GROTIUS
HIS ARGUMENTS
For the Truth of Christian Religion;
Rendred into plain English Verse.

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Ubi quid datur ost
Illudo chartis; hoc est mediocribus illis
Ex vitiiis unum
Hor. Serm. Lib. 1. Sat. 4.

IMPRIMATUR,
Dec. 16.
1685.

LONDON:
Printed for Jonathan Robinson, at the Golden Lion in St. Paul’s Church-Yard. MDCLXXXVI.
To the Honourable

ROBERT BOYLE, Esq;

Since your Command seem'd to suppose me fit;
To this Attempt I could not but submit:
How difficult e'er, who could refuse,
When such Encouragement supplies a Muse?
Yet this that leisure and recess requires,
Which one, of Avocat'ion's, but desires.
If I could envy what I truly love,
Or rev'rence rather, as advanc'd above;
Your Life, your Genius, would that Envy raise,
Happy beyond my hope, beyond my Praife.

Did not this Great Civili'an (a) Verse
adorn,
My Vein, whate're it were, might
merit Scorn,
As if I were to nothing better born:

A 2

By
To the Honourable Robert Boyle, Esq.

By it I never can expect a Name;
And most Men may my wronging Grotius blame;
While the ill-natur'd Criticks often smile,
To find his (b) Dutch excel our English Stile.

If I can lull the Cares of Life asleep,
'Tis the chief benefit I look to reap:
While you, of all the wise Man's Joys possess,
Out of the reach of mortal chances, rest:
From whence, with so much charming force, do flow
Treasures of Knowledge unto us below.

Had not your choice anticipated Mine,
I might have mingled Drofs where (c) you refine,
Embasing with low Verse that Chain of thought,
By which to Faith Reason's Subjection taught,
And the sublimest Truths to its embraces brought.

To
To the Reader.

Were it my expectation, or design, to gain a Reputation for Verse, I should have chosen a Subject more suited to move the Affections; without humouring of which, the smoothest Rythms please the the generality no better than Pictures in dead Colours.

Non satis est pulchra esse Poemata Hor, de arte
ducia junto,
Et quocunque volent animum audito-
ris agunto.

Verse should be soft, and sweet, as well as fair,
Moving the ravish'd Soul like fluid Air.

Yet as those Commands, which ennoble these Endeavours, were entirely with re-
spect to publick benefit: if I can attain that end, tho' with the censure of being an ill: Poet, or what perhaps would be worse for me, a tolerable good one; I shall be con-
tent, with King David dancing before the Ark, to appear vile, or like one of the vain Fellows. I must confess, I had not finish'd this Task, before I met with A ? Transla-
To the Reader.

Translation of this Book into English Prose, by an excellent Hand, which might have seemed justly to supersede my farther Progress. But I cannot but believe that many may be willing to divert themselves with this, who would think the other not sufficiently entertaining; for which I take leave to apply that of the admirable Herbert;

A Verse may find him who a Sermon flies,
And turn delight into a Sacrifice.

Measure is at least an art of Memory, an help for the treasuring up those thoughts which may enrich our Minds; such I am sure Grotius's are; and what so well deserve to be thought on more than once, that I am confident many, who have read both the Latin and English Prose, nay, and the original Dutch Verse too, will not think their time lost in reading the same Arguments repeated, in such a way as I have represented that Impression which they made upon my Mind. Wherein I must needs say, I never labour'd for a second Thought, if the first, without offending against the common rules, or (a) practice of Verse, seem'd clearly to express Grotius's Sense; nor hunted about for taking Epithets, or Flowers; but left Truth, and dry reasoning, to their natural Energy, if not Graces.

(a) This warrants the frequent use of a Verse two feet longer than the rest.
To the Reader.

I cannot but flatter myself, that in several places I have removed some Clouds, and made the Arguments more easy to be comprehended, by taking from their length.

The Truths here propounded, are of that nature, that me-thinks the Mind should be eager to come to the proof of them, and impatient even of Ornaments which may detain from the full view of their delightful Features.

If however this Version appear dull and flat, I hope it will be considered that it is but a Copy of a Copy; and if I had understood the Original Dutch Poem, as I should have had more assistance to Fancy, I know not but I might have offered here something more Poetical.

Yet still it must have been as careless and unlabour'd as now it is, unless I could have stolen more time from a Life not unactive, than I fear the Critiques will think, I have already but thrown away on this occasion.
Ad Virum Ornatissimum ——— de Veritate Christianæ Religionis ab eodem in Verbus Anglicanos traductâ.

Bella canant alii nullos habitura triumphos,
Et male conversos cognata in viscera cives,
Victoresq; fui populos, dum vincitur Hostis
Qui confangueinum genus est; aliiq; theatris
Spe lucii, aut auræ nimio popularis amore
Perpetuò insident, quibus & sua carmina vendant;
Furtivos narrent alii, sua crimina, Amores,
Et quæ Bella gerunt, Veneris dum castra sequuntur.

Nobilius moliris opus, dum sacra profanis
Posthabitis, modo bella canis, feu fundere versus,
Seu vitam verâ pro Religione paratus.
Nobiliora canis, dum Religiones avitæ
Impulsus studio, facili sacra dogmata venâ,
Et rerum à primâ deducis origine causas—
Maçte igitur virtute novâ; mysteria tantùm
Voce quidem, at strictâ, stricto velut ense tueris.

Exemplar superavit opus, mihi crede, nec undæ
Purius ex ipso jam semper fonte bibentur.
Pegasidas quisquis duxit te primus ad undas
Non leviter tinxit, sed pleno flamme meruit;
Nam modo vitales Gratios si duceret auras,
Non alium ambiret vatem; tam divite fundis Quæ
Ad Virum Ornatissimum, &c.

Quæ non sola fides docuit mysteria venâ:
Seu canis esse Deum, seu pellius occinas unum
Ess Deum tantum, seu quæ miracula Christus
Edidit, enumeras, seu Christi dogmata veris.
Annunccianta canis, seu forté objecta repellis:
Nec tantum Grotrium tibi debeat Angloca
Tellus;

Munus & illa tuum magni præfaga Maronis
Pars fuerit, (a) rursus mundo Saturnia Regna
Quæ spöndet, fœbolemq; novam, Æstætidus orte

Oris progeniem, magnum Jovis Incrementum.
Nec tantum vates, legumq; peritus ubiq;
Audis; (b) sed quæ etiam fudere Oracles Si-
byllæ

Linceus æquatis appendis lancibus, idem
Et sophus, & vates, & consultiissimæ æquæ.

Accinebat David Abercrombii,

M. D.

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To
To my Learned, and Ingenious Friend — on his Translation of Grotius de veritate Religionis Christiana, into English Verse.

What pains of old did Great Lucretius take
To shew such Gods, as did Mankind forsake?
Unthinking, senseless Beings, free from pain,
Did lazily in endless Pleasures reign.
A State so base, no Generous Heroe wou'd
After his death, vouchsafe to be a God.
But you on happier Theams your Thoughts employ.

Which those fantastick Notions quite destroy;
In charming Numbers mystick Truths rehearse,
And prove a Powerful, Active God, in Verse.
You shew him Great, Just, Merciful, and Good,
By whom all things are made, all understood.
The Night is Day to him, his piercing Ray,
Do's all the Secrets of our Souls display;
Our Thoughts, ere they proceed to action,
He knows, and all our Actions when they're don.
No Grove, no Cave, no Cloud is so obscure,
Can from our God a guilty Head secure.
The heav'nly Vengeance does like Lightning pierce
The dark Recesses of the Universe:

Yet
To my Learned and Ingenious Friend, &c.
Yet takes of humane Race propitious care,
Sees, and knows ev'ry thing, is ev'ry where.

The Noble Building Learn'd Grotius rais'd,
By you adorn'd, is doubly to be rais'd.
You to his Arguments, and weighty sense,
Have added Beauty, and Magnificence.
So to an Ancient Church, plain builds, and low,
Wren gives an higher Roof, and Cupola:
Long rows of Pillars the whole Frame support,
And that which was God's House, becomes his Court.

Hail great Apostle of the Muses, hail!
May your Example o'er their Sons prevail,
To change Parnassus for your Sion Hill,
And all their Minds with divine Raptures fill.
Ill Plays, false Satyr, empty Songs no more,
Henceforth prophanè our hallow'd Britisht Shore;
Before your Ark may their lewd Dagon's fall,
And you without Dragoons convert them all.

J. E.

To
To his worthy Friend——on his Version of Hugo Grotius, of the Truth of Christian Religion, into English Verse.

'Tis not, Dear Sir, the least ambitious aim
Of being noted for Poetick Flame,
Or with excused your's to miss my Name;
That now invites my Muse to celebrate
Those praises, you have justly got of late:
But as a Tribute to our Friendship due,
That I this slender Offer ring make to you.
As Noah, with a pious firmness, stood
Against th' Assauts of the invading Flood,
Until those happy days the welcome Dove
The Olive brought, by Orders from Above;
So you in stormy Weather have I seen,
Easy in Thought, and of a Mind serene,
Until those Clouds Jehovah did disperse;
And led your settled Thoughts to sacred Verse:
And surely, from Above you took that Fire,
For none below such thoughts could e're inspire.
For, David-like, your charming Lyre you string,
In praise and honour of th'Eternal King.
But first of all, as a wise Architect,
Who, that he may unshaken Piles erect,
Sees
To his worthy Friend, &c.

Sees his Foundations solid are and sure,
The only means his Buildings to secure;
So while Religion does your Numbers fill,
And sweetly flows from your judicious Quill,
Your Corner-stone, and Principles you take
From him, who did those equal Precepts make.
And first against Atheists you his Being prove,
And all their Shallow Arguments remove.
With strongest Reasons then you plainly show,
That all his Attributes from his Essence flow;
And this in Verse, and terms so well express,
As if He taught from your inspired Breast.
Then by your Verse, you liberty have giv’n
To Providence, which some confin’d to Heav’n,
As did Lucretius, who had fondly taught,
The lazy Gods of earthly things we’re thought.
In better colours you the Godhead show,
And fully prove, to Providence we owe
The change & turns of all things here below.
Then next Religion, you in all its parts
Have surely fortif’d, by the best Arts
Of Verse and Reason, and to the World evince,
That Piety ne’re stranger was to sense.
Here may the empty noisy Town-Gallant,
Who knows no Language but the modish Cant,
Whose tedious minutes stick upon his hands,
And make him curse the slow and lingering Sands;
By your Example learn his time to employ
On things, that yield a solid lasting joy.

Thus
To his worthy Friend, 

Thus taught by you, he speedily will find,
No Pleasures equal those 'oth' pious Mind.
But tho' in well-chose Numbers you excel,
And true Philosophy your Verse does swell;
Yet no confinement knows your active Soul;
But riddles other Arts without controul.
You into the abstrusest Notions dive,
And loaded with the sweets return from th'Hive.

Nor does the knotty Law, which few untwist,
Your piercing Judgment's conqu'ring force resist;
And tho' to some it takes Gigantick Form,
Yet you its Frowns and Menaces do scorn;
And being o'recome at your espence and toil,
The weaker Heads may bear away the Spoil.
Thus joining Law to Piety, you prove,
The Law not more of Serpent hath than Dove.

A. M.
To his Friend the Author.

Poet and Preacher, heretofore the same,
In dull or laziest times difficult became;
By pleasing Numbers British Bards of old
To th' listening Crowd Religion did unfold:
In Verse they chose their Raptures to express,
In Verse the sacred Mysteries to dress;
Religious Ardaurs thus they did inspire,
And kindle with a pure Poetick Fire.

Primisiva Musea modest Virgins were,
Ne're sung what might offend the choicest Ear;
In lovely Dre's each Virtue did adorn,
In ugly Shapes each Vice expos'd to scorn.
But now turn'd Prostitutes, upon the Stage,
They teach not Manners, but corrupt the Age;
Their easy Province in our Time has been,
To raise our Lust, or gratify our Spleen,
Maliciously to murder a Good Name,
And amongst others, Verse is self defame.
If with more Chastity, and less of Spite,
Some modern Poets set themselves to write,
It is wish fulsome Praise to court a Friend,
And basely flatter for some baser End;
Grossly they lay the thickest Varnish on,
Where Nature made the worst Complexion:
And thus the dignity of Verse is stain'd,
Apollo's sacred Temple thus profan'd.
But this our Author in a pious strain
The Poet and Divine writes again;
His Muse at once doth both instruct, and please,
She gilds the Pill which cures the Mind's Disease,
So weak's our Appetite to what is good,
So weary grown of plain-drest wholesome Food.

That
To his worthy Friend the Author.

That Wit and Verse must spice it for our taste,
Or else our squeamish Stomachs choose to fast.
The Truth more naked may in Prose appear,
She's more alluring thus, and not less clear.

Happy Maintainer of our Faith in Verse,
Proceed Lucreti's An Atomes to disperse;
Proceed Eternal Truths thus to reverse;
Such Truths for all that Fiction may alone,
Poets did're invent to please their own,

And make succeeding [Times] for real swal-
low down:
Such Truths enlightened Minds on Earth improve,
And propagate immortal Songs above.
Henceforth more sacred shall the Muses be,
And more ador'd the Art of Poesy,
Happy Assitant of Divinity.

E. Ll.

ERRATA.

The Reader is desired to amend with his Pen these following Errors in the Print; and tho' the frequent false pointings may change the sense in many places; 'tis hoped a little regard to the connection, or manner of the Expressions, may rectify them.


GROTIUS
Grotius his Arguments for the Truth of Christian Religion, rendered into plain English Verse.

Things visible declare a God unseen:
Some things 'tis obvious did in time begin:
And these could never their own
Being cause;
Nothing we're sure could act before it was.
It's rise from something else it then must draw,
Which holds as well in what we never saw;
From which things subject to our Senses came,
Till that we find which always was the same.
And this is God, whatever be the Name:
A Being necessary to exist;
For else the World must have beginning mist.
This also the content of Nation's proves,
Where e're Barbarity Reason removes.
What only from Opinion rose, we see
Men often change, nor in the same agree:
This Notion always, in all places found,
Did even Aristotle's Doubts confound.
Some cause is needful then to be assign'd,
Which may extend alike to all Mankind;
And this God's Revelation must be thought,
Or, a Tradition from first Parents taught:
If it's the first, you grant the thing is sought:
But
Of the Truth of

But if the last; in what's of so much weight,
Why should first Parents propagate a Cheat?
If wherefo're Humanity is known,
They the Idea of a Godhead own;
In places late found out, and long ago,
Not only with the dull, but witty too;
These would unmask it, if it were design,
Nor could the others lay a Plot so fine.
If some in sev'ral Ages have appear'd,
Who seem'd as if no Godhead they rever'd,
'Tis an Objection nothing to be fear'd:
For few they've been, their Arguments but vain,
Such as a Profelyte could rarely gain:
'Twas not from Reason common to Mankind,
But some Disease, or Folly, of the Mind,
An affectation something new to show,
Like him that Blackness would acribe to Snow:
Or, no right Judgment could by such be past,
Being like the Sick, whose Mouths are out of taste.
And this the rather is to be believ'd;
Because from all th' Accounts we have receiv'd,
We find the best of Men were always those,
Who with the notion of a God did close.
That a dissent from what so long obtain'd,
Only with Minds deprav'd its credit gain'd,
Whose vicious Int'rents can't a Godhead bear,
To pass right Judgment on their Actions here,
Ev'n hence is seen; that whatso'er they fain,
Whether succession in an endless chain,
Or the wild Atoms undirected dance,
Or whatever Scheme they please t' advance;
The Difficulties all recur, or more,
Than lay against what was receiv'd before.
Some seem to disbelieve a Deitie,
Because they can't his Sacred Presence see:

But
the Christian Religion.

But these, if they can anything descry,
Must ev'n the being of their Souls deny,
Which ne're were subject yet to mortal eye:
Nor ought 'gainst this Idea more to strive,
Because their shallow reasonings can't arrive
To understand the Nature which they find;
For it belongs to the inferior kind,
Not fully to conceive of what's above:
Beasts, of Man's nature, can't fit Judges prove;
Let's, how the few first gave the many Law,
And by what methods kept the Rowl in awe;
How Men could trace the flights o' th'starry host,
And round the dang'rous Deep in safety coast.
These things above their reach must be confessed;
And Man, as he excels the down-lookt Beast,
Should think that he who made him to excel,
Does in a distance far above him dwell;
And that there is an Excellence unknown,
Because it is superiour to his own.

Having thus found a Deity above,
Let's try how we his Attributes can prove:
One Proof concerning them in this does lie,
That what he is, is by necessity,
And this clearly infers the Unity;
For if we this extend to more than one,
We unto numbers infinite must run.
What does exist by necessary Law,
That Force must into actual being draw,
And this to single things must be apply'd;
But when we speak of gen' rals, 'tis deny'd.
Multiplications too of things we know,
From a fecundity of Causes flow;
And as the numbers of the Causes were,
So are the effects more numerous, or rare;

But
Of the Truth of
But nothing caus'd the Deity to be:
In differ'nt things we differences see;
Th' Essence, not Difference, is needful here;
Nor does one sign of many Gods appear:
The Universe, a single World is found,
One radiant Sun enlightens all around.
In ev'ry Man only one living Soul
Is all in ev'ry part, and in the whole.
Were there, besides, more than one Deity,
In Pow'r and Will all absolutely free,
How if th' Almighty Powers should disagree?
Should one be opposite to th' others Will,
Each could not then its purposes fulfil;
But this is far below a Pow'r Divine.

Next, full Perfection in this God does shine;
Which cannot but from hence be understood
That whatsoever in things we find of good,
Or a beginning had, or else had none;
What ne'er began belongs to God alone:
That which began, being from something drew,
And since from nothing, nothing ever grew;
It follows, what Perfections e'er are seen
In the Effects, have in the Causes been;
And all must be from the first Cause deriv'd,
Which of Perfection ne'er can be depriv'd.
What always was can no dependance bear,
Nor can an outward Cause its force impair:
Ne'er from its self a diminution came;
For all things at their own Perfection aim.

To these Perfections of the Deity,
We cannot but ascribe Infinity;
For all the limits we in things explore,
Are that no Cause communicated more,
Or else the Subject could not hold the store;

But
the Christian Religion.

But God could nothing take from any cause; Since, as we've shewed, he necessarily was,

What acts more perfect is, than that which can't,
And things endued with Life than those which want;
What understands, than that which nothing knows,
And what is good, than what does that oppose.
These then we attribute to the most High,
Nor can the manner infinite deny,
His Life, his Pow'r, his Knowledge, without end,
Nor does his Goodness one exception blend.
On what's already said it does depend.

That all things owe their rise to him alone,
Who is, being of necessity, but one.
What else in the Universe has room,
From something divers from itself did come;
Either immediately, or in its cause,
From the Divinity beginning draws:
And this not Reason only, Sense, may shew,
If we the Structure of our Bodies view.
Th'inward and outward parts for use conspire,
Without the Parents pains, or known desire,
And with an Art none can enough admire.
This shews the Excellence of the Supreme Mind,
Which made this all. Much we in Galen find
Our Admiration to confirm, or raise,
Where th'uses of the Hand and Eye he weighs:
This is declar'd ev'n by the Creatures mute,
Whose ev'ry part some certain use does suit,
And takes a Figure proper to its end,
To which the force of matter could not tend.
Of this Inanimates strong proof may yield,
The Plants, and painted Glories of the Field,

B 3 Into
Of the Truth of

Into the proof this the Waters flow,
And the the Earth by nature lie below,
These in the middle between that, and Air;
To see the course inverted is not rare,
And Waters often interpersit with Earth, To give things Nourishment, or easy Birth.
To have a certain aim in acting, shews
A Nature understanding what to chuse:
But things not only serve their proper end,
But do the good o’th’ Universe intend,
Thus against Nature Water does ascend,
Left somewhere a Vacuity prevail,
And the great Building wanting Juncture, fail:
But such a force could never move the whole,
Unless from him who did this Mass controul.
Actions so regular in Beasts appear,
As that they from some Reason mov’d, declare;
For this observe the lab’ring Bee, or Ant,
Nor yet in others do w’Examples want,
Who without any previous trial, use
Things hurtful to avoid, helpful to chuse:
That from no judgment of their own it came
Appears, in that they always act the same,
Nor can they other things, tho less, effect;
Wherefore some foreign Reason did direct,
Or else imprint their Natures with this force;
And we to God for this must have recourse.
The Lights above, chiefly the Sun and Moon,
Shine forth for this as clear as is the Noon,
Their Courses order’d, and attemper’d so,
That sublunary things may thrive and grow:
The ready motion through the Equator were, But they go flenting to refresh us here,
And that each Realm the benefits may share.
As th’Earth the living Creatures does preserve,
They, where much stronger, humane uses serve; Which
the Christian Religion.

Which made even the rigid Stoicks write,  
That th'Universe was made for Man's delight:  
But since no Pow'r of Man could e're attain,  
Over the bright Celestial Host to reign,  
Nor could they put themselves under his sway;  
'Tis then as some Superiour they obey;  
And this must needs be that eternal Mind,  
Which the vast Fabrick of the World design'd,  
And the Contextures wonderfully joyn'd:  
The Stars eccentrick Motions this proclaim,  
Which not from matters force, but a free Agent came:

This the Positions they above maintain,  
And the unequal form of Land, and main:  
That this way, more than that, the Stars encline,  
As in th'appointed places of the Heav'n's they shine.  
The Earth in the most perfect form is found,  
Which all Men must confess to be the round.  
Some of its parts ev'n in Heav'n's bosom laid,  
Declare the Pow'r which that Extrusion made.  
Is there a Sot who can to chance ascribe,  
What is more acc'rate than we can describe?  
As if a casual Coalition cou'd  
Make a fair Edifice of Stone and Wood,  
Or Letters with an accidental caft,  
Should make a Poem through all Ages like to last,  
Who Geometrick Figures saw on shore,  
Did thence the footsteps of a Man explore,  
Knowing that Chance could ne're such things compose.

That Man began in time this also shows,  
That by degrees Arts to improvement rose,  
That severall successive Ages find  
Places before unpeopled with Mankind,  
And they their Language from some Neighbours  
Or them who the discovery did make: (take,  

B 4  
Some
Of the Truth of

Some general Institutions too, have been
So common unto all the race of Men,
That them not instinct, or collective thought,
So much as was plain Tradition taught;
Such as was Sacrifice in pious Rites,
And Shame first blushing at unchast Delights,
The solemn tying of the Nuptial Band,
And flying incest the without command.

Nor ought we, because ill does footing gain,
To raise a Question, whether God does reign?
As caus'd by him that never did exist,
He made only what truly does subsist,
From what Subsistence has, there may proceed
Such Accidents as is an humane Deed:
He Man, and his sublimer Mind, did make,
With a full pow'r to chuse what Path to take:
This is a glorious liberty of Will,
Good in it self, tho it produces ill:
This which is moral ill, beyond dispute
T were impious to the Godhead to impute:
But it his Goodness does not cloud i' th leaft,
That what is ill, as on the Senses preft,
From him should come, to punish what is past,
Or to induce a better Life at last:
Tho 'tis like Phytick, nauseous to the taste.
To this the health we of our Souls do owe.
Some from two Principles think all things flow;
The ill from one, as absolutely bad,
As that was good, whence th'other being had:
But should such contrariety be found,
How could the course of things keep on their round?
One would the other's Workmanship destroy,
And neither it's Creation could enjoy.
the Christian Religion.

Ill absolute could never self-exist,
For its defect in what has something mist;
But then it's subject's to some good arriv'd,
In that of being it is not depriv'd.

That all things here below directed are
By the Almighty's Providential Care
From hence is seen, that not only Mankind,
Happy to have an understanding Mind,
But Birds and Beasts, with something in it's head,
Tenderly cherish what themselves have bred:
That this partakes of Goodness, need we prove?
And who can from the Godhead this remove?
The rather, since no limits can be found,
Which may this Knowledge, or his Pow'r, give bound.

What e're is done, or to be done, he knows;
And what can hinder when he'll interpose?
What was before observ'd how things forake

The Tendencies they of themselves would take,
That they may serve the common end of all,
Under this Head as properly may fall.

That the Celestial Orbs do not confine
The Influences of Providence Divine,
What's said already fully may perswade
(For that exerts its force to all things made.)
The Courses of the Stars besides appear,
To be appointed for our Service here;
But that, for which another thing's ordain'd,
The more immedi'ate care must needs have gain'd,

Out of a sottish Error some contend,
That Providence don't single things intend,
But only universals; which pretence
Would bar ev'n God of his own Providence:

IX. That the Universe is governed by God.

X. Even sublunary things.
Of the Truth of
Nor can that Knowledge infinite be thought
(As God's is prov'd in what's already brought)
Which does not take in all things singular:
If thus his Knowledge, what impedes his care;
Since we in single things, as such, may view
Their proper end, and universal too?
'Tis own'd that Generals through his care exist,
And they only in Singulars subsist:
If these for want of Providence expire;
The kinds of them we should in vain desire.

XLI.
This prov'd from the preservation of Governments.

The special Influence of a Power above,
Kingdoms and Commonwealths continued,
prove.
A form of Government that first prevail'd,
Has not through many Tracts of Ages fail'd:
For this we might all Histories apply,
Where a Republick, where a Monarchy,
All the Contrivances and Plots of Men,
If they unsettle, bring the same ages
So that against a long fix'd Power to fight,
Seems ev'n the Providence of Heaven to flight.
The Human Wisdom might preserve it long,
Yet the subject Rabble are so strong,
Such the Vicissitudes of human things,
That none could fix them but the King of Kings.
But then this Providence chiefly appears,
When the Foundations of a State he tears;
This Cyrus, Alexander, Cesar too,
Tartarian Cingi, and Nameas they.
These Men in things where Prudence has a share,
By far beyond its force successful are;
Nay, the uncertainty of things below,
Unto their prosp'rous Fortunes seems to bow;
When like Events to the same constant end
As 'twere by a Conspiracy do tend,

They
the Christian Religion.
They argue a direction from on high:
Sometimes a lucky side turns on the Die;
But if the same an hundred times you fling,
’Tis evident it from some Art must spring.

But Miracles afford the clearest sign
Of a presiding Providence Divine;
And the fore-knowledge of Futurity,
Of which we have such Proofs as none deny;
Since God is infinite in Pow’r and Skill,
Can any thing withhold his Sov’ragn Will,
From acting and imparting to Mankind,
What beyond Nature’s course he has design’d?
That very Course he did at first ordain.
But if inferior Minds to this attain;
Much more may God, who suffer’s what they do,
(If they do not his full intent pursue)
In Kingdoms constituted where we live,
Who made the Law, can Dispensation give.

That Miracles have been we may believe,
If we the Story of the Jews receive;
Whence their Religion of such date we know,
Tho all things have conspir’d its overthrow:
It long has been depriv’d of humane Aid,
And ev’ry where a Scoff and By-word made;
Yet still continues, when all others move
(Except the Christian, which does that improve)
As soon as that Authority is gone,
Which forc’d, or laid inviting Colours on.
Thus fell the Pagan, Mahomet’s does laft,
Because it’s Empire’s date not yet is past.
If any ask me what could be the cause,
Which gave such rooting to the Jewish Laws?
Of the Truth of

'Tis plain, it was the Miracles were wrought, When God himself did lead, and for them fought, And which were by a clear Tradition taught, Which might be trac'd from Father unto Son, Till they reach'd Moses, and the Son of Nun: Who else can think such stubborn Men as they, Would so severe a Ritual Law obey? Or, that a People evidently wise, Would chuse with so much pain to circumcise? Which other Nations needs must have conten'd: Nor could they in it self to God commend Moses his Sacred Writings, where we find These Miracles to memory confign'd; Not only this their lasting Credit gave, That the Tradition, which the Hebrews have, Speaks him to be of God chose, and inspir'd: But that his own Glory we're defir'd, Nor sought the advantage of his Friends, or Blood; From hence is-manifestly understood, That his own Sins he never seeks to hide; And the High-Priesthood to his Line den't'd, As well as in chief Civil Pow'r to place, Fixing them with the vulgar Levites Race: Which shews he had no caule to falsify; Nor did he use that Art becomes a Lie: No varnish to sett off a studi'ed Tale; But Truth did with its native force prevail. Consider further the unequall'd Age Of the known Writings of this Jewish Sage: The Greeks, to whom most own their Learning due, Theirs from abroad most evidently drew, And many Proofs 'twas from the Hebrews shew. The Attick Laws, & Roman, sprang from thence, From those which Moses taught did first commence. And
the Christian Religion.

And Men of other Rites full witness bear
Unto the Ancient Truths he does declare;
This th'old Phoenician Histories do shew,
As we in Sanchoniatho may view.
Indians, Egyptians, many of the Greeks,
Teach how the Chaos was to him that seeks;
How first the Animals, and Man at last,
(Man in an heav'nly mould divinely cast,
Out of the egg (for so they call't) did haste,
That Man had giv'n him pow'r o're other things;
This, among others, Ovid sweetly sings:
And this from Grecian Poets he did take.
That God the World into its being spake,
The Platonists and Epicarmus thought,
And he who long before in Verses brought
A rich Collection of what Orpheus taught.
That the bright Sun did not produce the heat,
But as it was ordain'd its lucid seat
Empedocles confess: Catullus too,
And Aratus did in their flights pursue
A fixt abode above the starry Skys;
That there's perpetual Light Homer descrys.
Mileian Thales out of ancient Lore,
That there's a God, whom nothing ever bore;
That th'Universe is fair, as by him made;
That antecedent to the Light was Shade.
With this the Orphies, Hesiod too delights,
And thence some Nations count the time by nights.
Wife Anaxag'ras in his search did find,
That all things came from a superior Mind.
Smooth Aratus, that God the Stars did make,
That from his Breath all things their life did take.
Did Virgil, after Grecian Poets say,
Hesiod that Man was form'd from out the Clay.

Homer,
Of the Truth of

Homer, Callimachus, that God is one,
And that all things proceed from him alone.
Maximus Tyrins strongly holds, that this
The uniform consent of Nations is.
That Honour which Latines and Greeks did shew
To the seventh Day (not here to name the Jew)
Which in unquestion’d Authors one observes,
The mem’ry of God’s seven Days works preserves.
The Celtsicks this, and this the Indian speaks,
Who portion out the Seasons into Weeks,
And this the Names which they assign’d each day:
That Men at first liv’d in a simple way,
Their Manners rude, they nake’d to the Skin
Is ev’n in some Egyptian Writers seen.
Th’ Indians, as Strabo shews, did celebrate
That Golden Age the Poets do relate:
Wild Indians did in their History agree,
Of Adam, Eve, the Serpent, and the Tree,
If to Maimonides we credit give:
Nay, Witnesses who in our Age do live,
Affirm that Indian Pagans keep the fame;
Their learned Brahmans mention Adam’s name.
Those at Siam reckon with us, the World
About the Poles six thousand Years has twirld:
That at the first Men liv’d a thousand years,
In the Caldean Registers appears:
Egyptians this, with some Phoenicians say;
Nor want there Greeks as positive as they.
And this may the more easy credit gain,
Because to after-ages did remain
The vast Graves, which did the mouldred Bodies,
Compar’d with present, of a monstrous hew.
Pausanias and Philostratus of Greeks,
And this the Roman Nat’r’s lift, Pliny, speaks,
How God and Angels did with Man converse,
Till he provok’d their absence for a cause.

After
the Christian Religion.

After the Greeks Callibus does relate;
And the old Giants truly serene state,
With Moses Greeks and Latins do agree;
And in all Nations we some Proofs may see,
Of what about the Deluge he has shown:
All time to that old Varrus call’d unknown.
Those things on which the Poets Fictions ground;
In other Writers are unblended found,
Agreeing with the Truth in Moses seen:
Berosus with the Chaldees, Abidene
Among th’ Assyrians, did hold forth the same;
And the pacifick Dove the last does name:
This Grecian Plutarch, Lucian mentions this,
Who says, that Syrian Hieropolis,
Retain’d the Story of the Ark of old,
Which the fav’d race of Men and Beasts did hold:
In Damascene and Mero this you’ll see,
The last does in the name of Ark agree:
Apollodorus does transmit to fame
Dascalon’s Story, differing but in name:
And sever’al Spaniards do at large attest,
That in America remotest West,
The mem’ry of the Flood they plainly trace,
And preservation of all Mortal Race:
The Raven forc’d to keep upon the Wing,
And well-come Dove which th’Olive-branch
did bring.

Where Men inhabited before the Flood
By Joppe, nam’d in Pliny’s understood:
And to this day Tradition does remain
Where th’ Ark did rest, the Flood b’ring in again,
Mount Ararat on the Armenian Plain.
The Father of us Europeans here,
Japheth in Ecbonick. Authors does appear
Ion or Javan the learn’d Grecians own,
And Hammon Arts to th’ Africans had shown,
Names
Of the Truth of Names the Mosaick Writings have preserv’d: Josephus too, and others have observ’d, That many Names of Men and places shew, Apparent Footsteps of what there we view. Which of the Poets does not proof supply, Of the condemn’d attempt to scale the Sky? Clouds of Authorities confirm that Fire, In which polluted Sodom did expire. We might as many Witnesses produce, To shew that Circumcision was in use, And this continues among Abram’s Seed, With Isma’elites, and Idumean breed: The Hift’ry of the ancient Patriarchs too In Philo’s Sanchoniatho we view; In Hecateus this, and Damascus, Berosus and Demetrius may be seen; Artapanus, and Eupal’mus we may add: This he who wrote the famous Orphics had. Some part of this Justin’s learn’d Book affords, Which from Pompeius Trogus he records; Scarce one of them but tells of Moses’s fame, How he was sav’d from water th’Orphics name, And that two Tables he from God receiv’d, And Polemon confirms what’s here believ’d. Sev’ral of the Egyptian Writers shew How vainly Pharaoh’s Hoast did Israel’s Flock pursue. And who that thinks of Moses can believe, That he should e’re have ventur’d to deceive; When, with wife Enemies encompass’d round, Who would have noted all the faults they found, If former Authors what he wrote controul’d, Or twere oppos’d by a Tradition old, Or he of the then present times did tell, What Witnesses then living could refel:

[Signature: Sicilian]
the Christian Religion.

Sicilian Diodore, Pliny the young,
Longinus of sublimity of Tongue,
Strabo, and Tacitus, of Moses speak;
Dannis and Mambris, in their Sorceries weak,
When they his Credit to impair did seek.
The Talmud, Pliny, Apuleius, name.
Some Laws, and Rituals, which from Moses came;
The golden Pythagorean Verses theyw;
And many of them you elsewhere may view.
Strabo and Trogus Testimonies give.
How just, how pious, the old Jews did live:
What we of Joshua, and others find.
Early or late, to memory confound'd,
Agreeing with the Jews, 'need not be join'd;
Since he who will to Moses credit give.
Whom now it were a shame to disbelieve.
Must not deny, which here we sought to prove,
That God in a miraculous way did move,
Exceeding all the Laws which Nature knew.
That he such Acts in after-times did shew.
As when Elijah, and Elisha liv'd.
Is with less hesitation to be receiv'd;
Because the Jews were then become more known.
Their Rites held more in detestation.
The World then could not but have jealous Eyes,
And stop the growth of the most specious lies.
Hecules and Lycombroes do tell
What in the twall-wing Whale Jonah befell;
Only the name for Hercules they change,
To whom they us'd t' impute things great, and strange.
The truth of History did Julian force, (more)
(Who ne'er 'wards Jews or Christians had re-
To own, that God did often Jews inspire,
And burst Elijah's Sacrifice with Heav'ly Fire.

C

Add
Of the Truth of

Add to this farther, that the Jewish Law
All vain pretence to Prophecy did awe;
It did Obedience to their Kings persuade,
Yet they that sacred Office fear'd t' invade:
Esdras, and others wiser than the rest,
That they were les than Prophets still confess;
This gift some Ages before Jesia cast.
But who on many millions could impose
With Prodigies they did to all expose,
Such as the High-priest's Breast-plate did disclose?
That Light and Truth which thence thence thence forth to all.
Contin'd fresh till the first Temple's fall;
In this such certain Faith have all the Jews,
As that 'twas known to their Fore-fathers, Jews.

To this of Miracles, we may subjoyn
Another proof of Providence Divine,
The knowledge of Contingencies to come,
Which was imparted from above, to some;
When not one cause, or sign could then appear,
To them their Times and Tendencies were clear,

(a) Jot. 6. 26. Jericho'd by (a) Jesum long before.
(b) 1 King. 13. 2 & 2 Kings 23. 17.
(c) Ez. 44. 28. And his chief Actions since made known to fame.
(d) Jer. 37. 11. Jeremy saw that they should yet (e) succeed,
(f) Dan. 2. & 32. 39. 7 USES & 3. 320.
(g) Dan. 10. 20. & 11. 2. 3.
(h) Dem. 8. 9.
(i) ib.

As th'Orbity of him who should restore
Who should the Temple on Mount (b) Betbel fire,
More than three hundred years e're 'twas t' expire:
Esaiah too (c) Cyrus the great does name,
Jerus'alem from (d) Caldean force being freed,
Jeremi's law that they should yet (e) succeed,
The fate of the Assyrian Monarchy,
Daniel (f) did in the womb of Time descry,
That first to Medes and Persians it should fall,
Then (g) Alexander should ingross it all.
Seleucus then, and Ptolemy (b) part divide,
What mischief should from these the (i) Jews, besidest,
But
the Christian Religion.

But chiefly from (k) Antochus the Renown'd ; (l) Dan.9.26,
The truth of these when searching Porphyry found,
To this poor subterfuge he driven was,
That they were wrote after they came to pass,
But we as well a warm dispute may raise,
Who wrote the Books whence Virgil has his
Praise ;
The Romans knew not that by surest fame,
Than had the Jews for what bore Daniel's name.
Did not ocular Predictions shew,
What Mexico should feel, and rich Peru,
Which the relentless Spaniards should subdue?
To this those many Dreams we may refer,
Which to Events full Correspondence bear,
Events which they who dream'd could ne'er foresee
From any thing observ'd below : (know,
These to acribe unto some casual hit,
Or nat'r'al cause, can't thinking Men best
Of these Tertullian, writing of the Soil,
Brings many Instances beyound controul.
Of Spirits assuming vehicles of Air,
Which Men not only did discern, but hear,
Authors by no means credulous declare.
Such Spectres in America have been,
In Mexico, and Sina, often seen.
And these free Ord'sals with old Germans
known,
As in their Histories, and Laws are known,
Prove an Almighty Power the just does own.

If less exertions of the Power Divine,
For Miracles, and Prophecies now shine ;
The force of what is prov'd it can't impair ;
Since 'tis enough, that once such things there

Wait :}
Of the Truth of

If they have been less frequent than before,
God in great Wisdom their Works forbore;
Nor is it fit to violate the Laws
Printed on Nature, but for weighty cause;
As when the Jews in a small Corner clos’d,
Were to maintain a Worship all expos’d:
Or that the Truths in Christian Doctrine found
Were to enlighten all the World around;
Such times are well becoming God to show
That Nature’s but his Handmaid here below.

XVIII.

And Wickedness obtains such licence.

Some question whether Providence presides,
Seeing how Sin flows in with mighty Tides,
As if it would deluge all the World again;
Which Providence, if any, should restrain.
But an answer easy, since Man’s Will is free,
And God alone good by necessity:
To bridle and keep in our Sins by force,
Were to make Man no better than an Horse.
Bate, that of freedom we are not bereft;
No proper means are unattempted left:
A Law is made our wild Desires to chain,
And none for want of Knowledge can complain;
Inward and outward Admonition’s join’d
And Threats and Promises to bend the Mind:
That very Wickedness that’s suffer’d here,
Has limits set by God’s o’re-ruling Care;
In vain it strives to swell beyond its bound,
To force th’enclosures of the sacred Ground.
His Church, hem’d in with the tempestuous deep,
His Pow’r does from an Inundation keep:
Civil Societies his Influence bare;
Else the mad Multitude no Laws would bear:
And even that mischief, which gives licence get,
Has some good end by his appointment set.

To
the Christian Religion.

To punish, or correct, those souls that stray
Out of the paths of virtue's narrow way;
Or else a glorious specimen to give,
How nobly the adult in virtue thrive.
Gainst those temptations which in crowds arise,
While patience does its perfect work maintain,
And constancy unto the last remain.
And they, whose punishment hath been delay'd,
For this forbearance have large interest pay'd;
Thus they who disobey'd the Almighty's will,
Against their own, his purposes fulfil.

If wickedness unpunish'd long appear,
The weak still suffer'd violence to bear;
In sorrow long to draw their hated breath,
And die at last an ignominious death;
As if their innocence had no regard:
Man is not therefore from God's care debarr'd,
For no man knows how God exerts his power,
In inward blessings, till all care be devour'd:
Besides, before was prov'd an aid divine;
Wherefore we with the wise in the belief should joy.

That since God knows our actions, and is just;
Yet sometimes seems to authorize distrust;
A future judgment needs must be behind,
Where sinners their due punishment may find,
And all egregious virtue, here unblest,
Exalted to a state above the rest,
May meet full recompence for all its pain.
For this we must believe, that souls remain,
When loosed from the body's cumbrous
And this belief so general is known
That we it's rise must from first parent own.
Of the Truth of

This Homer sings in Verses ever new,
And this the Gauls, as well as Grecians knew;
Their learned Druids this most fully taught,
And this the Brahmans with the Indians thought:
Egyptian, Thracian, German Sages, all,
Upon this Truth with one consent do fall;
For proof we might unquestion'd Authors call:
In Strabo, Plutarch, and Laertius, see
How the Egyptians, Indians too, agree,
In the expecting of the Day of Doom,
After this Life is to its period come:
Histories, and the ancient Sibyls speak,
What Conflagrations shall the World o're-take;
Ovid and Lucan, both this thought pursue,
This at Siam the savage Indians knew;
Of this Astronomers a Proof have found,
In that the Sun draws nigher to the ground.
Parts farthest off at first discovery prove,
That we can no where from these Truths remove;
Canaries yield this Fruit, the Western Shores
Largely enriches with this Golden Oak.

Nor can one Argument in Nature found,
This old Tradition, so extensive, wound:
For if we any thing observe to fail,
'Tis either, that what's mightier does prevail,
In its own Nature contrary to that,
As Cold does through the force of Heat abate;
Or the removing that in which it stands;
As when a Glass is fallen from our hands,
And into several little pieces broke,
The form is perish which at first it took:
Or else 'twas from deficiencie in the cause;
As Light does vanish when the Sun withdraws:

But
the Christian Religion.

But none of these can of the Soul be said;
For nothing contrary to that was made;
In this does its peculiar being delight,
Things to each other the most opposite,
At once it's intellectual Power receives.
This for the first: The second who believes?
For on what Subject can the Soul depend?
If we for this the Body should command;
How happens it that when the Body's tyr'd,
The Soul to farther Action still is spur'd,
Without least latitude from thence acquire'd?
An Object also that too much excels
All the weak forces of the Body quells;
And thus the feeble Organs of our sight,
Cannot endure the Sun's prevailing Light;
The nobler Objects entertain the Mind,
Its force is stronger, Pleasure more refin'd;
As when its Thoughts from matter it abstracts,
And about lofty Universals acts;
The Body's forces cannot but embrace (place:
Things, which are circumscrib'd by time and
For that's the Body's Nature, while the Mind
To what's eternal, and immense, is joyn'd:
Since then the Body don't its Actions give,
It's Essence how can it from thence receive?
The Natures of the things we ne're discern,
We can but by their Operations learn.
Nor more to this can we ascribe the way
Mention'd the last, as reason of decay;
For no efficient cause we can invent,
Which failing, all the reasoning Pow'r is spent:
For this the Parents you can ne're assign;
For then their Deaths would cut off all their
No other cause 'tis possible to name, (Line:
Than th' universal, whence at first things came,
Of the Truth of
Whose Pow'r we're sure can no deficiency know;  
But that his Will's deficient, who can show?  
That 'tis the pleasure of the Deity  
Soul's should in total Abolition lie?

Nay th' Arguments 'o' th' other side are clear:  
That Man o're his own Actions pow'r does bear,  
And all the Animal World his beck obeys;  
That he his Mind to God's own Throne can raise,  
And for his sake contemn all outward things:  
That in his Soul a grateful thirst there springs  
Of an immortal State above the Earth,  
And he diverts himself with solid Mirth,  
While a good Conscience does supply the Feast,  
With which he in each Circumstance is blest:  
This comforts him to bear the heavy stroke;  
Nor can the anchor of his hope be broke:  
But then if he a wicked Life has led,  
What gattily Horrors all his Thoughts o're-spread!  
Death is the King of Terrors truly found,  
And the last Judgment inwardly does wound;  
Under the force of which great Tyrants groan,  
And hardly dare they trust themselves alone:  
Examples are too numerous to give,  
Of those, who under these Tormentors live.

But if such be the nature of the Mind,  
That of it's failing we no caufe can find:  
And God has pleas'd to give us many signs,  
That when the Body moulder, that still shines:  
What nobler end can mortal Man propond,  
Than that with Happinesse this may be crown'd?  
Hence Plato, and the Pythagoreans taught;  
Man should to imitate his God be brought;  

What
the Christian Religion.

What that Felicity, and how attained,
May in some part by humans thought be gain'd;
But what God has discover'd in his Word,
Must most of Truth, and Certainty afford;
Which since the Christian Doctrine does hold
Let us examine what belief 'tis worth. (forth.

XXV.

Which to obtain,
Men must search for the true Religion.

LIB. II.

Thou, blessed Jesus! who in Heav'n dost reign,
Alift my Thoughts, while in an humble strain,
The Truth, and Certainty, I represent,
Of that Religion, for which thou wast sent!

That while Tiber'ins did the Empire sway,
Jesus of Naz'areth did in Judah play,
Not Christians only constantly profest,
Jewish, and Pagan Authors, do no les;
Sueton'ins, Pliny, Tac'tins, have his Fame,
And numbers after 'em repeat the same:
And that this Jesus, Pilate crucify'd,
Howe'er reproachful, Christians ne're deny'd:
Nay this the Jews ne're scruple to declare,
Tho' great, on that account, their Sufferings are,
Where e're dispers'd they among Christians live,
And Proofs beyond desire the Pagans give;
Who Pilate's Acts have down to us convey'd,
In whose Memorials this as chief is laid.
Julian, and others, who the most oppoSE
That rule of Life, which blessed Jesus shows.

Con-
Concerning this did we're one Question prove:
The most disagreeing People prove;
The Proofs so full, no History has more,
Yet him most distant Realms as God adore.
And this appears not in our Age alone,
But we may trace it back unto his own:
And when at Rome - fierce Nero did preside,
Many for that Profession bravely dy'd,
As Tacitus, and several others tell.

And of these Worsh'p'pers, many did excel
In Judgment and improvements of the Mind
(Not here to name whom of the Jews we find)
Such Sergius was who did in Cyprus rule,
And Dionysius, Head of a fam'd School;
That glorious ancient Martyr Polycarp,
Justin, and Irenaeus, Writers sharp;
Wife Athenagoras at Athens bred,
And Origin, whole Learning far has spread,
With Alexandrian Clement many more,
Unto this suffering Lord like reverence bore.
What with such thinking Men as these could sway,
Most of them bred in quite another way,

On such an Object of their Faith to call,
Where neither Honour could, or Gain befal?
Were it not this, that having us'd the care,
In things which of the chiefest moment are,
Fit for the wise, trying the constant fame,
Which did his supernatural Works proclaim;
They found them such, beyond the least dispute,
As did all vain Philosophy confute:

Diseases quitting the long ravag'd Field,
When nothing in all-Nature help could yeild:
Sight giv'n to him who we're could use an Eye;
That questionless miraculous supply

Of
the Christian Religion.

Of thousands, with creased Leaves of Bread,
Repeased, and thro' distant Regions spread;
And Life call'd back again after 'twas shed.

Not here the numerous instances to name,
Which had obtain'd such an universal Fame,
That Celsus, and ev'n Iudaeus, these confess,
And the learn'd Jewish Talmudists no les';
These they we're simple Prodigies to call,
And therein own them supernatural.
Long fixt Diseases yielding at command
Of the least motion of the Lip, or Hand,
Argue a Pow'r which Nature must obey;
But if in this such Efficacy lay;
It no les' strange appears, that of all those,
Who Christ, and his Religion, did oppose,
None should the mighty Secret yet disclose,
And hence we wish just reasoning may collect,
That of Impotence none can their suspect;
Since they were publick, and expos'd to sight,
Of Men, who 'gainst Conviction us'd to fight,
And Men well conversant in ev'ry Art
That nat'r'al Wit, or Study could impart.
And the like things repeated as was need,
Shew'd that these Works did not from chance proceed.

Besides th'effects were such as long did last;
When things by accident are quickly past.
These things with due Consideration weigh'd,
'Gainst which the Jews have no Objections made,
Their Force from something more than humane
Which either a good Spirit was, or bad:
The bad would never these great Truths attest,
By which their Empire here is so deprest,
And which prohibit their beloved Feast,

V.
Which Miracles cannot be ascrib'd to Natural
or Diabolical Efficacy, but proceeded mainly
from God.
Of the Truth of

Deeds, and Desires obscene; Experience shows,
That Demon all their Pomp and Worship lose,
Magick, and all their other Arts held vain,
Where e're Christ'sanity does footing gain:
Porphyry owns, Christ's Advent did impair
The Forces of those Princes of the Air.
Who can think Evil Spirits so unwise,
Where there no Honour or Advantage lies,
But great Disgrace and Detriment ensue,
Yet the same Actions still they should pursue?
Let is it to be thought it should agree
With the known Wisdom of the Deity,
And that extensive Goodness all Men see,
To suffer Men, guilty of nothing ill,
Devoted absolutely to his Will,
Such as all grant the Primitive Christians were,
To be trapp'd into a fatal Snare;
Most in their Lives unblam'd, and suffering pain.
That they a faultless Conscience might maintain;
But if you say these Deeds must be asigned
Unto some good, but secondary Mind;
Therein that they the Godhead pleas'd you own,
For all good Spirits look at that alone.
Not here those wondrous Works of Christ, so
Which no less Author than a God proclaim;
As with new Life informing Breathless Clay:
And who, besides, can of the Almighty say, by
He does, or suffers Wonders without cause:
For no wise Maker of well-founded Laws,
World without weighty Reason make their vain:
But then who can another Reason feign,
Than what our Saviour did himself declare:
That God thereby did Testimony bear Unto
the Christian Religion.

...to those sacred Doctrines which he taught; those that saw them, what else could be thought? when being such as we observ'd before, there was scandal to the God we adore, ...impious to believe, he would impose on men to perfectly resign'd as those was the cause why many of the Jews, ...he Moses for their constant Guide did chuse; but that time when Jesus here did move receiv'd him as a Matter from above, ...were the Nazarens and Ebi mites, jealous Asserters of the Jewish Rites.

Christ's Miracles like Confirmation have, upon his return to Life out of the Grave: this has not only been for Truth receiv'd at a chief Article to be believ'd, all who are Christ's is right profess. it, for certain needs, must be confess'd could not this matter of Faith have thought of the Men, who first Christ's Doctrine taught, and full persuasion in their Hearers wrought; it, evidently, this could not be have been without asserting what themselves had seen: one moderately wise, would e'er have chose Faith, which to such Dangers did expose, unless they had affirm'd it's Truth, who law is the great Foundation of the Christian Law; but that it always was affirm'd, is shown in other Writings, fully as their own, and, as in Books as clearly 'tis reveal'd, they to five hundred Witnesses appeal'd. Who law our Saviour come to Life again, but how durst any so appeal that feign? And
Of the Truth of

And who could on such Multitudes prevail,
To cheat the World with a fictitious Tale?
Nay were the Twelve all who had this maintaine'd;
They were know full Credit to have gain'd:
For no Man would for nothing be a Knave.
Honours 'tis sure thereby they could not have:
For those were at the absolute dispose
Of Jews and Heathens, who did them oppose:
Nor could they have by this encrease their store,
Thro' it they lost what they had gain'd before:
Nor could one benefit of Life, invite
To cheat the World with any cunning flight:
Their very preaching, as full well they knew,
To Labours, Hunger, Thirst, and Prisons drew:
Then Fame with their own Sect could new tempt

Plain Men, from all degrees of Pride exempt,
So many Inconveniences to beat,
For the thin diet of that popular Air;
Nor could they hope that Doctrine would succeed,
With Nature, still intent upon it's need,
When all Authority on Earth oppos'd;
But as they with God's sacred Promise clos'd,
This may be added; that whatever Fame
They might propound, by preaching up Christ's Name;

They had no expectation it could fail,
For, so with Clouds God's Purpose was o're,
They thought the World did to it's Period hate,
Which is in theirs, and other Writings plain.
The sole Objection which can yet remain,
Is that they dy'd for their Religion's sake:
Which no Man, that had duly weigh'd, would make;
the Christian Religion.

either their Religion true they thought, what they knew to be a Falsity, taught they not believ'd it to be best, y would not have forsaken all the rest, ong which Safety lay and Honour too, had profess'd, barely as 'twas true, es they that Profession needful knew: nothing else could save them from the Guilt, all the Blood through that Profession spilt: if they that believ'd, not true alone, best, and necessary for them to own, r the Founder's Death to be receiv'd ; s could not have obtain'd, had he receiv'd, laring his own rising from the Dead: Men whose Understandings were not fitt, ding their Expectations frustrate there, ult to that Faith still holy Reverence beat. n all Religions, chiefly Christ's, deny blemish sacred things with any Lie:igion therefore, such an one before, uld never this officious Lie procure.

Men besides were such, as their worst Foes r nothing, but simplicity expose: r had, such, Wit enough to well to sign, d who would do it for the sake of pain? rich that Profession certainly would gain: utmost Tortures Malign could invent, ny for this out of the World were sent: w much forever some might choose to bear, n an Opinion which they valu'd dear; her can imagine Men with Sense indu'd, e one alone, but a great multitude, could make themselves subject to certain Wood r what themselves had known to be untrue?

Bu
Of the Truth of

But then their Lives, and Writings, which they left, Shew that they were not of their Wits bereft. What may confirm the Evidence of those, Who the first Witnesses for Christ arose, Serves for St. Paul as much, who did declare, That rapt above the Regions of the Air, Whether with strengthened Rays of mortal sight, Or merely by an intellectual Light, The Soul, being separate from the Body's Chain, He saw where Christ does with his Father reign. All that the Jews could teach, he had acquired, Nor greater honour need to have defir'd, Than what he might expect in his old way: When on the other side, for this, he lay Expos'd to th'utmost hatred of his Friends, Nature depriv'd of all its darling ends, Travels, and Labours all his worldly Meed, And a reproachful death was to succeed.

V\Who can assent to proofs, to clear delay?

VII.

Answer to the Objection, that Christ's Resurrection seems impossible.

Unlesstis impossible he say, That is a contradiction does imply;
Which we of this may with good grounds deny. At the same time to be alive, and dead, Were contradictitious: but when life is fled, Back by the Power that gave't it to be brought, Can never sure impossible be thought: As Plato writes, to Eris this befell: Heraclides this does of a Woman tell: Of one Herodatus does this relate; And this, says Plutarch, was another's fate: Which shews that Woman-thought that it might be; If that 'twas possible, we then agree, For Christ to breath again with living breath, After its being extinguish'd once in death;
the Christian Religion.

And that 'twas so in fact so fully prov'd,
That it the Jewish Rabbi Bezai mov'd:
But as his Followers, and others, shew,
He held forth to the World a Doctrine new;
This must by needful Consequence be true,
Since he maintain'd 'twas by divine Command;
For with God's Justice it can no way stand,
Or Goodness either, to exalt so high
One, who in so momentous things would lie:
Had he been such an one, who would believe
That he the certain notice should receive
Both when, and how, he should from Life retire,
And have his Reins new fill'd with active Fire,
Himself declaring that all this was wrought,
For Confirmation of the Truths he taught?

These Arguments do from the Fact arise.
Let's come to what within the Doctrine lies:
He who believes, that God did all things make,
And care of his own Workmanship does take;
And thinks withal, how great is Humane Mind;
Unto what noble purposes design'd!
To be acquired by freedom of the Will,
In chusing either Moral Good, or Ill,
To close with the Rewards which so invite,
Or take the Penalties in endless Night,
Can't think all Worship should aside be laid,
Or that refuse which Jesus does persuade.
Not only this the Evidence of Fact,
Intrinsic Motives strongly this exact;
For no Religion ever yet arose,
Which did so excellent Rewards propose,
Or such a perfect Rule of Life did lay,
Or went on in so wonderful a way.

Here
Of the Truth of

IX.

For the Excellence of the Reward professed.

Here to begin with the Reward, the end,
Which in their Actions Men do first intend;
Tho' in the execution last 'tis seen:
Those Institutions Moses did bring in,
If we the Letter of the Law regard,
Beyond this Life did promise no Reward;
Rich Soil, a plentiful ensue of Store,
Conquest o'er all that Arms against them bore,
A vigorous old Age, and prospect clear
Of issue long the faintest Name to bear,
Were all that did, without thick Clouds appear,
From which the Wise alone themselves had wrought,
Through a long chain of recollective thought.
Hence Moses tho' the Sadducees receiv'd,
They nothing of a future state believ'd:
The wisest Grecians, who their Learning drew
From all Caldeans, or Egyptians, knew,
Conceiv'd some hopes of Life when this were out;
Yet still 'twas mingled with o'er-shad'wing doubt.
In the Socrateck Writings thus 'tis sound;
Nor do the Latins less with doubts abound:
Of Tully this, and Seneca may be said;
When to the Truth their Arguments have led,
They seem'd afraid with their own thoughts to close;
Which on fo fallible a ground arose,
That 'twould with Beasts as well as Men agree,
The consequence of which when some did see,
A Transmigration they of Souls did feign,
From Men to Beasts, from Beasts to Men again:
Nothing like Proof did 'e'er this recommend;
Yet it being evident Man has some end;
Some thought that Virtue was its own reward,
In Instances most perilous and hard;

That
the Christian Religion.

That that alone gives pleasure to the full,
The Wife being happy in the burning Bull:
But most Men saw thro' this so thin pretence,
A form of words against apparent sense;
As if the height of happiness could lie,
In dangers, Nature rob'd of all supply,
Paintings, and dissolutions at the last,
After a life in wasting torments past.
Others, who saw the vanity of this,
In gratifying Sense plac'd all their bliss:
But this the nature of Mankind deprest,
And humbled Man to the degree of Beast,
Extinguishing those gen'rous inbred Seeds,
Which carry him erect to noble Deeds.
In such incertainties Men groan'd about,
Till Christ in Charity remov'd the doubt;
The perfect knowledge of Man's end he taught,
Life without death, or pain, and happy beyond
thought.

And this not only for that part of Man,
For which some Ages a Conjecture ran,
If not Tradition, that it should remain,
After the being unloos'd from its Chain;
But that God would our Bodies spiri'tualize,
That they may to a joyant Communion rise;
And this with mighty Equity, since they,
As they the Sanctions of God's Laws obey,
Are often forc'd to bear with dol'rous Pain,
And Death at last, for all their Labour gain;
Wherefore some Compensation should remain:
Nor are the promis'd Joys so grossly low,
As were the chie Gest some dull Jews did know,
Perpetual Feasts, or that the more refin'd,
Refined Society with Woman-kind,
That powerful Lure fly Mahomet design'd:

These
Of the Truth of
These are peculiar to a Mortal State,
To cherish Life, or else to propagate.
Vigour in Bodies never to abate,
Beauty beyond what in the Stars does shine,
Knowledge of God, and Providence Divine,
A mind with steady light, without one cloud
Of baleful Error, or reserve to shroud,
Perfect tranquillity of settled wills,
While God himself the Soul with Raptures fills,
Th' extatick Soul wholly imployd in Praise,
And admiration which no time decays;
This is the happiness, which Christ declares,
Which he much undervalues that compares.

X.

Some urge a difficulty yet unsolov'd,
How Bodies should, after their being dissolv'd,
Have all their scatt'red Particles agen,
And make the self-same individual Men.
But by their search Philosophers can tell,
That what eré changes have in things befal,
The matter of them still continues fit
Of sev'ral different Species to admit,
How far sooner they may be disjoind,
Th' Almighty can their Receptacles find,
And into the same mass together bind.
Things of like kind the Chymists can unite,
Of him who made the World shall we deny't?
If into Nature's common works we look,
We find where things have different Species took,
To the first form they oft again return;
As we by sev'ral sorts of Seeds discern.
Nor yet a Knot more difficult to untie,
In human Bodies eat by Beasts does lie,
And they again for Men becoming food,
This may concerning them be understood;
the Christian Religion.

Of what we eat 'tis but a little part,
Which Nature to our Substance does convert,
Most, Excrement, or such accesion, proves,
As Phlegm, or Choler, which with ease removes;
Diseases, inward Heat, and outward Air,
Much, ev'n of that which nourishes, impair:
Which being so; what should our God impede,
Who of mute Creatures still prefers the breed,
Of human Bodies so much care to take,
That what of theirs does food for others make,
No more of added substance should produce,
Than Poison, or the Medicines which we use?
And this the rather, since we plainly see,
Man's Flesh by Nature don't for Food agree,
But yet for once, let us admit it were.
And part of th'last must to the first repair,
To constitute the Man which was before;
Yet this Objection does not press the more;
For the same Person it may well be thought,
The back to th'first some Particles are brought;
No less Mutations ev'n in Life are wrought.
In Worms we may discover little Flies,
In Plants, and Wine, a secret Virtue lies,
Which the same Substance after waste supplies.
Of the like kind we might name many more,
And shall we think the God whom we adore,
Can't make a Body, tho dissolv'd, the same?
Men we are are sure, for Learning great in Fame,
Not only this as possible receiv'd;
But that 'twould be in future times believ'd.
This did Caldean Zoroaster own,
And scarce one Stoick was against it known:
Peripatetick Thoerampus too,
In his Researches did this thought pursue.
Of the Truth of

The second Proof, that Christ’s Religion’s best,
Is in the holy Rules it gives, express:
All others that have been, or can be fram’d,
Compar’d with this, deserve to be disclaim’d,
Both for the Worship of the Deity,
And every Office which in Life does lie.
The Cruelty of the old Pagan Rites,
Is fully seen, in what their Porph’ry writes:
And where e’re late discov’ries any find,
They appear to be unworthy of Mankind.
In almost ev’ry place a Notion ran,
That God’s were pacify’d by Blood of Man,
Nor Grecian Learning, nor the Roman Law,
Did it’s Authority from this withdraw:
The bloody Bacchanales’ ans this may prove,
And the warm Sacrifice to Lat’al Jove,
Their Cere’al Mysteries, most sacred held,
With all sorts of Obscenities were fill’d;
As was most visible to ev’ry sight,
When their Arcana were expos’d to Light:
Clement of Alexand’ra this does blame,
With other Authors of undoubted Fame:
Grave Cato was atham’d of those lewd Plays,
With which they kept their Consecrated Days.
But the Religion of the Jews, indeed,
Allow’d no wicked or dishonest Deed;
Yet loads of Ceremonies it enjoyn’d,
That People, to Idolatry inclin’d,
By no means tending to improve the Mind;
Merely their own Will-worship to restrain;
Hence were the Beasts in Sacrifices slain:
Their painful circumcising the Foreskin:
And counting Work on the seventh day a Sin,
With the prohibiting some sorts of Meat:
When cunning Mahomet set up his Cheat;

This
the Christian Religion.

This was a Pattern unto his design:
A Law he added to abstain from Wine.
But that Religion which to Christ we owe,
Does how we should the Godhead worship, show;
That we must offer to the purest Mind,
What is, as much as may be, of the kind, (quires;
And Works good in themselves: whence he re-
Not Circumcision of the Flesh, but of Desires:
Our Hands from ev'ry Work not to withdraw;
But what is contrary to the justest Law:
Not for our Sins with Blood of Beasts to atone,
But, if the Truth require, to yield our own.
To think our God himself has Debtor made,
For whatsoe'er to help the poor is paid:
Not to abstain from certain kinds of Meat,
But with fit Moderation any eat,
Such as we find unto our Health is due:
Sometimes with Fasts the Body to subdue,
That it may be more subject to the Mind,
To the pursuit of things sublime, enclined.
But the chief Proof of our Religion's shown,
To lie in pious Trust of God alone,
Thro' which devout wholly to his Will,
We wait when he'll his purposes fulfil,
With certain Faith, a pledge of future things,
Whence lively Hope with solid Pleasure springs,
With an exalted Love, sincerely true,
Not only of our God, but Neighbour too:
Hence we obey not out of servile fear,
But that we him may please whom we revere,
Looking that as his Sons he'll us regard,
And with Paternal Blessings at the last reward.
We're farther taught, unto our God to pray,
Not for that Wealth, which must in time decay,
Of the Truth of
Honours, or other things, too often found
To Men's chief Inelicity 't'abound:
In the first place God's Glory to desire,
But of those perishing things what Nature does
However trusting Providence Divine, (require;
To which we should wholly our selves resign.
But then to think no Labour is too great,
In following what tends to th'immortal State,
Pardon of Sins, and God's afflicting Grace,
That thro' all hazards we may Truth embrace.
This Worship Christ in his Religi'on taught,
Than which none can of God be worthier thought.

And, suitable to this, you that will find,
Which with relation unto Man's enjoyment.
Mahomet's way, brought forth, and spread by
Breaths nothing else but terrible Alarms: (Arms,
So the Laconic, which the Greeks commend,
And th'Oracle approv'd, to this does tend;
Which Aristotle both observes, and blames;
Yet War against Barbarians just proclaims,
As if 'twere natural; when o'th'other side,
By Nature we to Friendship's Laws are ty'd:
What more unequal than when Skin for Skin
Is pay'd, where ever civil Rule has bin; (in,
When Slaughter takes whole bleeding Nations
Such Acts as glorious Men are proud to own,
And hence their Heads triumphant Lawrels crown.
War, oft unjust, procur'd the mighty Name
To Rome, that City scatter'd so by Fame:
What but their Glory, and unwieldy Might,
Made them 'gainst Cyprus, and Sardinia fight?
In general, as the best Historians write,
No Nations look'd on robbing as a fault,
When from beyond their Confines Spoils were brought:

That
the Christian Religion.

That to revenge a Wrong a Vertue was,
Did with the Stacyriff, and Tully, pass.
The Gladiators mutilating Fights
The Pagans us'd in publick, for Delights;
And their own Children Men did oft expose.
That Discipline, with which the Jews do close,
Better, and much more holy does appear;
Yet, even that, with many things does bear,
Or rather grants, which give their Passions force;
As using 'gainst sev'n Cities no remorse,
With which their licence, how're not content,
They think't of all who differ from them meant;
And hence they hate all Men of other ways;
The Jew now curses Christ'sians when he prays:
Their Law allow'd to make Returns of Pain;
An Hom'icide might by a private hand be slain,
When to the dead th'Avenger was of kin;
But such return Christ's Law has made a Sin:
Nor should we in our Actions imitate,
What shewn in others we most justly hate:
In the first place to help the good w'are taught,
And like our God, to benefit the naught,
God who has giv'n in common to Mankind,
The Sun, the stary Hoft, Air, Shours and Wind.

Nothing does more the care of Laws best,
Than th'union which does the two Sexes knit:
No wonder that the Pagans this did sligh:
Since of th'Adulteries, and Rapes they Write,
In which the Gods they worship'd did delight:
Nay by th'example of the Gods they prove,
That Male with Male may do the Act of Love:
For this cause with the Gods have been enroll'd
Antinuous lately, Ganymed of old.

XIII.

Of the Conjun.
ction of Men
and Women.
Of the Truth of

This with Mahometans is usual known; Sine\text{\textit{f\text{\textit{s}}}}{\text{\textit{t}}}, others too, for lawful own. Grec\text{\textit{i\text{\textit{a}}}n} Philosophers much Art do use, Under an honest name that Vice t'excuse, And these whole Cities render'd common sense, While they Community of Women prais'd; When yet indulgent Nature seems t'have rais'd A conjugal Affection, ev'n with Brutes: How much more equal is't, t'avoid Disputes, That the more holy Creature, Man, proceed, From an united Love, and unmixt Seed? Left all Paternal Care, and Filial Love, But empty useless names on Earth should prove. The Jewish Law to check Uncleaness strives; But yet too plainly yeilds one many Wives, And, for small causes, gives the Husband leave To be divorce'd from one he did receive: This at this day Mahometans maintain, Among the Greeks, and Latines, did so reign, That the Lacon\text{\textit{i\text{\textit{a}}}n} would let out their Wives, And this reproach, ev'n Cato's Fame survives. But by that perfect Law Christ did perwade, The Ax unto the very Root is laid. Who does a Woman's Chastity invade, Or but commits with a lascivious Eye, Can by no means the Imputation fly, Before the great Discerner of the Mind, Who, as 'twas done, judges what was design'd: And, since true Friendship does in Union lie, Body, as well as Soul, to one would tie, And this is much more profitable known, For bringing up the Children which we own. Few Ethnicks were contented with one Wife: The Romans, thus, and Germans, led their Life, The
the Christian Religion.

Christians thus; that as the Wife's desire
in the Man, she should have his entire;
the affairs at home may well proceed;
the different Ministries would discord breed.

and come to th' use of things which pass for

Ethnicks Theft, as criminal, n'erewwith

stood:

his Egyptian, Spartan, licence had;
not this, but in private men, forbid;
chiefest business of the Publick 'twas;
which made their Orator that Sarcasm palls,
if they should to all their own restore;
'd live in Cottages, as heretofore,

this was the Jewish Law severe;
did with Usury to Strangers bear:

it to suit their Genus did strain,
valu'd their Religion by their Gain.

it did Injustice totally restrain;

about enquiring who the persons were:

for frail things forbade all carking care;
minds being unfit for two desires,

of which all of the Man requires,
of them prompting him in severall ways.

several cares, which Riches keep, as well as raise,
got so much servitude, and constant pain,

leaves away the pleasure of the gain,

so little cost and diligence, acquires,

several, and easie things, Nature desires;

if indulgent Heav'n affords us more,

need not throw away an useless store,

some Philosophers have done before;

without profit it at home retain,

say it out in things profusely vain:

But
Of the Truth of

But we are taught it nobly to apply,
While we the wants of those that need supply,
Giving, or lending, as those well becomes,
Who know they are but Stewards of their Sums,
Plac'd in their hands by God, but to dispence,
Yet they true Treasures may obtain from thence;
What's well laid out, God takes as to him paid,
And makes returns which nothing can invade.
Hence Liberty, next to divine,
Did in the practice of first Christ's ans shine,
The farthest parts of Greece help'd Palestine;
As if the World were all one Familie.
But in the Law we may this Caut'ion see;
We should beware of looking for our pay
At other hands, than his to whom we pray;
Left we desflow'r the Bene't we do,
Whilst Profit, or Vain-glory we pursue:
And left, as 'tis too common, we pretend,
That we should want our selves what we should
That Age and Accidents come on to saft,
That 'twill not for our own Occasions last;
The Law does promise a divine Supply,
For those who with its lib'ral Rule comply:
And that we may the more in God confide,
Bids us observe how well he does provide
For th' animal, and vegetable kind:
And we think meanly of the Sov'raign Mind,
If we distrust his Word without a Pawn,
As if he were a Man whose Credit's gone.

XV.

of Swearing.

Forswearing is forbid by other Laws:
By this, to swear at all, without just cause;
And such Veracity it does require,
That if 'twere kept, we need no Oaths require.
the Christian Religion.

In this Religion we shall find amus'd,
What-c're of Excellent has ever past,
In Sentences, or Writings of the Wise,
Besides the San'dion added from the Skys.
In what a moving manner does this teach
A modesty in actions, and in speech,
Temperance, Goodness, honest deeds, and mind,
Prudence, with ev'ry office of Mankind;
What is from Magistrates, and Subjects, due,
From Parents, Children, Servants, Masters too,
And what where Mar'sage-rites make one of two:
Often it does the needful Rule repeat,
Against what with such specious shews do's cheat,
 Honour and Glory, which have past for brave
With Greeks and Romans, most reputed grave:
But then the Summary of all does prove,
That we should worship him through whom
we move,
And as our very selves, our Neighbours love;
That is, should never fail for them to act,
What for our selves we should be sure t'exact.
But some may urge against those Verities,
The mighty oppositions that arise
Among Professors of Christ's holy Name;
The multitudes of Sects themselves proclaim.

Yet this a ready answer may receive:
That in all arts we may the same perceive;
Either thro' imbecility of mind,
Or that to parties they're too much inclin'd:
Yet these are limit't to certain bounds,
Which in their controversies serve for grounds,
On which each his own Argument would build;
And thus the Men in Mathematicks-skil'd,
Of the Truth of

Have heats about the making Circles square : When 'tis as evident that none e'er were. Whether if equals be from equals ta'en, That is not equal which does yet remain. In Physicks, Med'cine, other Arts beside, This difference, and agreement, is descryd: Nor does variety of opinions, known Among the Men who Christ's Religion own, Hinder at all but that they may agree, In what we the chief Rules of living see, Those generous Principles, before express, Which recommend it's worth above the rest. And even this it's certainty proclaims: That they, whom warm dissension most inflame, That he commanded these never deny, E'ven they who will not with his Law comply. If any yet, to contradict delight, 'Tis questioning whether the Snow be white; For as the Error, here, Scape can reful, An universal concord, these can tell, Among all Christians that have ever wrote, Or from the first to last Christ's Doctrine taught, To which some by their deaths have Attestation brought.

That they did these for their Religion own, To equal Judges is as clearly shown, As 'tis that Zenophon did; or Plato, write, What does this Age under their names delight? Who wrote what we to Socrates ascribe, Or Zeno, Founder of the Stoick Tribe.

A third rich Magazine of Motives lies, For the embracing Christian Verities, I'm admirable way in which it was taught, And to so far extended Regions brought;
the Christian Religion.

This brings us to the Author of the Rules,
The chiefest Masters of the Greæian Schools,
Confess they nothing with assurance tell,
And fancy'd Truth lay bury'd in a Well,
Our Minds they thought were dim at things divine,
As th' Eyes of Owls when the bright Sun does shine.

Besides, some Vice the best of them did taint,
Some with gross flattery their Princes paint,
Some Brothel's lov'd, and Acts'ions of the dark,
Others with Cynick Impudence would bark;
Clear Proof of their contentious Tempers springs,
From quarrels about words, and trifling things.
In sacred Worship they're discover'd cold;
Since they who but one Deity did hold,
Put mighty flights on him they did adore,
Giving that very Worship unto more,
Such as they knew had no Divinitie,
Thinking from Blame the publick use would free.
Nor were they sure what need Vertue should have,
And this they 'd Socrates, when nigh his Grave.

Mahomet, Author of far spreading Rites,
As is confess by his own Prophets,
Diffus'd in Laxity and Lust did live,
Not left he the least earnest to believe,
That the Rewards he promis'd shall be found,
Perpetual Feasts and Lusts for ever crown'd;
When his own Body ne'er had Life again,
And does intomb'd at Mecca still remain.
Moses who had the Jews divinely taught,
Tho' a brave Man, yet was not free from fault;
When God would send him to th' Egyptian Land,
He did too long the Embassy with land;
And
Of the Truth of

And when God promis'd Water from the Rock,
He thought 'twas his Credulity to mock,
And he himself scarce any thing enjoy'd,
Of all that has his Foll'owers Faith employ'd,
In desert places with their Factions tir'd,
Himself debar'd entering the Land desir'd.
That Christ was sinless his Disciples taught,
Nor was one Proof against it ever brought;
He was th'Example to the Rules he gave,
And executed all that God would have;
Patient of Injuries, and Torments too,
As on the Cross he did most fully shew;
A lover of Mankind, and ev'n of thosc,
Who to that cruel Death did him expose;
Ev'n for those Miscre'ants he to God did pray,
Nor did he to his Foll'wers Promise pay,
In which himself had not first led the way,
As is not only said, but clearly prov'd.
His Visitt, after being from Life remov'd,
How many were there that at large declar'd,
Who him had touch'd, as well as seen, and heard?
The Twelve were Witnesses when he did rise,
And was receiv'd within the joyful Skies,
Where, as appears, a Pow'r suprem he gain'd,
From which they whom he left behind obtain'd,
Not only Tongues which they were never taught,
But Pow'r for other things, which Nature never

All which he promis'd when he left this Life,
And which should silence ev'ry doubtful Strife;
Whether he will, or's able to make good,
What he has promis'd for our Spiritual Food.
And hence we gather his Religion's best,
That he perform'd himself what e're he profet,
And was of his own Promises possess'd.
the Christian Religion.

If then we view his Doctrine ith" effects;
They’re such, that either God his World neglects;
Or we must think the Doctrine from above.
Nothing more worthy of God’s care does prove,
Than that what’s best should be the farthest spread.
And this of Christ’s Religion may be said,
’Tis taught thro’ Europe, and ev’n farthest North;
All Asia, with its Islands, know its worth;
Egyptians, Ethiopians, Africans,
Are joyn’d in this with the Americans:
Nor has’t been only late, but long ago,
As Hist’ries of succesive Ages shew.
The Books of Christians, Acts of Synods too:
Among Barbarians a Tradition’s known,
Of Miracles by some Apostles known;
The Lives and Journeys are with them express’d,
Of Thomas, Andrew, and some of the rest.
Clement, Tertullian, and others note,
That Britain, Germans, places most remote,
Did, in their time, Christianity embrace.
What other Worship e’re reach’d such a space?
If you say th’ Eshnicks rival in this Fame:
It is not one Religion, but one Name.
Nor ever all of them worship’d the same;
Some Stars, the Elements some did adore,
Some Animals, some what no subsistence bore,
Nor did they the same Law, or Master own.
The Jews, a scatter’d People, were but one;
Nor has their Law been much observ’d to spread,
Since Christ his beams of Truth divine did shed.
Many the Rules of Mahomet obey;
Yet Christians live among them of that way,
And often are more numerous than they:
When in some places where they Christ receive,
Not one Mahometan is known to live.

Men
Of the Church of

Men readily enough Examples take
From Kings, and others who great Figures make,
Especially if Law, and Force, they add;
Hence their encrease th'Etchmick, and Turkish had:
But they, who Christ's Religion first professed,
Nothing of Empire, or of Wealth, possess,
As humble in their Fortunes, as in Mind,
Follow'd mean Trades, to which they'd been
design'd:

Yet in the space of thirty Years, scarce more.
They this dispers'd, the Roman Empire o'er;
And to the Parthians this, and Indiens bore:
And for these Ages only private hands
Did carry on the preaching Christ's Commands,
Without external Promises, or Threats,
Nor ever against the Authority of States;
Yet before Constantine in Christ he believ'd,
Thro' most o' th' Roman World he was receiv'd.
Who with the Grecians preach'd up Moral rules:

For other Arts were famous in the Schools,
Plato for the Art of measuring the Earth,
Peripatetics how the growth, and birth,
Of Animals, and Plants, did Lectures read,
And with what subtiles Disputes proceed.
The Stoicks in their labour'd Logicks shew,
The Pythagori ans the Art of Numbers knew:
Plato, and Zenophon, could charm the Sense,
So Theophrastus, with their Eloquence:
But they who first the Christian Doctrine taught,
By no such art upon their Hearers wrought,
Their Speech was simple, without any shore,
They only did in downright terms declare,
What their great Master gave them in command,
And how the Threats and Promises did stand.
the Christian Religion.

This progress ne're had been from that alone, But Mir'cles or God's Blessing we must own, Or both, to carry it so strangely on.

This may be added here, concerning those Who first with Christianity did close; They were not in all other Rites untaught, So with more ease to that Religion brought; Much less were they brought up in any way, Which might dispose them Christ for Lord to obey. While Turks and Pagans, and the stubborn Jews, Had something previous, helping them to chuse: The last, their Circumcision had before, And learnt only one Deity t'adore, Which made them ready Moses to receive: While they, who in Christ Jesus did believe, Had many Obstacles which would withdraw, Cus'tom a second Nature, humane Law, Parents Authority, all urg'd t'have kept The way in which their grave Fore-Fathers kept; Being Jews or Heathens bred, to to remain, Add to all this the certainty of Pain, Which they by that Profession were to gain, Pain, which by Nature all Men would refuse, Nor readily would what procures it chuse. The Christians long debarr'd from Honours were, Mules, Confiscations, Exiles hard to bear, Were to be accounted their appointed share: These things were light, into the Balance cast, With Tortures but too exquisite to last, Cruel as witty Malice could invent; And Life was often in the Conflict spent. As the Histor'ians of those times have wrote, So many Deaths, no Famine, Plague, or War, has brought.
Of the Truth of

Nor were they with the common Deaths to strive;
But put into consuming Flames alive,
Or look'd for Crucifixion, and the like,
Reading, or thoughts of which, with Horror
strike:

Thro' out the Roman Empire these did last,
Till their Religion Constantine embrac'd,
Without them but short intervals were part:
Elsewhere they did continue longer still:
Yet all the blood they did so freely spill,
The Church, but with more living seed did fill,
And thus the more was scattered, more did spring:
If other Rites into the Scales we bring,
The Greeks and other Heathens, us'd the most
Of their admir'd Philosophers to boast,
Bate Socrates, Gymnosophists a few,
Scarce others dying for their way can shew,
And who that thinks can well deny of these,
That in their Deaths the hope of praise did please;
They thought it glorious to survive in Fame,
And have Posterity their Deaths proclaim.
While many suff'ring for the Christian Name,
Were Men in Fortunes, and Ambition low,
That such Men were, their Neighbours scarce did
know,

Women, and tender Virgins, gentle Youths,
With their last Blood bore witness to these Truths;
Who can believe of these, a vain desire,
Or hope of lasting Fame, to this should fire?
Besides our Martyrologies contain,
But a small part of those who thus were slain,
And rarely can the Jews a Martyr boast,
Beyond Antiochus his time at most,
Since Christ's Religion is for this the best,
Is it not to be chose before the rest?

When
the Christian Religion.

When the vast Multitudes we duly weigh,
Who did their Lives for this Religion pay,
Each Sex, each sort of Men, in ev'ry Age,
We needs must think some pow'rful cause t'engage;
And what to so great constancy could move,
But Truth, and th' holy Spirit from above?
If by the Arguments already brought,
In some Conviction is not wholly wrought:
Let them consider, Proofs in sev'r al ways,
As is the nature of the thing, one weighs;
One sort does with the Mathematicks suit,
Another when in Physicks we dispute,
One when for Action we would Counsel take,
Diff'rent when Fact does th' only question make:
And this is always yielded by the Wife,
When no exception against the Witness lies:
And if we will not this for Proof admit,
We all the use of History must quit,
The most approved Medicines we must loose,
That Piety too, which does its self diffuse
Where ever Parents are, and Children, known,
For want of Evidence must needs be gone.
It is the pleasure of the Pow'r most high,
The things wherein he'd have our Faith to lie,
That our Obedience it's Reward may gain,
Should not appear so evidently plain,
As things which Sense or Demonstration shew;
Yet as much Light should carry, as is due
For raising a most firm belief, in those,
Who will not pertinaciously oppose;
Hence we the Gospel as a Touch-stone find,
To try and prove which is the upright Mind,
For since so many good, so many wise,
Embrac'd so highly [penal] Verities;

E 3
Of the Truth of
It shews that other’s Incredulitie,
Never from a defect of Proofs can be,
But that they would not have that pass for true,
Which their Affectiions did so much eschew,
That it was hard, with a regardles Eye
To suffer all that glitters here, to lie; (hold
Which needs must be, if they for Truth would
All that has been concerning Jesus told,
And therefore would obey the Rules he gave;
An Evidence for this herein we have,
These, many Histories for true receive,
Which they on bare Authority believe,
Of which no Foot-steps at this day are known.
As for the History of Christ, are shown:
This in the Jews Confessiions we may trace,
And the Assemblies which these Truths embrace,
Of which some cause we cannot but assign;
Nor can’t be any thing below divine:
No humane force could it so long maintain,
And such remote and spreading Conquests gain:
This could proceed from Miracles alone,
But if we are resolv’d them to disown,
That without them it should such force acquire,
Is what we ought much rather to admire.

LIB. III.

I.
For the Authority of the Books of the New Covenant.

HE whom these Arguments, or others, move
As true, and best, Christianity t’approve,
Would be the knowledge of it’s Precepts gain,
Must search those sacred Scriptures which obtain

The
The Christian Religion.

The name of Testaments, or Covenant, new.
Where we the whole of this Religion view
For this we should not scruple to receive.
What Christians always hold that they believed;
To Men of ev'ry Sect we credit pay,
As to the Books they shew us of their way:
And thus the Mediator is justly thought,
To shew what Doctrines Mahomet has taught.

Since then the Truth of Christ's Religion's known;
And that lies in the Books the Christians own;
If, any a more special proof require,
We then't'admit this equal rule, desire,
That they who any writing will oppose,
With which for several Ages Men did close,
Are bound those Arguments first to maintain.
Which may impeach the Credit that did gain,
Till which, of full Authority it must remain.

The Books in which no Christians disagree,
To which some certain Names affix we see,
To have been wrote by those whose Names they are.
The Writers of succeeding times declare; (bear,
Thus Justin, Irenaeus, Celsus, there;
With other Men of Ages that ensue,
That all the sacred Books were titled true.
Add farther, as Terrulpus does declare.
Some of the Originals in his time were fair:
And ev'ry Christian Church the same did own,
Ev'n before Councils to unite them, known.
Nor did the Jews, or Pagans, ever doubt, (bod).
But they were theirs; whose Names they bear a-
judging content in terms by no means dark,
That Peter, Paul, with Matthew, Luke, and Mark,

E 4

Were
Of the Truth of

Were Authors of those Books which bear their Names;
Thus he but his own want of Wit proclaims,
Who doubts of what both Greeks and Romans thought,

T'have been by Homer, or grave Virgil, wrote:
More on that Evidence should we rely,
Which almost ev'ry Nation does supply.

Yet does the Volume now in use, contain Books, which at first did not like Credit gain;
Thus 'twas with one which we St. Peter's call,
The same did those of James and Jude befall:
And thus with two, which the like late consent,
From John, the Elder sty'd, supposes sent.
Th' Apocalypse as doubtful has been thought,
And the Epistle to the Hebrews wrote:
How' er that many Churches them receiv'd,
And sac'd their Authority believ'd,
Appears, in that Christi'ans who first did write,
Them, as of such Authority, do cite;
Which may in reason well be thought to shew;
Of some, nothing at first, same Churches knew;

How're the Truth being set in a clear light,
They did with others in their use unite:
Nor was there any cause in these to cheat;
For without them, the System were compleat,
The self-same Doctrine they do but repeat.

Nor should th' Epistle to the Hebrews wrote;
Or two reputed John, be spurious thought,
Or the Apocalypse of doubtful Fame
Twixt John the Apostle, and one of his Name:

The
the Christian Religion.

The quality of Books is most esteem'd:
Some Histories have been authentick deem'd,
Whole Authors never did themselves declare;
Thus the Account o'th' Alexandrian War,
Does with a gen'ral Reputation pass,
Since part of what he writes the Author plainly
So since the Authors of the Books we cite,
Liv'd in the very times of which they write,
And as they add themselves, partakers were
Of Gifts, which fell to an Apostle's share;
It is enough our full belief to gain:
If any say these qualities they reign,
And to some Books fictitious names did give:
They urge what none that think can 'e're believe;
As if who preach up Truth, and Piety,
Should venture without any cause to lie,
Which not all good Men only, would refuse,
But to forbid by Law the Romans chuse.

The Books which the new Cov'nant, then,
declare,
Were doubtless wrote by them, whose Names
they bear.
Or such, at least, as they themselves profess:
And, what there is like reason to confess,
The things of which they wrote the Authors
Nor could defire to mix what was untrue: (knew,
For Falshood we no other grounds receive,
Than Ign'rance, or intention to deceive. (those,
Matthew, John, Peter, Jude, were known of
Whom Christ attest his words, and Actions
chose;
And therefore needs must know the things they
And this to James may be apply'd as well, (tell,

Being
Of the Truth of
Being an Apostle, or to Christ of kin,
And Bishop of Jerusalem had bin,
Advanc'd by the Apostles to that See.
St. Paul from Error must have been as free,
When what he learn'd from Christ he did declare,
Being rapt above the Regions of the Air:
To him, or Luke, who always clos'd his side,
For what Christ did, Faith ought not be deny'd:
That Luke did know, 'tis easy to suppose,
What of our Saviour's Life and Death he shows;
Being born hard by, and having travel'd o' the
The places Christ had visited before,
And had, Eye-witnesses of what he writes
Often consult'd, as himself recites;
Many with whom he Friendship did contract
Besides Apostles, could attest the Fact:
Some whose Diseases at Christ's word had fled,
Who saw him living after being dead.
If Tacitus, and Suetonius, are believ'd,
In things which happ'n'd long before they liv'd,
Because they're diligent Enquirers thought;
Rather should one esteem what Luke has wrote.
Of Mark a constant Fame is known to pass,
That he Companion to St. Peter was,
And what he wrote should have the like esteem,
As if St. Peter dictated to him:
And farther hardly any thing is these,
But what th' Apostles Writings do declare:
Nor could the Writer of the things (a) reveal'd,
When God large folds of Providence unfold'd,
Have been impo'd upon in what he saw;
Or he, who wrote (b) to them o' the Jewish Law,
In what he says from th' holy Spirit came,
Or the Apostles witnessing the same.
the Christian Religion.

That they to cheat with Lies could not design,
Mention'd before, we always should subjoin,
When we would reinforce that Law divine,
Which from our preaching King at first was spread,
With his return to life from being dead.
Who Witnesses of ill intent'ion blame,
The grounds of such their ill intent'ion name;
Here can be none: If any say they reign,
That they the cause they manage'd might maintain,
For such a cause why should they so contend,
Which no advantage here could recommend?
Nor did they any dangers thereby then,
For that alone they did all hazards run,
And, as to worldly Goods, were quite undone:
No Man can therefore think they chose this cause,
But in obedience to God's holy Laws;
Which would not have encourag'd Fallcies,
Chiefly in that wherein Salvation lies,
So ill a charge these things with strength oppose;
The pious Doctrines which they did propose,
Their Lives unspotted, and so free from blame,
That their worst foes their Ign'rance only name,
No proper Parent of invented tale:
To shew their faithfulness this should not fail,
That their own faults they leave upon record,
That all forlook, and Peter thrice deni'd their (Lord.

But God himself did witness to them bear,
Whilst he by Wonders did their Truth declare;
On which since they, and all Men of their way,
Such mighty stress with such assurance lay,
And to the Publick Scrutiny advance
The Times, and Places, ev'ry Circumstance;
The Magistrates concern'd, did they so please,
The truth or falshood might have lesart with ease.

This
Of the Truth of

This too th' allaying hand of Heav'n do's shew,
That many spake the Tongues they never knew,
And Pains fed suddenly in publick view.
Nor were they terrifi'd from what they preft,
To think the ruling Jews were foes profefl,
Nor were the Romans less enclin'd to close
With what might them for Novelties expose.
Nay Jews and Pagans; of the Times most nigh,
That these had Wonders wrought durst not deny.
St. Peter's Mir'cles Phlegon does report,
An Annalist o'th' Emp'ror Adrian's Court:
And Christians pleading before any State,
Urge all these facts, as being past debate:
That at the Tombs of Martyrs there remain'd
A wondrous Pow'r, they publickly maintain'd;
And that throughout some Ages it did laft;
Which if untrue, they might with shame be cast,
When they were put to justify their Cause,
Before Dispensers of the Civil Laws:
So frequent were the Prodigies there wrought,
Of them such uncontroff'd Proofs were brought;
As even Porphyry himself confecr.
With what's already said we well might rest;
Yet there's an heap of Arguments behind,
Which may commend these Books to a serious
mind.

In them are many things plainly fore-shown,
Which no Man could by natural skill have known
Th' event declaring them from God alone.
As the (a) large-sudden-spreading of that way,
And that (b) no Age should see its pow'r decay,
That it should (c) be rejected by the Jews,
While Gentiles far remote obedience chuse:

VIII.
The Truth of the Writings confirmed, in that they contain many things which the Event has prov'd to be reveal'd from Heaven.


That
the Christian Religion.

That 'twould the hatred of the (d) Jews procured (d) Mat. 16:14.
What Cruelties for Christ's Name Men should en-
The (e) siege, and d/ifinal ruin to invade (due;
That (f) City, where the Jews their Worship paid;
That there the Temple should be left forlorn,
With the (g) Calamities still to be born.
Add here, if God regard our mortal state,
Chiefly in what 'his Worship does relate,
He cannot suffer Errors to abound,
Where nothing but his Honour Men propound.

But for the sacred Books this proof supplies;
That of all Christian Sects did e're arise,
Scarce any has been found that these denies.
Some the whole Volume for authentick take,
And they who doubts concerning any make,
Others receive which do with them agree;
When yet we such warm differences see,
That what one Party for their Rule have chose,
Others would shun, if 'twere but to oppose.

Indeed some Christians did those Books disown,
Which were against their darling notions known,
Either, who, out of hatred to the Jews,
Their God, and Law, did with reproaches use,
Or, fearing Evils Christians were to bear,
Themselves deceitfully did Jesus declare.
But by all Christians these abandon'd were;
While, as they were by the Apostles taught.
No differences unkind Divisions wrought,
So they did not from Piety withdraw:
These, who adult'reate thus the Christi'an Law,
May meet Conviction in what's said above,
Where that there is (c) one Deity we prove,
(c) Lib. 1.

Who
Of the Truth of

(b) Lib. 1. 5-6. Who into being (b) the Creation spake:
   Nay, ev'n the Books they for authentick take;
   Shew that the Hebrew God did all things make;

(c) Exod. 33. 19. He was by Moses represented (e) good,
   But is thro' Jesu better understood.
   The other sort of Men we will confute,
   Where we against the real Jews dispute.
   In the mean' while this wonderful may seem,
   That with these Men St. Paul has no esteem:
   More Churches no Apostle did erect,
   And those stupendous Works he did effect.
   Were then by Christians publickly maintain'd,
   When they might be discover'd if they feign'd;
   If it be granted Miracles he wrought,
   What colourable ground can then be brought,
   We should his heavenly Visions disbelieve;
   Or what he says, he did from Christ receive?
   But if on Christ he did so much attend;
   That he would nothing teach him to offend;
   Durst he have ventur'd with a lie to impose?
   His Doctrine most condemn'd, who can oppose;
   Where, from their Ritu'al, Jesu discharg'd he shows?

(d) Phil. 3. 5. He (d) Circumcision did before endure:

(e) Acts 16. 3. (e) Some voluntary Proofs in him, they saw
   Of def'rance pay'd into the Jewish Law;

(f) 2 Cor. 12. 10. And to more (f) hardships did for Christ aspire;
   Than did the Rigor of that Law require:
   These things, by no means pleasing to the Ear,
   He did to all his Followers declare;
   Instead of one, the Jews no more afford;

(g) 1 Tim. 4. 5. To keep all days for (g) Sabbaths to the Lord;

(b) 2 Cor. 6. 4. (b) Instead of some small charge did them befall,
   To bear with equal Mind the loss of all;
   And
the Christian Religion.

And for the Blood of Beasts, they us’d to lay,
Our own an Offering to our God to pay.
Nay he affirms, that hands with him were joyn’d.
By (i) Peter, John, and James, all of one Mind; (ii) Gal. 4. 9.
Had it been false, he durst not this proclaim,
When they might have deny’d it to his shame.
Excepting then, those we before observ’d,
Who scarce to bear the Christian Name deserv’d.
The manifest consent of all beside,
Who with these Books, as sacred, have compli’d,
Joyn’d to the Miracles their Writers wrought,
And God’s (k) peculiar care of such things taught; (k) Sect. 9.
Should be enough to quiet doubting Minds;
When for all Histories of other kinds,
Which are not of such Proofs as these possess.
No man will their Authority contest,
Unless some Reason do against them weigh,
Which none, that well considers, here can say.

If any say these Books such things contain
Which, as impossible, no Credit gain’t;
It soon appears that the Objection’s vain.
(1) What have I shown above the Pow’r of the most High
In things that carry no (d) Repugnancy,
Tho’ they by far all humane reach exceed.
Such are the things that Admiration breed;
(2) These hidden Virtues Nature never knew,
And, after Death seeing the Moon’s renew.

Nor is there greater weight in what they move,
Who somethings there would against Reason prove:
More Wit or Learning can such Men pretend,
Than did from the first times these Books defend.

What  

XII.  

Or things contrary to Reason.

(1) Sect. 7.

(2) Lib. 2.
Of the Truth of

What e're we with right Reason shew'd t'agree,
In lively Characters you there will see;

That God (m) exists, and is in Essence (n) one,
Possess of all (o) Perfection ever known,
Pow'r, Wisdom, Goodness, Life, beyond degree,
That the whole (p) Universe he caus'd to be,

That alone (q) prefers things what they are,
But (r) chiefly Man, his more immediate care:
That both (s) can, and will, fully reward
Those, who him only, as their End regard,

That we our (t) look Desires should bridle in:
That all the race of Mortals are of (u) kin;
From whence an Argument of force does prove,
That we should one another truly love;
Reason's a Guide deceitful, very weak,
If to know any thing beyond we seek,
Or of God's Nature, or his Soveraign Will:
What lewd Diffentions all the Schools did fill,
While best Philosophers betray'd their want
of Skill!

Nor need this be a wonder, since we find
They little understood of humane Mind,
And how can the Supreme then be defin'd?
The Prudent know, that it much danger brings
To search into the purposes of Kings;
And that the search however would be vain.
But what Conjecture can expect t'attain,
To what th'Almighty freely does ordain?
That t'is not to be known Plato did hold,
Unless an Oracle the secret told:
But then no Oracle that ever was,
Had proofs so clear, as the new Cov'enant has:
Nor ever yet did Man attempt to prove,
That any Revela'tion from above

Did,
the Christian Religion.

Did, of God’s Nature, or his Will, make known
What is repugnant to what there is shown:
Some things of middle nature we may view,
Which of themselves claim’d no obedience due,
Or else in which no turpitude did stand,
Which before Christ had licence, or command;
These Books for want of such, are no less full;
Since later Laws may former disanul.

But some their doubts concerning them declare,
Upon the disagreeing senses there:
Yet this should credit add with them that find,
How they for Faith and Doctrine are conjoin’d,
So as in other Writings ne’re was seen,
Amongst the Learn’d that ever yet have been,
Whether you Jews, or Greeks, or Romans name,
In ev’ry Science Men of greatest Fame:
Of ev’ry Sect some Men will disagree,
This we in Zenophon and Plato see:
Men from themselves are often diff’rent known,
Either forgetting what before had gone,
Or being doubtful what to fix upon:
But all those Writings which we Sacred call,
About those things to no division fall,
Which do the Rules of Faith and Life contain,
Or how Christ liv’d & dy’d, and liv’d again;
And they agree entirely in the main.
Indeed in circumstances of no weight,
We sometimes find occasion of debate;
But many things, which lie from us conceal’d,
Might all these seeming differences have heal’d;
Or, that like things at diff’rent times abound,
Or Names ambiguous do the Mind confound;
Or had one Man, or Place, Names more than one;
And such-like circumstances, now unknown:

F. But
Of the Truth of

But this them from imputed fraud may free;
Who lie by compact, will in all agree.
If some slight disagreement still appear,
Which will no Reconciliation bear;
We ought not therefore all these Books suspect;
Unless we will all History reject;
For we as much may of that kind perceive,
In those which we without dispute receive:
Polybius, and Herodotus to name,
Livy, and Plutarch, Authors of great fame:
How much more equal is it not to doubt,
When it appears the Writers were devout;
And thought it criminal, things false to tell?
We by extrinsic Proofs might such refel.

XIV.

But I affirm, none such are to be found;
Unless our doubts on later times we ground,
Where Enemies the Christi'an Name would wound.
We cannot such for Witnesses receive;
Nay, foreign Proofs confirm what we believe.
That Jesus suffer'd, Jews and Heathens taught,
And that he and his Follower's Wonders wrought,
Some forty years from Christ Josephus wrote,
Who does in Terms the most perspicuous own,
What was by Herod, Pilate, Festus, done;
Felix, John Baptist, and Gamaliel names,
And how Jerusalem expir'd in Flames:
The Talmudists the same fully relate:
Tacitus tells th'effects of Nero's hate,
When he against Christi'anity did rage:
And several Books were extant in that Age,
(Such was old Philemon's we before did name)
And publick Records mentioning the same

To
the Christian Religion.

To which the Christians commonly appeal'd;
Nor was the Star, pointing at Christ, conceal'd:
They name the Earth-quake, and Eclipse o' th' Sun,
Against the Course in which Nature had run,
When yet the Moon at Full felt not the loss,
About the time when Christ was on the Cross.

No other difficulty I can name,
But that the Writings are not still the same:
The fate of other Writings we must own,
To have betided these may here be shown:
The Copier's Neglect, or faulty Will,
If not his want of necessary Skill,
In Letters, Syllables, or Words, might wrong,
By change, omission, some of them too long:
But these things should no Controversy raise,
Being but incident to length of days:
But that by fraud, or any other ways,
In Doctrinals all Copies vicious were,
Or where they memorable Facts declare,
Don't or by Books, or Witnesses, of those times, appear.

What ever of that kind is offer'd since,
Must pass for Railing, not for Evidence.
This may be thought enough to silence those,
Who for Mutations holy Writ oppose;
On whom it lies not to object, but prove;
Since they'd a settled Reputation move;
But we their vain pretence may soon detect,
Who what ne'er was, nor can be, here object.
Before we prov'd, to any equal Mind,
The Books were their's whose Names affixt we find;

It follows then there was no change of Books:
And if to every part of them one locks.
Of the Truth of

No change of part mater"al can be found;
Some end who made the Change must needs
propound:
That, where the Change was made, should
differ more
From those remaining what they were before,
Than here the sharpest search could e're explore:
Nay, as before was in this Tract observ'd,
A wonderful Consent's throughout preferv'd:
Besides, when any of th'Apostles wrote,
Or Men who Apostolical were thought,
Sincere Professors of the Christ'ian Name,
As their concern for Truth it well became,
Must needs have us'd all diligence, to gain
The valu'd Transcript's of what they maintain,
Through Europe, Asia, Egypte, these diffus'd
(For the Greek Tongue among all these was
us'd)

Could not but spread as far as Christ was known.
Consider farther, as before was shown,
That some Originals were seen to last,
Until the second Century was past:
A Book of which so many Copies were,
Preferv'd not only by a private eare,
But by whole Churches which did Christ obey,
No Man to have been counterfeit can say.
Add, that 'tis evident the sacred Text
Was read in sever'al Tongues i'th' Ages next,
The Syriac, Ethiopic, Arabic,
And Latin too, agreeing with the Greek,
In all those weighty things of which we speak.
Farther their Writings to our hands are brought,
Whom the Apostles, or their Follow'rs, taught;
Who many Passages from them do quote,
Agreeing with that Sense which now we note.
the Christian Religion.

in the Church was any Man possessed such Authority above the rest, at they'd comply, if he a Change had profes. is Irenæus, and Tertullian, shew, is Cyprian too, who without fear withdrew from those who then were most reputed sage: if we come to the succeeding Age, find Men of best judgments, greatest parts, had run their Stages thro' the liberal Arts, the utmost search these to receive, of Original Purity believe: proof of this divided parties join; who believe the World a work divine, of Christ the Founder of a sacred Law; against changing would the other awe: yet did any Sect that licence take, at to have chang'd them for their side would make;

Hence is seen, that when e're they dispute, would from hence his Opposite confute, that's urg'd of Providence concern'd for all, every part of these alike will fall, ought it of our God to be believ'd, he would suffer Men to be deceiv'd, what's of greatest moment to the Mind) who had his Honour above all design'd, next the way to Happiness would find, or many thousands such as these to run to those Errors which they could not shun, may be thought sufficient to maintain, that the New Testament does there contain, and there at large is our Religion seen. etc since th'Almighty's Pleasure it has been,
Of the Truth of

The Truths the Jews believ'd should now appear,
Which no small Light to our Religion bear,
'Tis not amiss to shew their Credit here.
What prov'd those other Books were titled right,
Will serve for these, where any shall deny.
The Authors of those Books the Jews receiv'd,
Wore Prophets, or most fit to be believ'd,
Such Esdras was, thought to have joyn'd in one,
Those scatter'd Books which went before alone;
When at that time some Prophets were alive,
Who would against an Impostor strive,
Such Haggai, Malachi, Zach'ry, were known;
To praise what was in prais'd of Mo'sh shown;
Pagans confirm not only what he wrote,
But what of later times the Jews were taught.
So the Phoenician Amalits proclaim
David's and Solomon's great in Fame,
And they their Treaties with the Tyrians make
Nebuchadnezzor, with others joyn'd,
Who Caldees rul'd, we in Beroseu find;
Egyptian Vaphres, Jeremy does name,
And Aphræes in Herodotus, are the same.
Of Cyrus, and who follow'd in his charge
Until Darius, Græc'ans speake at large.
And in those Books Josephus did endite,
When Appian to his way he would invite.
We many things may gather in a Throng,
Which to the Honour of the Jews belong.
And to what's mention'd here we well may add,
What we from Strabo, and from Trogus had:
But we who in our Suffering Lord believe,
These Books without disputing should receive.
Since there is scarce a Book but ours do cite,
And so far to agree with theirs delight;

And
the Chaldean Religion.

And when Christ blames the Doctors of their
And what in the proud Pharisee he saw, (Law,
He never mentions any Change they made,
In what from any Prophet was convey'd,
Or that suppositional Books they brought,
Nor can this after Christ of them be thought:
Considering how the wandring Hebrew Sheep,
Scattered throughout the World, these Books
did keep;
Ten of the Tribes first from Assyria led,
And after two, did through all Media spread;
And after Cyrus, did the Jews restore,
Many did ramble Foreign Nations o'er,
These Men the Macedonian did invite
In Alexandria to take delight:
The Cruels Antiochus did shew,
The Civil Wars the Asiotaans knew,
The Wars which Pompey, and which Sossus made,
Did force the Jews, in various parts to trade,
These did the Cyrenaic Region fill,
The Caries too of Asia saw their Skill;
This Macedonia, Lycaonia, knew,
The Isles of Crete, Cyprus, and others too:
That anciently at Rome they numerous were,
Both Horace, Martial, Juvenal declare.
No Art could People, to divided, cheat;
Nor could they have consir'd a Fraud so great.
Almost three hundred years e'er Christ was here,
Some Kings of Egypt made their care appear
To propagate these Books the Jews admire,
Whilst they the Seventy's Version did require:
So in like sort, the Greeks did them receive,
Whence with a change 'twas harder to deceive:
The Language which we from Chaldeans take,
And that which at Jerusalem they spake,
Of the Truth of
That is half-Syriack, help't these Books to spread,
Part before Christ, part after he was dead:
Aquila, Sym'chus, Theodotion,
Each to have turn'd them into Greek are known,
Which with the Seventy, Origin did view,
With others, in the main all of them true,
In things of weight none can a difference shew.
Philo liv'd famous in Calig'la's Reign,
Josephus to Vespasian's did remain;
Both cite, out of the Books among the Jews,
The very same which at this day we use:
And many then of Jews, Christians became,
Who'd certainly what change they found pro-
claim.
If't were of moment, which they might compare
With the most ancient Copies that there were;
But far from doing this, they oft delight,
In the same sense with Jews, their Books to cite.
But any Crime 'gainst Jews has more pretence,
Than either Falshood, or else Negligence.
With such Devotion they these Books imbrace;
That they will tell you ev'ry Letter's place.
Add yet a stronger proof, which last we range,
These Books the Jews would not on purpose change,
Since thence, who for their Saviour Christ receive,
Prove strongly, or at least as they believe,
That he they worship, that Messiah was,
Of whom the Promise to the Jews did pass;
And none can think since that dispute arose,
The Jews would, had they Pow'r, a Change have chose.
L I B. IV.

To see Mens Perils while we sit at ease,
Is what does too much Human Nature please;
But it becomes us Christians to rejoice,
Not only at our happiness of choice;
But to endeavour, to our Pow'r, to free
Those who are lost in Errors stormy Sea,
And to have them our Happiness partake,
Towards this great end the former Books did make;
Because the proof of Truth doth that expose,
Which do's it self against that Truth oppose.
But since all other Worships that are known,
The Pagans, Jews, that the Turks do own,
Besides the Errors common unto all,
Have each what to its proper share do fall,
And against ours, in different methods right;
I think I shall do Truth the greatest right,
If I of each make the dispute entire:
Which doing, of the Readers I desire,
That laying all Partiality aside,
And what e're Customs long have held them,
They'd use unbyass'd judgment for their Guide,
While with us such Impediments have place,
We go with Fetters unto Truth's embrace.

First then, against the Pagans we dispute,
And these we did before enough confute,
There is but one God: That created Spirits are good, or bad,
the good not to be worshipped without the direction of the most High God.
Of the Truth of

If they believe more than one Pow'r above,
In an eternal state to move;
We having they'd only one God to reign,
Who all things of himself did first ordain;
If of created Minds their God they make,
Either for good, or bad, we these must take:
If good they say; First, let them have a care,
Left they are cheated with a Name so fair.
For it is very dang'rous erring there;
Left Foes they take for Friends, and those that fell,
Instead of those who should God's Pleasure tell.
In Reason too we should some difference find.
For Worship paid to them, and the first Minds,
Let's know what order is allign'd to each;
What good respectively to us they reach:
That we may judge what Honour the great King
Intends we to those lower Pow'ts should bring.
Since none of them they can pretend to know;
This how uncertain is their way may shew;
How much more certain they were not to err,
If to the Chief this Worship they transfer;
This Place held the duty of the Wife;
This does he with more confidence advise.
Since the good Minds being Servants to the Best,
If him they please they may securely rest;
Of their good Offices they can't but be
perfect.

Then to attain Arguments belief persuade,
That unto evil Spirits: Pagans pray'd.
First, that their Followers they did not bring
Unto the Worship of the eternal King;
Nay, did his Worship what they could impair;
Or strove with him to have an equal share:

Then
the Christian Religion.

Then they did strongly Magistrates incite,
Against the Men who worship'd God aright:
And the misguided Rabble urg'd their pains:
When yet the Poets in licentious strains,
With Parricides and Rapes their Gods did charge:
And Epicures, that things go at large,
Without the Conduct of a Pow'r Supream,
Was bold to make the subject of his Them:
And the most different Rites one Compound
made,

Egyptian, Phrygian, Greek, together laid.
The Thracian too, they did at Rome perswade.
They ridicul'd the Jewish way alone;
As is it? Epigrams and Satyrs shown,
And sometimes Banishment shorted their Woes:
Thus against Christi'ans Persecutions rose
Of which the only cause to be assign'd,
Is, that they worship'd the Eternal Mind;
That thus the Gods they serv'd their Honours.
Fearful of him alone who all engross.

The third Exception's taken from the way,
In which they worship'd those they did obey,
Such as could never please an honest Mind.
Thus there we humane Sacrifices find;
Themselves in Temples naked Men expose,
And Jew'd men reign'd in their most solemn shows.
These Rites now in America proceed,
And Africa these Monsters still does breed:
Nay, further yet, those there have been, and are,
Who worship Minds which evil they declare.
Therefore Ariman a God the Persians made,
And Greeks to Cacodemons worship paid:
The Latin to Hajro's, and Indians yet,
With Ethiopians to such Pow'rs submit.
Of the Truth of

And what more truly impious can be found?
For of Religious Worship what's the ground?
But the belief of Goodness we admire,
Which we't express i'th' humblest way desire:
If a known evil Spirit this receive,
Our selves the lye to our own Worship give.
This too no less than Treason must be thought;
When th' Honour which due to our King is taught,

Is not withdrawn alone, but giv'n to those,
Who are his Rebels, or at least his Foes.
But they are sotith, who e're count upon't,
That a good God will not avenge th' Affront;
They should consider that his Clemency,
And Justice no less infinite, agree;
Where bold-fac'd Wickedness all bounds exceeds,
Justice, as, of necessity, proceeds.
Nor do they less deserve Rebukes to bear,
Who say they only worship out of Fear;
When He whom we believe supremely good,
Is, as communicative, understood,
And thence from Him all other Natures rose;
From whence this Consequence directly flows:
That he does use an Absolute Command,
O're all these Workmanships of his own hand;
So that from none of them can that proceed,
But he at his free Pleasure could impede;
Which being granted, we collect with ease,
Who e're our God so great, so good, does please;
Can ne're from evil Spirits have that hurt,
Which to good purposes God won't convert;
Nor can the evil Spirits that command,
Which we should not on that account withstand;

For
the Christian Religion.

For when the guide of Good, the Evil bear,
Then ought we of their flights the more beware,
The Gifts of Enemies deceitful are.

Some there have been, and yet are known
t’have pray’d,
To Men whose Honours in the Dust are laid:
This Worship should have proper marks assign’d,
Distinct from what is paid the Sov’raign Mind,
And thence some good we should expect to find;
But this their Worshippers could never shew,
Not knowing what these Souls departed do.
But against this we chiefly should inveigh,
That many Men to whom they this did pay,
Were more than others for some Vices fam’d,
And thus for Drunkenness is Bacchus nam’d;
For Luft thus did their Hercules surpass;
Against his Brother Rom’lus impious was;
And so against his Father was their Jove;
So that the Honour paid to them, would prove
A great Reproach to the true God above;
Who does in Probity chiefly delight;
Against it self they make Religion fight; (Rays,
While what should scatter Vice with conqu’ring
Is taught to flatter it with its own Praise.

The Stars and Elements ev’n long before,
Fire, Water, Air, and Earth Men did adore:
But nothing is more brutish than this way:
Since the chief part of Worship is to pray,
Th’Objects of this should have Intelligence;
That th’Elements have none is plain to Sense.
If any say Stars are with this endu’d;
The ground of such their Fancy ne’er was shew’d,
Of the Truth of

By th' Operations, which their Natures tell;
We cannot judge that this to them be
d;
Nay, the unalter'd Course in which they move,
The contrary with mighty strength does prove;
This argues they no freedom have of Will;
But do another's Purposes fulfill;
We their subserviency to Man have shew'd;
Whence we should think our selves the b
endu'd;
Our better part unto our God more near;
And for that likeness, unto him more dear;
Therefore our selves we ought not to debate;
To what's subjected to us through God's Grace;
Off' rings of Praise for them by us are brought.
Which how to pay they never can be taught.

VI.

Some in their Worship lower yet do fall,
And thus on Beasts for Aid Seepes are call:
A shew of Reason some may seem to shew;
What it's when we with Man's would it compare?

And their Conceptions, whatso're they frame;
Ne're from within by words, or writing came;
Their Works in kind, and manner, are the same:
Numbers and Measures eart they comprehend;
Or how the Course o'th Heavenly Host does bend?
Man on the other side, of strength but small,
Into his Snares makes Birds, Beasts, Fishes, fall,
These by his Wit he brings under his Law,
Ev'n Elephants and Lions keeps in awe,
Horses and Oxen makes together draw;
Things the most noxious useful to him makes;
And thus from Serpents wholesome Medicines
Their Bodies frame, and site of ev'ry part, (takes;
Unknown to them, do not escape his Art:

Thence
the Christian Religion.

ence he the use and worth of them can tell, that Species, and what Genus, each befit: en the Structure of his own Body views, which him by far the nobler Creature shews: though compare aright, so far will be from thinking one of these a Deity: n he would rather think, God did ordain, a vicarious Power o’er them to reign.

\[ \text{VII. Against worshipping things which are no Substances.} \]

\[ \text{Latin, and Greeks, we find, Devotion paid, what of no Subsistence Nature made,} \]

\[ \text{were more Accidents to things that were: Pudence, Fever, and the like, to spare:} \]

\[ \text{alth, which in this did much more justly share,} \]

\[ \text{a true temp’ment of parts we find:} \]

\[ \text{fortune, that Deity acknowledg’d blind,} \]

\[ \text{but a set of Chances to one’s Mind: ‘} \]

\[ \text{Affections, Anger, Fear, warm Hope, and} \]

\[ \text{Love,} \]

\[ \text{others which from Good, or Ill, do move,} \]

\[ \text{we consider them remote, or nigh,} \]

\[ \text{pleas’d th’ motions of the Blood do lie,} \]

\[ \text{th’ Animal Spirits carry’d thence are known;} \]

\[ \text{if these none have a motion of their own,} \]

\[ \text{it on the Empire of the Will depend,} \]

\[ \text{least for their Direction, and their End.} \]

\[ \text{f Virtues Worshippers with them were seen;} \]

\[ \text{Pudence, which lies in choice of the right mean,} \]

\[ \text{When we pursue what’s represented good:} \]

\[ \text{the braving Dangers, counted Fortitude:} \]

\[ \text{Nect, in keeping from another’s right,} \]

\[ \text{and Temperance moderating our delight:} \]

\[ \text{These Dispositions unto Good we find,} \]

\[ \text{settled by a long Custom in the Mind;} \]

\[ \text{But} \]
Of the Truth of

But these, as they increase, so may decay,
And, much neglected, vanish quite away:
Honour, to which they oft did Temples raise,
Is known to lie but in another's praise:
This oft the Good have mixt, the Bad receiv'd,
So ease 'tis for Man to be deceiv'd:
Since no subsistence then these have at all;
And so below things of subsistence fall;
Nor can these understand the zealous pray'r,
With which our reverence of them we declare,
To worship such reason must disallow:
Rather to Him we should devoutly bow,
Who only gives, and can to us preserve,
What we the most to be admir'd observe.

VIII.

Argument of the
Gentiles taken
form Miracles
done among
them.

But then to Miracles Pagans appeal,
As if the Truth these of their worship seal:
Whereas we may with justice them suspect:
Their Sages many, as unprov'd, reject:
Night and retirement were for some the scene;
To others but few witnesses have been,
Such as with ease might swallow down a cheat,
From subtle priests, well practis'd in deceit:
Not knowing nature many did admire,
And qualities occult their search did tire;
With admiration thus some load-stones saw
To its embrace the distant iron draw:
Simon did in these arts successful prove;
And thence did Apollonius wonder move.
Some things by such we must effect'd own,
Which have a pow'r more than of nature shewn,
Or what man could draw forth from that alone;

But
Yet these do not imply a Pow'r Divine,  
To which we should Omnipotence assign:  
But intermediate Spirits for this purpose,  
Higher than Men, yet under Deities,  
Who being very nimble, strong, and wise,  
May bring together what remote does lie,  
And thence compose things wondrous to the Eye;  
But that these Spirits cannot good be thought,  
Their Worship therefore bad, before was taught;  
And this against their Veneration Arms,  
That Men pretend to force them down with  
Charms;  
When yet the wildest Heathen own it plain,  
That words the pow'r but of Persuasion gain,  
And that according as their Sense we find.  
This proof may of their pravity be joyn'd,  
That oft they promised him or her to move,  
Against their Inclination, unto Love;  
Injurious in the Promise, or Command, (brand  
And Humane Laws such Acts with Sorcery  
Nor is it strange, if he whom we adore  
With the Delusions of ill Spirits bore,  
To punish them who fell from him before.  
But then this may their Impotence persuade,  
That none hadsignal benefit by their Aid:  
If any thence return'd to Life again,  
They were known in Life, long to remain;  
Nor could they act like those who Life enjoy'd,  
If e're a Pow'r divine did seem employ'd,  
It never was foretold that this was done,  
That Men might into that Religion run:  
And nothing hinders but the Pow'r divine,  
Might have, what greatly distress, in design.  
As for Example, If one should believe,  
That to one blind Persuasion sight did give,  
That was
Of the Truth of

'Twas that he Reputation might acquire,
To gain that Pow'r to which he did aspire,
He being one whom God before did chose,
To execute his Judgments on the Jews.
For other Prodigies like came might be,
In which we nothing of Religion see.

What was before observ'd we may apply,
When on their Oracle's they would rely:
Chiefly that God may Cheats on them permit,
Who nat'l. Light, or old Tradition quit.
And generally 'twas doubtful what was meant,
The words' complying with what e're event:
If any thing more plainly was foretold;
A Pow'r divine for this we need not hold;
From natural Causes known it might proceed;
Physicians thus know how Diseases breed:
Much comes from due observing what has past,
For which th'experience'd need no Figure cast,
But if by Pagan Prophets e're was shown,
What had dependance on God's Will alone,
No cause of which besides that e're was known,
It was not to confirm the Pagan Rite,
But rather it against them all did shine.
Thus Virgil, not discerning what was meant,
In his fourth Epilogue, yet did represent,
What some old Pagan scatter'd leaves did shew,
Of Christ, and the great Benefits t'ehile.
Those Leaves to shelter noble Fruits were made;
While they an universal King did make,
Whom to obey, if we'd be happy, they persuade.
That he who of this Pow'r should be poss'd,
Should make his Progress from the brightned East,
And Porphyry an Oracle doth name,
Where th'Hebrew God with the most joyful claim,

Vid. Cíc. de Divinatione
lib. 2. Eum quem re verâ
Regem habe-
barnus appellant
quaqu
esse regem ini
ralli esse vellemus.
the Christian Religion.

To be the only God the World should fear,
While others vanish'd into empty Air:
If this Apollo's Votaries obey'd,
Ev'n his own Worship must aside be laid:
But if their Worship still they paid at large;
They'd their own Deity with fallhood charge.
If by their Oracles these Spirit's design'd,
Any advantages to humane kind;
Some certain Rule of Life they needs must give,
In following which Men happily might live:
Yet they nor Rule, nor Happiness, propound,
With which their blind Devotes might be crown'd:
Nay, on the contrary, we've-often found,
They in their Verses worst of Kings did praise,
And Wrestlers unto sacred Honours raise;
Unto unlawful Loves they did incite,
And catching Wealth without regard to Right,
Encourag'd Slaughters, and a vicious Train,
The bare reciting which, our Leaves would stain.

This against Paganism strong proof supplies,
That it on humane Force so much relies,
That when foe'se that was not on its side,
As if through that it stood, it quickly dy'd:
But where Christianity, or Turfism, reign'd,
Only in story the Ethnick Rites remain'd;
When yet Christianity was known to grow,
Ev'n with the Blood did from its Martyrs flow.
This Conquest's gain'd in spite of all the Pow'rs
Of the enrag'd, and bloody Emperours.
Nor could learn'd Julian's Wit keep up their way,
But sensibly it fell into decay,
Nor Force, nor high Descent, against it brought;
A Carpenter, the Founder's Father, thought;

Nor
Nor did that way which made all others fail,
With flow'rs of Rhet'rick on Men's Minds prevail;
None of these Ornaments their Speech did grace,
Who first persuad'd Men Christ to embrace:
Of Gifts, they being poor, made no pretence,
Nor mov'd by Flatteries to tender Sense:
Nay, they declar'd that Pleasures they must shun,
And for that Law all worldly hazards run:
And this subdu'd not Paganism alone,
But ev'n the Spirits which did that Worship own,
Christ's Name of them Men's Bodies disposset,
And their known Voices they at that comprest:
And being ask'd, why then they silent were?
They were against themselves forc'd to declare,
That where Christ was 'invok'd their Pow'r dissolv'd to Air.

Some, hardly worth the labour to confute,
Unto the Influence of Stars impute
The rise, and progress, of Religious Rites:
But this their Science no known Rule unites,
And all the certainty, which there is known,
Is that from Stars there's nothing certain shown:
But none of those effects I here do mean,
Of which some necessary cause hath been,
According to the Law which Nature gave,
But what the Will of Man for causes have,
Which being of itself entirely free,
Can't from abroad receive necessity:
But if th'impressi'on from without's so strong,
That the meere passive Will is forc'd along;
In vain was giv'n that grateful pow'r of Mind,
Which we in choice, after confiding, find,
The Equity of Laws could not but cease:
From all Rewards and Penalty's that frees;

For
the Christian Religion.

For where the Act is necessary found,
What fault to punish; Merit to be crown'd?
Besides some Actions of the humane Will,
Justly deserve the Character of ill;
But if of these Heav'n were the proper Mint,
As heav'nly Bodies God did so imprint,
That they compel the Act we seem to chuse;
Of causing moral Ill 'twould God accuse,
Who must be thought in full perfection good;
Besides his hate to ill is understood,
By his known Law which doth from that dissuade;
But if he it inevitable made,
By an effective Pow'r himself instill'd:
'Twould shew as if things contrary he will'd;
That the same thing should, and should not be
While by his impulse into Sin we run.
Some, with more probability, declare,
That Stars first influence the ambient Air,
Our Bodies this; and qualities conveys,
Which in our Minds such kind of Passions raise;
That these often entice the yielding Will,
And their Commands it often does fulfill:
Suppose that this were granted ne're so clear;
'Twould nothing make to help the question here;
For Christ's Religion doth withdraw the Mind,
From things to which the Body is inclin'd:
How then could bodily Affections move,
The Christian way of Worship to approve?
And how could Stars to cause its rise be thought,
When they only by those Affections wrought?
Whatever Laws to Men the Stars would give;
The wise and good exempted from them live:
Wisest Astrologers do this confess;
And wise were they who first did Christ profess:

G 3. But
Of the Truth of

But if in Learning any force we see,
From the Contagion of the Flesh to free;
Such among Christians have been ever known,
Who in this Praise to flourish, all must own:
Besides the learned in the Syd'ral Arts,
Ow\nthe Effects reach but to certain parts,
And those Effects but temporary are;
When this Religion yet has lasted fair,
One thousand and six hundred Years, and more,
It's Praises echo'd forth from Shoar to Shoar,
In distant Regions stretch'd out we're so far,
Whatever the Position of the ruling Star.

XII.

'Tis known that the chief Principles of the Christian Religion are approv'd by wise Pagans; and if there be any thing in it hard to be believed, things of the like kind are found among the Pagans.

This to Christianity may Trophies raise,
That every part shines with such piercing Rays,
Does with so fair a Countenance delight,
That it convinces with its Native Light:
So that enough we among Pagans find,
Out of whose Sayings in one System join'd,
All our Religious Truths we might decay:
As that Religion don't in Rituals lie,
But th'Efficacy in the Mind to place:
Adultery to lie in with't embrace:
Not to repay the Wrongs which we receive:
One Wife, one Husband, should together live:
The Bond perpetual which does them unite:
That this, Man's Office which should most delight,
To do to Men what good is in his pow'r,
Chiefly where sharp necessities devour:
From Oaths as much as may be to forbear:
To be content for Clothing and for Fare,
With what the needs of Nature do require,
But where Christian'ty still rises higher,
And difference with wonder seems to strike,
We with the wisest Pagans find the like.

What
the Christian Religion.

What of the Souls immortal State they hold,
And Life returning unto Bodies cold,
We shew'd before. Plato, of Caldees taught,
Of the Divinity this distinction thought,
The Father and the filial Mind, from whom
He held the Universe at first to come:
He adds a Mind which over-spreads the whole,
Nor does he Julian their Belief controul.
Who think the Humane Nature with Divine,
Might to compose a single Person join'd,
Such he believ'd that Asculapius was,
Whom he would have from Heav'n directly pass,
To teach Mankind the helpful Art of Cures;
Who sees not what offence Christ's Cross procures?

Yet Heathens in their Gods the like things brook:
Some we find Servants, others Thunder-struck;
Some into pieces cut, Wounds others took;
Their wives held a good Man's Joys the most,
When him his Honour, the dearest coil.
Plato, as if what was to come he found,
Says, If we a true Pattern would propose,
It must be one whose Virtue is depoild
Of all those Ornaments with which it is mili'd:
He must be wicked thought, expos'd to scorn;
A shameful Death must after all be born.
Patience exemplify'd unto the height,
Must by such Indisces as these incite.
THAT glimmering Light saluting by degrees,
As from a dismal Cave himself one frees,
Points out their State, who quitting th’Eskimick
After the Jewish Rites their Worship pay. (way,
That part of Truth, that noble entrance made,
Makes me in friendly manner Jews persuade,
What’s offer’d to receive with equal Ears;
We cannot but confess that it appears;
That they from those Religious Men descend,
To whom th’Almighty Embassies did send,
By Prophets and his Ministring Spirits above;
From out of them did the Messiah move,
And they who first preach’d up the Christian Law.
Their is the Stock whence Nourishment we draw,
Being engraven there; that they preserve.
Those Oracles of God which we observe,
With the like Veneration as do they:
And with St. Paul most zealously we pray,
That God would suffer soon that Day to dawn;
When from before their Eyes the Clouds withdrawn;
They may discern with us the Law fulfill’d.
And, as into their Prophets was intill’d,
That we who long no sacred Covenant knew,
May lovingly embrace th’enlightned Jew,
And hand in hand that only God adore,
Whom Abr’m, Isaac, Jacob serv’d before.

First,
the Christian Religion.

First, we desire them that they would admit,
What pleading for themselves they urge as fit.
If to them any Pagan Question move,
How Miracles by Moses wrought, they prove?
They say no more, but that to constant Fain's
Of their own People, did his Works proclaim;
As needs must come from those who saw the
same.

So, that Elisha multiply'd the Oil,
And purg'd th' Abishag from his leprous Soil;
That with new Life a Young Man did arise;
After his weeping Mother clos'd his Eyes:
And several other things of the like kind,
Among the Jews firmly believ'd we find;
As from good Witnesses to them confirm'd.

But that Elijah spairg up to the Skies,
They trust Elisha, thought 'twas seen him rise;
Twelve Witnesses, whose Lives none could re-
prove;
Attell'd have seen our Saviour hence above,
As he ascended to his Throne above.

A greater Cloud of Witnesses maintain,
That after Death, they saw him live again.
Which, if considered, manifestly show,
That what he taught on Earth, must needs be
Nor can one Argument be urg'd by Jews.

But what we equally at least may use:
But to omit Authorities to press;

The Jews, and their learned Talmudists, confess,
That our Messiah things prodigious wrought;
And this might against them enough be thought;
Nor can God authorize a Doctrine more,
Than shewing Miracles upon that Corp.
Some...
Some to the Pow'r of Demons this impute,  
Which Calumny we did before refute;  
Shewing that where Christ's Doctrine did prevail,  
The Pow'r of Demons totally did fail:  
That Christ in Egypt Magick-Arts did learn,  
To have less shew of Truth we may dissent,  
Than the like Accusation Pagan raise.  
To blemish Moses his left setled Praine.  
As is in Pliny and Apuleius, seen;  
But that in Egypt Christ had ever been,  
Does only from his Followers Books appear,  
Who that he went an Infant thence, declare,  
Moses, and other Jews, expressly own,  
That he resided there to Manhood grown;  
But then the Laws Moses and Christ pronoung'd  
Should stop the progress of this Change divulg'd.  
Since both of them against such Arts inveigh;  
As hateful to that Pow'r all should obey,  
But that in Egypt such had ever Birth,  
While Christ, or his Disciples blest the Earth,  
Or any other place, who can believe,  
To do what we, as done by Christ, receive?  
The Dumb to speak, the lame to walk, the Blind  
All of a sudden long wait Light to find.  
The Emperor, Tyberius, Nere, more  
Who spake no Coalt at root of this Explo;n  
Had that Art thus far exceed'd had known't before?  
And if the Talmud we admit as true,  
The Jewish Sages shew the Art of Magick-Joyr  
The manner to convict the Guilty have:  
And since to Christ they did highest, have, did  
Envy'ing that Pow'r his Miracles declare.  
They would the like by the like Art have done  
Or shew'd them thence, by Proofs which none  
can shun.

Some
the Chaldaan Religion.

me Jews ascribe the Miracles Christ did,  
Of a Secret by King Solomon hid,  
For above a thousand Years had slept,  
To fierce Lions in the Temple kept:  
This was read by Christ; a Fiction bold;  
of those wondrous Lions nothing's told  
y Book of the Old Testament,  
y Josephus, or the Romans sent  
with Pompey to the Temple's spoil.

If the Jews confess the Fact, the while,  
flows from their own Mosaick Law,  
one should from blest Jesus Faith withes  
in (a) Deuteronomy expressly says, (draw  
after him would other Prophets raise;  
that the People should obey, shews,  
setting Penalties if they refuse:  
These are Miracles the certain sign;  
Can we more illustrious ones divine:  
A (b) Prophet shall himself declare,  
make by Miracles his Title fair;  
ids them not to listen to his Speech,  
to worship other Gods should teach;  
God will (c) such among his People bear,  
if to his Worship they'll adhere.

These Interpreters rightly collect,  
As true Prophets they should all respect;  
not the Worship of that God divide,  
is not the worship all prelude:  
ing enjoyment in this case alone,  
should not the greatest Wonders shewn.  
Worship to God's Christ taught to pay;  
they'd it pentic unto such to pray:  
and following Prophets, he requir'd  
accept'd as Men of God inspir'd:

Against
Of the Truth of
Against his Miracles then nothing lies:
That he and Mōses differ, can't suffice.

VI.
Answer to the
Objection taken
from the diffe-
rence between the
Law of Mōses
and of Jēsū,
where is shewn
that a more per-
fect Law than
that of Mōses
might be given.

That he who does a Pow'rs for Wonders gain,
And proves himself a real Prophet thence,
With any sacred Precept may dispence,
Except the worshippin' the Pow'rs Supream.
'Tis clear as if 'twere wrote with a Sun-beam,
What Legislative Pow'rs with God did rest,
When unto Mōses he his Will express'd;
In times succeeding he the same must have.
Who in his proper Right Laws ever gave,
Is not thereby hindred from making those,
Which do directly former Laws oppose,
To urge that God's immutable, is weak,
Not of his Nature, but his Works, we speak.
The Light for Darknes, Youth for Age does
change,

Summer for Winter, works with God not strange.

(d) Gen. 2:17. Adam (d) had leave, only one Tree deny'd,
To feast himself with ev'ry Fruit beside:
The killing Men in general God forbade;

(e) Gen. 22:2. Abram (e) to slay his Son, his Precept had:
Off'ring elsewhere than at th'appointed place,
Now he refus'd, now (f) blest of his free Grace.
Mōses his Law, besides, th'o good we own;
Dost follow that a better can't be known?
With Children childish Talk the Parents use,
Nor to connive at faults of th'Age refuse;
But when adult they will correct the Speech.
And Precepts of the strictest Virtue teach.
How great the beauty of an honest Mind!
And what Rewards it shall hereafter find!

(f) 1 Kings 18:38.

(g) Heb. 8:7. But that the Law did of (g) Perfection mis,
This to be thought a Proof sufficient is;

That
the Christian Religion.

That in those times some holy Men out-do
Whatever by the Law they're prompted to;
Moses Revenge does partly lawful make,
Partly the strictest Justice bids them take;
Yet, (b) being wrong'd in the most high degree, (h) Num.12.
Him praying for those Murmurers we see.
So his (i) Rebellious Son David would spare,
And (k) bitterest Curses did with Patience bear.
We read not that good Men their Wives did
Altho their Law did plainly this permit. (quit,
Laws are adapted for the major part:
Some things were to be past by, there, with Art,
To a more perfect Rule then to be squar'd,
When Men God's Spirit in larger measure shar'd,
By which out of all Nations God would draw
A People subject to a purer Law.
Moses propounded, plainly, no Reward,
Beyond what does this mortal State regard.
Who then can question but there might have been
A Law more perfect, than what that is seen,
Which might eternal Bliss clearly propound,
And this is in Christ's Institution found.

Here by the way we this Remark may chuse,
With what Injustice the coeval Jews
Christ, the obedient to their Law, did use:
He had been (l) circumcis'd, like them did eat,
His (m) Habit too was Jewish, as his Meat;
He to their Priest sent (n) Lepers which he cleans'd,
Nor with one of their (o) Feasts all dispens'd;
The Paschal, and the rest observ'd with Zeal;
When he did any on the (p) Sabbath heal,

(b) Num.12, v. 13 & 14. 2.
(i) 2 Sam.15. 21.
(k) 2 Sam. 16. 7, 11.
(m) Mat. 9. 20. (n) Mat. 8. 4.

Shew'd

VIII.

That Moses
his Law was
observed by Je-
sus while he was
on Earth; nor
were any Com-
mandments after
abolish'd, but
what had no in-
trinsick Goodness
in them.
Of the Truth of

Shew'd that their Law, and Commentators too.
Allow'd Men on that day such works to do.
Some of their Laws, then (q) first declar'd repeal'd,
After his Triumph over Death reveal'd:
He being into th' inmost Heavens receiv'd,
The (r) Holy Sp'rît adorn'd those that believ'd,
And thus he his full Regal Pow'r maintain'd,
In which the Legislative is contain'd.
This (s) Daniel law in his Prophetick view,
Who, after Syria 'and Egypt's Fate did shew,
(The laft of which was while Augustus sway'd)
That unto one all Pow'r's shou'd be convey'd,
To whom, tho' in his outward habit (t) low,
All Nations of the Earth shou'd ever bow.
That part, beides, of the Mofaick Law,
Th' obedience unto which Christ did withdraw;
But things indiff' rent, mutable, thence known:
[If of themselves they necessary were,
Would-God but to one People them declare,
And that not till two-thousand years and more?
While Abel, Enoc, Noe, who liv'd before;
Melchis'dech, Abram, Isa'c, Jacob too,
And Job, all dear to God, none of this knew,
Or what from nothing hardly was remov'd;
Yet was their Faith never the less approv'd;
Large were the marks that them th' Almighty.

Moses on Jethro did not urge those Rites:
Nor Jonah on repenting Ninivites;
Nor others, writing to the Moabites,
To those of Calde, Egypt, Zidon, Tyre,
Any account concerning these require,
When to a reck'ning all their sins they call:
These Precepts therefore were not general:

But
the Christian Religion. 93

But either to keep off some Sin design'd,
To which the Jews were known the most inclin'd:
Or else that People, so stiff-neck'd, to try,
How far they'd with the Will of God comply:
If not to typify some future things.
And this no greater cause of wonder brings:
Than if a King all Borough-Laws repeal,
That one may flourish thro' the Commonweal.
Not any thing the face of Proof has gain'd,
That God from changing has himself restrain'd:
What tho he sometimes these perpetual call?
The like does often human Laws befall,
As different from temporary Laws,
Made for a certain time, and transient cause.
Yet what does hinder but new may be made,
When publick benefit does so perswade?
Thus God the Jews did variously command,
When in the (u) Wilderness, and (ω) holy Land: (u) Exod. 27.
By Laws perpetual, those God therefore meant, (ω) Deut. 12.1.
Which were to stand till his reveal'd Intent.
Which way of speaking, all the Nations use,
And should the least move wonder in the Jews,
With whom as such that (x) right and service past, (x) Exo. 21.6.
Which but from Jubilee to Jubilee did last: (x) Levit. 25.10.

Then the Messiah's Coming they agree
To be the shining great (y). Jubilee.
The Jewish Prophets too plainly foretold
Of a new Cov'nant, promis'd long of old:
And full of this does (z) Harmony delight,
Where God does promise to (z) infuse the Light,
That none need farther grope in baleful Night;
While Truth inscrib'd on ev'ry Breast appears:
Besides a general Annually declares,
Not much in this unlike a mortal thing,
If we such low Similarides may bring:

Who
Of the Truth of

Who after a defection from his Pow'r,
While Subjects one another would devour,
The better to establish lasting Peace,
Them from some loads of Impostions frees;
And on a perfect Law let them depend,
Who for the future promise to amend.
What is already offer'd may suffice;
Yet take their Law as in its parts it lies;
And 'twill appear that nothing there displac't,
Could please God in it self, or always ought
to last.

Their Sacrifices first themselves present, (vent:
Which ev'n some Jews thought Men did first in-
Them fond of various rites we plainly find,
Whence against many Gods they are enjoin'd;
Perhaps but requisite, their minds to wean
From what they had living in Egypt seen.
When Sacrifice was, with their Offspring, come
To take up in Religion too much room,
As if 'twould in it's self th'Almighty please,
And him, provok'd unto the heighth, appease,
Without a Reformation in their Lives,
Then it of Reputation God deprives:
Of this, he tells them, ' He makes no' account,
' How high foe're their Holocausts may mount,
'While Flocks and Herds they on each other
' heap,
' Bullocks, &c Goats mingled with harmless Sheep,
' With these they would propitiate him in vain;
' Since they but render back his own again,
' Tis his what feeds on Mountain or on Plain :
' No Beasts or Birds, says he, my notice flee,
' And should I hunger, need I tell it thee?
' Mine is the Universe with all things there :
' Dost think the Blood of Bulls or Goats my fare?
the Christian Religion:

' Offer to God the Sacrifice of Praise,
' And pay those Vows which thy distresses raise.
Some Jews, still to this ancient Rite enclin'd,
Think the Reproof not against that design'd;
But th'ont 's pravity of Life and Mind:
Yet who what here is cited well has weigh'd,
Will find, that Victims on the Altars laid,
As of themselves cannot th'Almighty please;
This in the Series of the Psalm one sees:
For to the pious he directs the Speech;
Whom there he does after that manner teach;
That such are call'd together, there we find,
Immediately hear, yea my People's joyn'd,
After the Passage we above did quote; (note.
We may a (b) different form to th'impious (b) Psal. 50, 16.
In other places the like Sense is found;
' What tho with Holcausts the Altar's crown'd,
' Tis not the Sacrifice that pleaseth thee,
' But th'Heart that's humbled its offence to see;
' For thou, O Lord! dost not that Heart despise,
' Which broke and contrite at thy Footstool lies.

Elsewhere, ' The Sacrifice does not delight,
' And the Burnt-off'ring's nothing in thy sight:
' Me thou hast mark'd for thine, nor doth require
' A warm Oblation with piac'lar Fire.
' Then said I, I am here to do thy Will,
' In which my own chief pleasure I fulfill:
' Not meerly as an hireling this I do,
' But to th'Impression on my Heart am true.
' My inward pleasure streams forth in my words;
' The transports of my Soul my Tongue records;
' The Contemplation of thy Mercy this affords;
' Thy Nature so veracious, and benigne;
' Ev'ry where proclaim, as 'tis, divine,

H

' Thy
of the Truth of

"Thy Faithfulness and large Compassion shown,
I loudly in the Congregation own.
Thus does our God, Esaias represent;

Esa. 111, &c. "Why are so many Sacrifices spent?
Your Holocausts of Rams have tyr'd me quite,
Nor do I in the richest Fats delight:
The Blood of Bullocks, Goats, or tender Lambs
Pleases no more, than do the toughest Rams:
Who bids you thus my sacred Courts profane?
And Jer'my has a passage no less plain;
Nor does th' Interpreter the meaning stain.

Jer. 721, &c. Thus says the God of Angels, Israel's Lord,
What tho' ye beaps of Holocaust afford?
Eat them your selves for all the good they bring.
Freeing your Fathers from th' Egyptian King,
Nothing of any Sacrifice I said;
This for the necessary Rule I laid,
That I should absolutely be obey'd;
So I their God, my People they should prove,
And they to take the Paths I shew, should love:
Thence all things should to their desires succeed.
Thus in the Prophet Hose we may read;

Hos. 65. "Beneficence does Sacrifice exceed;
Right thoughts of God before Burn't-Off' rings pleased.

Thus where in Micah one the Question sees,
What God, displeas'd with us, may reconcile,
Numbers of Rams, or measures of rich Oil?
God thus is represented there, I 'll tell
What's truly good, and pleases me full well;
That you to ev'ry one render his due;
And unto all Bowels of Mercy show;
While humbly before me your self you bow:
Which places, if consider'd right, declare,

That
the Christian Religion.

That these things of themselves or i'th'first place;
As pleasing God we ought not to embrace.
But if the People by degrees were known,
As Superstition had upon them grown,
In them to place great part of Piety,
As if they flake the Wrath of the most High;
What wonder isn't if God did them remove,
Indiff'rent in themselves, tho' ill they prove:
Thus when the Brazen Serpent Moses rais'd,
Men, as of Pow'r divine devoutly prais'd;
Good Hezekiah cast it to the ground.
And among them some Prophecies are found,
Fore-telling that these Rites should one day cease;
This from their Law we may collect with ease;
Where only Aaron's Race a Pow'r receive
For off'ring these, and while at home they live.
But then a (c) King is promised to reign,
'tho should from Sion lead his humble Train;
(c) Psal. 110.
And both a Priest and King always remain,
Resembling what Melchisedec was known.
And in Esaiach's Prophecy 'tis shown;
That Men in (d) Egypt should an Altar view,
Where the Egyptians, and Assyrians too,
Should join in Worship with the happy Jew.
Ver. 25.
Again, (e) They whom vast distances divide,
Who have no common Language for their Guide,
Shall wish the Isra'elites their Off'rings bring,
As Priests and Levites to th'eternal King.
This could not be till their Law were repeal'd.
Besides, in (f) Malachi it is reveal'd,
That God the Off'rings of the Jews did hate;
That East and West his Name should celebrate,
And Clouds of Incense should perfume the Skies,
As from pure hands it to his Throne did rise:

H 2
Daniel
Of the Truth of

Dan. 9. 27. Daniel relating the Angel Gabriel's words,
This Oracle concerning Christ, records: The Sacrifice and Off'ring he removes.
And God by Instances most real proves,
That all the Oblations Moses had enjoyn'd,
Cannot with him any acceptance find;
When more than sixteen hundred Years are gone,
Since Jews have had no Temple of their own;
No Altar, or distinction of their Tribes,
That they may know to offer, as their Law prescribes.

IX.
The difference of Meats.

Their Law forbidding Meats of sever'al kinds,
No better grounds for its continuance finds:
For it is evident after the Flood,
No sort of Meat under Injunction stood:
Noah, and his, had the free use of all,
Which as a Right unlimited did fall
To Abram, Is'ac, Jacob, sprang from Sem,
As well as unto Japhet, and bold Cham:
But when the Egyptian Superstition spread
O're Is'rael's Seed, thither to Bondage led,
The'eating some Animals was then deny'd,
As thence were the Egyptian Rites supply'd,
And thence they thought things future were descriy'd:

Or else their Law, with Types and Shadows dark,
Did by some Animals certain Vices mark:
That this was not a general Rule design'd,
We in the instance of those Beasts may find,
Which free from outward force their Breath resign'd:

Of these unlawful 'twas for Jews to eat,
Which for Inhabitants was licenc'd Meat;
Such too, who met with this Indulgence, were,
As God himself commend'd to their care:

Nay,
Nay, the old Jewish Rabbies did maintain,
That when Messiah should begin his Reign,
He should this Prohibition quite remove; (prove.
And Swines Flesh should as clean as Bullocks
And surely since it pleas’d the Powr Divine,
People of ev’ry Land in one to joyn;
A liberty in these, beyond dispute;
More than restraint, must such Communion suit.

Let us consider next their Holy Days:
They first were kept in the Almighty’s praise,
For their deliverance from the Egypt’s an hand,
And leading to the promis’d Sacred Land:
But Jeremy a time to come did shew,
When new, and greater benefits ensue,
Should to the memory of this surpas,
That Men should hardly mention that it was:
Besides, as ’twas with Oi’s rings, so with these;
’Twas thought they God so in themselves did please,
That keeping them they might indulge their Ease:
Thence representing God, Esaiah says,
*I hate all your New Moons and Holy Days,*
They’re such a burden as I cannot bear.
Moll confident they of the Sabbath are:
They urge that Precept always ought to bind;
That ’twas in Paradise Adam enjouyn’d:
To which I say, with Rabbies on my side,
The Precepts teaching this we thus divide; One is, that we the Memory preserve;
Th’other, the day religiously observe:
The first of these is to this day obey’d,
In grateful owning how the World was made:

H 3

Th’other
Of the Truth of

Th’other requires from all those Works t’abstain,
Which on the common days full licence gain:
The first the Pious kept before the Law,
Obeying this, Men, Enoch, Noah, law,
This Abram, Isaac, Jacob, kept in Mind,
Whole Travels we at large recorded find;
With them this is not found a day of Rest,
As after leaving Egypt ’tis express’d;
From that and the strange progress thro the Sea,
We th’Institution of the Sabbath see; (sing,
On (a) the first day their Thanks to God they
And from that time the sacred Rest begun.
The first observance which is enter’d found,
(b) Ex.16.25. Was, (b) when they heavenly Food took from
the Ground;
(c) Exod.13.8. And (c) their deliverance from th’Egyptian Land,
Is mention’d as the cause of this Command:
Care of those Servants too this Law express’d,
Whose cruel Masters would allow no rest,
Who sojourn’d there were to it likewise bound,
That the same face of Quiet might go round,
That this does not take other Nations in,
May be from hence most evidently seen,
That we in many places find it nam’d,
(d) Exod.13.5. A (d) Sign, a Covenant, God with Israel fram’d:
But that those Laws which did their Sanction

gain,
In mem’ry of being freed from Egypt’s Chain,
Were not intended ever to remain;
Appears i’th’Promise we observ’d before,
Of greater benefits preserv’d in store.
Add to this farther, If Sabbatich Rest,
As indispensable, at first were press’d;
All interfering Laws could not but fail:
When against this some Jewish Laws prevail.

Thus
Thus Circumcision on the Sabbath's good:
Beasts then were offer'd while their Temple stood;
It's mutability their Doctors preach,
Who working on the Sabbath lawful teach,
If authoriz'd by any Prophet's Speech.
Joshu'ab's Command for taking Jericho,
They urge as what does such Commission show:
But that in the Messiah's promised Reign,
There should no differences of days remain;
Some, from that passage in Isaiak, hold,
Where 'tis concerning that blest time foretold,
'That God's true Worship should be constant
known,
'From Sabbath unto Sabbath, and from Moon
to Moon.

Let's come to Circumcision long in use,
Before that Law which Moses gave the Jews;
To Abram and his Seed this was enjoyn'd;
Yet this th'inception of that Law we find:
Thus God to Abrāham; 'You and your Seed,
Unto the Land of Canaan shall succeed;
That Land where now a Pilgrim's Life you lead:
See that my Cov'nant you observe with care:
This is the Cov'nant I with you declare;
You and the Males which from your Loins descend,
Shall all be circumsics'd unto the end.
Before we shew'd that th'old Cov'nants room
A new one, common unto all, should come,
And this distinctive mark then needs must cease:
Besides some Myst'ry in this Rite one sees;
And this their Prophets shew when they impart,
Precepts for Circumcision of the Heart;
Which is in all our Saviour's Rules descriy'd:
Besides the Promises to that apply'd,

H 4  Muf
Of the Truth of
Must needs be thought intended to relate
Unto the prospect of a better State,
Eternal Life, which Jesus shews us clear,
Till when it did only in Types appear.
That Promise too which did to Abram fall,
That many Nations him should Father call,
Seems to describe that happy time, design'd,
When all the World should in one Faith be
joyn'd,
Which, to express the Gospel-state we find,
No wonder that the Shadowes flee away,
At the deer'd approach of perfect Day;
That to this sign God did not stint his Grace,
Appears, in that his Favour did imbrace
Abram, and many who before him liv'd,
Before this Mark was in their Flesh receiv'd.
And while the Jews through the parch'd Desart
It was omitted without any blame.

XII.
And yet Jesus and his Apostles owe,
Who their discharge from this encumbrance show.
And this evinc'd by Gifts and Deeds so high,
As nothing short of Moses we descry.
Yet they who taught the Rule which we admire,
Did not their owning this great Boon require:
But in such things indulg'd them their own way,
So they on others did not the Impostion lay:
This shews they without cause from Christ with-
draw,
Upon pretence of their old Ritu'al Law.
The almost sole Objection they have brought,
Against the Miracles our Saviour wrought,
Being thus remov'd, let's other Mediums chuse,
Proper for the Conviction of the Jews.

In
the Christian Religion.

In this Profession Jews and we unite,
That Men endu’d with the Prophetick Light,
Did the clear notice of One promis’d bring,
From whom much greater good to them should spring,
Then e’re before from Heav’n did Men befall
Him, the Messias all agree to call.
We, that he has been here already, say;
They, yet expect him in a future day.
Let’s search those Books, fairly this Doubt to end,
Which for Divine both sides alike commend.

(a) Ezekiel shews Daniel to be believ’d:
He would not cheat, nor could hav’ bin deceiv’d
In what from Gabriel he affirms receiv’d.
He (b) from the Angel’s dictating declares,
That there should not elap’d five hundred years,
After the Edict publish’d to restore
That City, where the Jews all met t’adore;
But the Messias should on Earth be seen;
When now above two thousand there have been;
And yet the Jews expect him still to come;
Nor can they name another in his room,
To whom this circumstance of Time agrees,
And this their Rabby Nehumias sees,
Who fifty years e’re the Messias’s Reign,
Say’s, more than fifty years can’t now to that remain.

Another Note we touch’d upon before,
Of having Pow’r from God all Nations o’re;
When the Seleucan with the Lagian Line
Should all Authority, of Force, resign:
The last in Cleopatra did expire,
Little before the World did Christ admire.

XIII.

A Proof against the Jews from their confessing that at e’minous Messias was promis’d.

XIV.

'Tis shown that he is already come, from the presignification of the time.

(a) Ezek. 14.
14. & 28. 3.
(b) Dan. 9.25.

Prolemy the Son of Lagus.
Of the Truth of

In Daniel a third Note deserves regard.
Where, from Prophetick Spirit, 'tis declar'd,
That after the Messias here injoy'd,
Jerusalem should wholly be destroy'd;
And this Josephus to his Age applies,
A Passage of like sense in Haggai lies;
Their Governor, with the High-Priest, we find,
After a great dejection shew'n of mind,
Seeing the Temple then but lately rais'd,
If with the first compar'd, not to be prais'd,
Had hence their drooping hearts with spirit supply'd,
Such honour this shall crown, as was the first deny'd.

Of Size, Materials, Art, or Ornament,
'Tis plain by Story this could not be meant.
Besides, the greatest Hebrew Rabbies hold,
The later was infer'our to the old,
Both for the Majesty, and Light Divine,
Effusion too, which with the first did shine.
Wherein the last should yet the first exceed,
We may of Sacred Revelation read,
Where God declares his Peace with That should
By which his Grace and Favour is express'd. (ref)
This we in Malachi at large may find;
'Who comes to seal my Covenant with Mankind
'I send before: The way he shall prepare,
'And in the Temple suddenly appear,
'Whom you expect to come, your Hearts delight.
Under the second Temple he did write.
'Tis clear then, while the second Temple stood,
The Jews were to expect this promis'd Good,
Which from Zerubbabel to Vespasian's understand.

For
the Chaldee Religion.

For 'twas not wholly from its Ruine rais'd,
While Herod, they who saw'd Grandeur, praise'd,
By sev'ral parts they did compleat the pile,
Which the same Temple we may justly stile.
'Tis plain they then did for Messiah look,
From whence, some blindly Herod for him took.
Some, others; some; Judas the Gaulanite,
When Jesus liv'd, who needs must be the right.

Some Jews perceiving how these Motives pres'd,
That the appointed time is past, confess.
But think their Sins of it th'occasion were:
To wave how positive their Prophets are,
Without Condition tacitely imply'd;
How could the Advent be for these deny'd?
When Daniel from a sacred impulse spake,

That Ruine should: for these Jerusalem o're-take,

Soon after the Messiah's peaceful Reign:
Befides another came of's Advent's plain,
To be the Healing a corrupted Age,
And Men a better Rule of Life t'engage;
While for the past he did God's Wrath asswage.

In Zach'rey see a sacred Promise lie, (supply; Zach. 12. 10;
That God with Grace would David's House & 13. 1.
From thence an open Fountain should appear,
Which from their Sins Jerusalem should clear.
The Jews besides a strong Tradition own,
That Schopher Messiah should be known;
That is design'd th'Almighty to appease;
But could he be with-held for that Disease,
Which 'tis most evident he was to ease?

That the Messiah's come, we may evince
From a by-no-means disputable Sense:

God's promises.
Of the Truth of

God's Cov'nant with them in their Law ex-
Declares they shall in Palestine be blest, (prest,)
While they obed'ient to those Precepts rest:
But when from these they a Defection make,
Exile and other Woes should them o're-take:
But when a lively Sense of their Misdeeds,
Sincere Compunction and Contrition breeds;
How much foever distant they remain,
They all should see the Holy Land again.
More now are past than fifteen hundred Years,
And no Completion yet of this appears:
Still they in Exile without Temple live;
Often they to rebuild it vainly strive.
Wond'rous Eruptions of restless Fire,
Have forc'd the baffled Work-men to retire,
This Ammianus Marcellinus shows,
Tho' he did Christianity oppose.
When formerly that Peoples Sins encroa't;
When with their Children they did Saturn feast;
When for no Crime Adultery did pass,
To rob Widows and Orphans usu'al was,
And to fill up the measure of their Guilt,
Innocent Blood was without Mercy spilt;
For these against them Prophets oft complain'd,
And Exile they, for Punishment, sustain'd;
Yet seventy Years, of this was th'utmost date,
And God compass'onating their low Estate,
Did by his Prophets keep their Spirits up,
And tell when he'd remove that bitter Cup.

But since they last were driven from their Land,
They seem kept out by an Almighty Hand,
Banish'd, contemn'd, their Prophecies all cease;
And no fixt time for their return express;
Their Rabbies with Delusion seem poss'd,

To
the Christian Religion.

To Fables and ridic’ulous Doctrines fall,
Which they their Oral Law fottithly call;
These like blind Insects in their Talmud crawl.
Sometimes they’re equall’d, and sometimes prefer’d,
To what their Lawgiver from God declar’d.
There they the Godhead represent t’have wept,
To see Jerusalem’s mighty Ruins heap’d;
Of Behemoth and Leviathan maintain
Things so absurd, as to repeat were pain:
Yet all this while they the true God have serv’d,
And to the Worship of no false one serv’d:
None do their Slaughters or Adulteries blame,
And a warm Zeal does their griev’d Hearts inflame.
They fast and pray, an angry God t’appease,
And yet without Remorse he hears and sees:
None of their Propiti’ations can prevail:
Which shews that the Moaick Law does fail:
Or else some Sin their Nation has involv’d,
Through such a Tract of Ages unabolv’d.
It lies on them, either the Sin to name,
Or own ’twas slitting the Messiah, when he came.

That the Messiah’s come already’s plain;
That Jesus was the true, we here maintain.
Of all that e’re with that Pretence arose;
Or else, with whom, for such, People did close;
Not one of them has left a Sect behind,
By which what they deliver’d we may find.
Nor Herod, Judas, or Barchosebas,
Who for the Christ with learned Men did pass,
When Adrian did the Roman Empire sway:
But down from Jesus, to this very day

There
Of the Truth of

There have been, and throughout the World re-
main,
Those who this Jews for the Christ maintain.
And many other signs & here might give,
Which were foretold, or People did receive,
Which as fulfill'd in Jews we believe.

As that he was from (g) David's Seed to spring:
    That Him a (h) Virgin to the World should bring;
He who betroth'd her this (i) from heav'n was
    taught,

Or else the Nuptial Tie would not have sough:
    In (k) Bethleem he was born; and (l) Galilee
Did the first spreading of his Doctrine see.
    To every Malady he did Cure afford,

(m) Sight to the Blind, Feet to the lame refresh'd;
    But on one Sign alone I might rely,
Th' effect of which we at this day descrie,
    Do in plain Prophecies explicitly shew,

That Christ should not instruct the Jews alone,
    But that all Nations should his Precepts own;
The Worship of false Gods, through him should fail,
    And over far-spread Multitudes, the True prevail.

Until he came false Worships did abound;
    Thence forward by degrees they all lost ground,
And in the Worship of One God were drown'd.
    To Jesus and his Followers this we owe:
No such effect from Jewish Doctors know.

(f) Hof. 2. 23. The People thence who were not (r) God's, became
    Such, as for his, he with delight doth name.

(g) Gen. 49. 1. This, the fulfilling Jacob's (s) Blessing shows;
(h) Verk. 9. That Civil Pow'r (s) fierce Judah should not lose,
the Christian Religion.

Till (n) Shilo came, whom Nations should obey: (n) Ver. 10.
That this is the Messiah Jewish Doctors say.

The hard'n'd Jews here an Objection reign,
That many things still unfulfill'd remain,
Belonging to the true Messiah's Reign.
But those things at the best are but obscure,
And may as well another Sense endure:
For these, we ought not Evidence to leave,
Such as shines forth in that which we believe;
The Holiness of what this Jesus taught;
The excellent Reward to Light he brought;
All things exhibited in Speech most clear;
By Miracles his Mission made appear.
To prove his Doctrine true these should suffice:
But then for understanding Prophecies,
Which to seal'd Books we often find compar'd;
Men with some helps from God should be prepar'd,
Of which who flight things plain, are justly bar'd.

They know besides, that what makes their de-
is often render'd in a different Sense:
If they make search with an impartial Mind,
They ev'n their own Interpreters will find,
Who during their Captivity had wrote,
Or much about the time that Jesus taught,
In these agreeing with what Christians thought:
If one observe how later these oppose,
Writing since Hatred against Jesus rose;
This a plain Bias to their party shows.
Ev'n they themselves will without scruple own,
That Figures oft in Holy Writ are known.
The proper Sense being diff'rent from the True,
Which we in numerous Instances may view:
Thus
Of the Truth of

Thus God is mention’d coming from the Skies,
And oft describ’d with Mouth, Ears, Nose, and Eyes.

Why should we not in the like way explain,
Some things foretold of the Messiah’s Reign?
As that the Wolf and Lamb, Leopard and Kid,
Lion and Fatling, in one Covert hid,
Should lie together in a peacefull way?
That suckling Infants should with Serpents play?
God’s Mountain should above all others rise,
Thither should Strangers come to sacrifice?

Either the following or preceding words,
Where holy Penman, what’s foretold, records,
Oft prove Condition in the Sense imply’d:
Some Promises are thence the Jews deny’d,
Because they have not with the Christ comply’d.
Our Faith on this account they should not blame;
Since for the failure they must take the blame.
Some Promises we find without reserve;
If such they unaccomplish’d still observe,
What prejudice that yet their time’s not past?
They hold Messiah’s Reign till all things end
(shall fail.

Selc. XIX.

Answer to the Objection from the low Estate, and Death of Jesus.

Jesus his low Estate gives some Offence;
But the Objection is a vain pretence:
Almost throughout the Holy Writ ’tis seen,
God will dethrone the Proud, exalt the Mean.
Jacob past Jordan with his Staff alone,
But to return with Flocks and Herds was known.
Moses, a banish’d Shepherd, hardly far’d,
When in the burning Bush our God appear’d,
And him the Leader of his Flock declar’d.
David from Sheep, was to a Kingdom chose,
Many such Instances the Scripture shows.

We
the Christian Religion.

We find it read of this long-promis'd King,
That he glad-Tidings to the Poor should bring:
That he should not in publick make a Noise,
Nor use Reproach, but a gentle Voice:
Would cherish the bruised Reed, and that small
Which in a snuff maintains a doubtful seat.
His Death, and other Ills which he did bear,
Should not his Credit in the least impair.
God often in his wife Dispose thinks it
The Impious in their Ravage to permit,
And force the Pious poorly to submit.
The Sodomites with lustful Fury hot,
Made a poor Fugitive of rightous Lot.
Some have been slain, Abel by Parricide,
Isaiah is by piece-meals said 've di'd.
The Maccabees in Tortures did expire,
The Mother, with the Sons of her desire.
Many such Instances we here might bring;
'Tis written in those Psalms which th' Hebrue
Thy Servants Carcasses a Prey did yeild
Unto the Birds of th' Air, Beasts of the Field:
Their Blood like Water in the Streets does flow,
And none dare give the Burial which they owe.
That the Messiah was his Pow'r to gain,
Thro' many Troubles, and Death full of Pain,
Is from Isaiah beyond question plain.

Who has what we report duly receiv'd?
Who has the Pow'r of the most High believ'd?
And that the rather, since before his Eye
He grows up like a Plant wanting supply;
A starv'ling Root plac'd in a Sandy Ground,
No Form or Comeliness in him is found;
Nor if you see him, can you Beauty find,
Which thro' the Eye should work upon the Mind.
Of the Truth of

Of Men rejected, and expos'd to scorn;
And many are the Sorrow's by him born.
Those who insult not, will their Faces hide;
These exercise their Pity, others Pride;
Yet he our Griefs does sorely for us bear,
Our's the Advantage, his the Sorrow's are,
In his wounds our Transgressions are describ'd,
And our Iniquities have bruis'd his side.
His Chastisement procures our failed Peace,
And we are heal'd in what gives him Disease.
We all, like silly Sheep, have gone astray,
And each run bleeding his own footpath way.
For all our Aberrations he does pay.
Silent he bears Afflictions beyond thought,
And like a Lamb is to the Slaughter brought;
Or as a Sheep, before her Slicers dumb,
So does he to the bitter'st Sufferings come.
After a Pris'n and shameful Sentence past,
With form of Law he's taken off at last.
Yet after all, who's worthy to declare
That life of Glory falling to his share?
My Peoples Sins occasion'd his remove;
Thence 'twas he went to soon to's place above.
The wicked ins'olent with the Pow'r they have,
Drive him to Death and the devouring Grave:
Altho' he never did commit a Wrong,
Or e're impos'd with a deceitful Tongue.
But tho' God suffer'd all this to be done,
Since he refus'd not for our Sins t'atone,
But did himself a Victim for us pay;
His Seed, his Life, shall never know decay;
And thro' all Ages he our God shall please.
After his Travel he shall sit at ease,
With Joys the most sincere for ever-crown'd,
While numbers thro' him justified are found.

And
the Christian Religion.

And he discharged the Debt which on them lay,
Him with the price of Victory I'lay pay;
Because he did himself to Death resign,
As a Transgressor suffered a Wrath Divine.
For others' Sins he did endure the pain,
For them an Intercessor does remain.

What other Prince or Prophet can they show,
To whom his Character may be thought due?
What some of the late Jewish Writers feign,
As if 'twere of their Nation meant, is vain.
As if they, scatter'd over every land,
Should many bring the Truth to understand.
By their Example, and diffusive Speech,
The contrary to which the Scriptures teach:
Shewing that they have suffer'd nothing ill,
But for their Sins they were to suffer still.
The Series too of what's deliver'd here
Will not endure such a strain'd Sense to bear.
The Prophet, rather God, does there declare;
My People's Sins of this th'occasion are:
God's; or Isaiah's, People, were the Jews:
This then, That 'twas another suffer'd, saiths.
Their ancient Jewish Rabbies have confest
These things of the Messiah were express'd:
With which some of the later being prest,
Upon the Fict'ion of two Christs do fall;
One they indeed the Son of Joseph call,
Who was to suffer Ills and Death at last;
Another for the Son of David past;
All things with him should happily succeed:
This from partiality must needs proceed.
'Tis easier, and does better far agree
With what we in Prophetick Writings see;
Of the Truth of
T'acknowledge one who was to gain his Pow'r,
By Life of pain, and shame at the last hour;
Which we believe of Jesus to be true:
If we were silent, This, the thing it self
should shew.

Some Jesus and his Doctrine disbeliev'd,
On an Opinion they had preconceiv'd,
That they who did first Opposit'on raise,
Were Men for Probity deserving Praife:
Chiefly the Priests who warmli' est did proceed,
Here I, for Satyr, no Invention need. 
Let them but their own Law and Prophets,
There does in lively Characters appear,
What sort of Men their Predecessors were;
As Men uncircumcis'd of Heart and Ear,
That with Lip-service they to God draw nigh,
With Hearts which in Earth's furthest Corners lie.
Their Predecessors would have Joseph slain,
Slav'ry was all the mitigation he could gain.
Of them they were whose Factions Moses tir'd,
So much that he to end his Life defir'd.
Whose Rod the Earth and Air were known
t'obey,
At one dread shake the astonish'd Sea made way;
The Sea less deaf, and less disturb'd than they,
These were not satisfy'd with heav'nly Bread;
Belching up Quails still wanted to be fed.
Such leaving David their Anointed King,
To his Rebellious Son their Homage bring.
They Zacharias at the Altar flew,

The Victim of their Cruelty, the Priest did
Nor were their Priests less scandalously ill,
They by false Witness Jeremy would kill.

Lay-
the Christian Religion.
Lay-Piety indeed came in to's aid;
Yet him their Influence a Captive made,
Until themselves were force'd to the like fate.
Is't said, while Jesus blest this Earthly State,
The Priests then living greater Conscience made?
This fond Belief Josephus will dislawde:
Read there, how great their Crimes, how strange
their Woes:
That these were short of their Demerits be avows.
Nor can the Sanhedrim be better thought,
Since, as by th'History of those times we're taught,
Not choice, but great Men's Pow'r to th'Office brought.
Oftlen who gave the most, promoted were,
Before for Life, then but from Year to Year.
What wonder then if People swell'd with Pride,
With Avarice or Ambition for their guide,
Should be with an insatiate Fury mov'd,
At one whose holy Life theirs so reprov'd?
Against him they could no Objection raise,
But what they always met who merited most Praise.
The Prophet Micah thus to Prison was brought,
For standing to the Truth which God had taught,
Against four hundred of a diff'rent thought.
Ahab against Elias that did urge,
From which the Priests put Christ himself to
That he was the disturber of that Rest,
Of which till then Israel had been poss'd.
Did Christ against the Jewish Temple preach?
For this they did condemn their Jeremy's Speech.
Add farther, as their ancient Rabbies say,
Men shall be known in the Messiah's day,
Of the Truth of

As bold as Dogs, as stubborn as the Ass.
The Cruelty of Beasts, far to surpass.
And God himself, who plainly did foretell,
What in Messiah's time the Jews would be,
Says a, new People be for his will chuse:
While from the Streets and Cities of the Jews,
Scarce one or two ascend the holy Mount;
But he with Gentiles would fill up th'account,
A Stone of Stumbling, an offensive Rock.
Shall Christ become to Israel's scatter'd Flock,
But yet that Stone which the first Builders leave,
Others shall into the chief place receive.

XXI.
Answer to the Objection, that many Gods are worshipp'd by Christians.

Two Calumnies do: yet untouched remain;
With which the Jews Christi'anity would stain.
First, That we worship many Gods they feign.
But here with malice obvious to discern,
A Doctrine opposite to their's they turn.
Th'Objection equally affects the Jew,
As does their Philo evidently shew.
He three Hypotheses in God does name,
Unto him adds his Word which made this frame;
Who otherwise than Men from's Father came;
On the belief he of a Third does fall;
Him does Embassador, or Angel call,
To whom he does assign the care of all;
Adoves, Nehmarn's Son, with him agrees;
And in their Cabalis the like one fees.
They God distinguish as a threefold Light;
Some have the Names of which the Christians write:
The Father, Son, or Word, and Spirit Divine.
Here what's confest by all the Jews to joyn;

That
the Christian Religion.

That Spirit known the Prophets to inspire,
They do as something create, admire,
Distinguish'd still from him by whom 'twas sent:
And fo of 'what by Schechina is meant.
That Force Divine should in the Christ reside,
Which they call Wisdom, many Jews confide:
Whence the Chaldean paraphrast does accord
With Christ's ans. calling him th'Almighty's Word.
David, Isaiah, with more, taught of Heav'n,
The Name of God and Lord, to him have giv'n.

Another Inquisition here they lay,
That we to a meer Creature Worship pay:
But this with mighty ease is wip'd away;
Since we to Christ, no other Honour give,
Than what we in the Psalms his due perceive.
The second, David Kimchi thus applies;
Finding King David not so high to rise;
In Christ the Character at large decays:
Yet none did more than he. Christ's unity op-

The hundred and tenth Psalms which this yet
fuller shows;
Must needs be thought of the Messiah meant.
That which some Jews of later time invent
Of David, and of Hezekiah some,
Is but their Malice boiling up in scorn.
The Psalms of David's as the Inscript. 'on shews;
Where then King David calling, Lord, one views;
Can it be thought, this to himself he'd uie?
Or Hezekiah coming from his line,
When yet he did in nothing him out-shine?
Abram no Priestly Character possess'd,
And him Melchisedec devoutly blest,
As one whom a more sacred Order did infue.

XXII.
And that the Humane Nature is ador'd.

Psalms 2.
Psalms 110.
Of the Truth of

Ps. 110. 2. That which we added by the Psalmist know, 'A Rod of Strength shall out of Sion go, And make his distant Foes his Prome's see, Does evidently with the Christ agree. Nor did the ancient Jews e're differ here, And this in their old Paraphrases is clear. So great their Probity was fully known, Who for the Christ, the Nazarite, did own, That we for this might credit them alone; As well as Moses is by Jews believ'd, In what himself alone declares from God receiv'd.

But more, and stranger Arguments maintain, That Pow'r Suprem this Jesu did obtain; That many saw him come to Life again: That he was seen when to the Heav'n he past: That out of Men he raging Demons cast: Diseases cur'd by his tremendous Name: (came, And that the Gift of Tongues this Follow'd: Which he had promis'd for his Empire's sign; His Scepter too, that is, his Word Divine, From Sion went devoid of Humane Aid, And did the Limits of the Earth invade, People, and Kings, its sacred force obey'd: Exactly answering what the Psalmist told. Their Cabalists a middle Nature hold, Between the Highest, and the Humane Mind; For whom the name of Enoch's Son they find; With a much lower Pow'r to him assign'd. To him how much more justly this we yield, Who has himself with so much Light reveal'd? Against the Father's Pow'r, this does not make; Since we confess he this from him did take: To him at the end of all it must return; And we his Honour brightned hence discern.
the Christian Religion.

Unto more subtile Questions to descend,  
Were but the Readers time in waste to spend;  
These things I think may be enough to prove,  
That no Objection any Skill can move,  
Argues the Doctrines which this Jesus taught,  
Either absurd, or impious to be thought.  

What hinders then, but all Men should imbrace  
Those Doctrines, which such Miracles did grace,  
Which Precepts of such Sanctity commend,  
With a Reward so glorious in the end?  
 Whoever this for his Live's Rule does take,  
But Queristions more particular would make;  
Must search those sacred Books, which we maintain,  
The whole of our Religion to contain,  
That on Mens Minds these their due force may gain.

We ought with fervent Zeal that God implore,  
Whom Jews, and we, with holy Fear adore;  
That he to them would open the clos'd Door;  
That they may feel the beams of Light Divine,  
In their most inward Parts serenely shine:  
That that warm Pray'r's may efficacious prove,  
Utter'd for them by Christ when he did hence remove.
Of the Truth of
And after mutual various chances past,
They struck an undivided League at last.
Then, a Conformity of Manners, brought
The Turks to close with what the others taught:
Friendship prevail'd where Force did fruitless prove,
So much more pow'rful is the bond of Love:
Of Empire with the Turks remain'd the Seat,
Taking in Partners, they became more great:
Cities of Asia, and renowned Greece,
They soon compell'd to render up their Keys;
Their prosp'rous Arms in Hungary were crown'd,
And they broke through the stubborn German Bound.

This Doctrine, set up to encourage Fights,
Is glaringly drest out with gaudy Rites;
Their Books, call'd Holy, from the vulgar hid,
All free enquiry after Truth forbid:
Nothing more justly may Suspicion breed,
Than that they are prohibited to read:
Who would not think that an adult rate Ware,
For which who puts it off takes mighty care,
That none shall view the purchase he has made,
This being the condition of the Trade?
All Men indeed can't equally be brought
To understand all Objects of their thought;
Pride, Affectation, Custom, may misguide;
But that the way of Truth should be deny'd
To them who seek it without by-respect,
Themselves and all things else to God subject.
With this the Aid Divine warmly implore;
Would cloud the Goodness of Him we adore.
And since a judging Pow'r adorns the Mind,
What of that Pow'r can we more worthy find,
But
the Christian Religion.

But that those things should exercise it most,
Through Ignorance of which Eternal Life is lost?

Moses so pow'rful with his wondrous Rod,
Mahometans confess was sent from God;
This they of Jesus own, nor flock to say,
That holy Men first spread about his way;
Yet in their Alch'ran many things do lie,
Diff'ring from Moses and the Christian Verity.

Here, that I may but one Example name,
That on the Cross Christ dy'd, Scriptures proclaim;
That the third day he came to Life again,
Without delusion, seen of many Men:
O'th'other side by Mahomet, 'tis said,
That he was privately to Heav'n convey'd,
Upon the Cross th'Effigies only laid.
The Death of Christ he plainly thus denies,
And would not have the Jews believe their Eyes:
Th'Objection can no other Answer bear,
But that the Books remain not what they were,
The contrary to which we've made appear.

If any this against their Alch'ran urge,
The bare denial would be thought to purge;
But they for that can ne're such proofs pretend,
As have been shewn on holy Writ t'attend:
As that it soon throughout the World did pass,
Not in a single Tongue (as th'Alch'ran was),
Faithfully kept by each divided Sect,
Who one anothers Frauds must needs detect.
Christ's welcome Promise, enter'd by St. John,
To send the Comforter when he was gone,
Mahometans suppose t'have curtail'd been,
That something there of Mahomet was seen;

But
Of the Truth of

But that the Christians to suppress this Light,
Blotted the passage of malicious light;
On which this Question may an Answer need,
Was't after Mahomet; or did precede?
After it could not be, since then were found
Copies dispersed throughout the World round,
The Greek, the Syriac, Arabe; were known,
Æthiopic; and in Latin more than one:
But in that place these all are known't agree;
Nor can we the least various Version see:
No cause of change before that could be thought;
None could foresee what would by him be taught.
Tho nothing contrary to Christ he brought;
Who can of those who follow Christ believe;
They should the Books of Mahomet receive
Before what Moses and the Hebrew Prophets leave.
Suppose on neither side a Writing were (clare,
That might what Christ or Mahomet taught de-
Reason would teach that that for Christ's should pass,
Which that esteem among the Christians has;
For Mahomet's that, which to his Followers take.
Of both now the Comparison let's make,
While we the Adjuncts and Affectations view,
Whence which deserves the preference we may
First for the Authors; the other side agree; (threw.
Men did in Jesus that Messiah see,
Of whom the Promise in the Law did pass, (chas.
The Word of God's his Name; which Mahomet
Vary'd to Wisdom, and the Filial Mind:
That he no Earthly Father had, is joyn'd;
While Mahomet was got the common way,
As the most zealous of his Followers say.

Long
the Christian Religion.

Long was rapacious, ever too inclin’d,
To satiate his warm lust with Woman-kind.
Mahomet owns Jesus t’ascend the Skies,
Under his Tomb himself a Relick lies;
Who cannot see which most we ought to prize?

Compare their Deeds: ev’n Mahomet does own,
That Christ t’endue the Blind with Sight was known;
To Cripples he the use of Feet did give,
And made the Dead with Breath recall’d to live.
Th’other for Miracles urges Alarms,
And thinks to prove his Mission by his Arms:
Yet they who after him his Rules imbibe,
What they call Miracles to him ascribe;
But either they from human Art might move,
As what is story’d of th’attendant Dove,
Or such as by no Witnesses they prove;
As that a Camel spake to him by Nights,
Or what against all Sense absurdly fights.
As that upon him part o’th’Moon was found,
Which he return’d to fill a stary round.

Who will not say, that when Disputes arise,
That Law is to be chose where one decries
That clearest proof of sacred Sanction lies.
Let us observe what sort of Men were they,
Who first took up the one, or t’other way.

Christians the World, Men fearing God, did
Of Innocence unfally’d from below: (know)
And with God’s Goodness how can it agree,
To suffer such to drown in Error’s Sea,
Cheated by Words of the most specious shew,
Or Deeds seeming miraculous to view?
Who first for Mahomet their Notions chang’d,
Were Robbers, even from Humanity estrang’d.

Mark
Of the Truth of

VII

Mark then the manner, in which each was found to propagate the Rule he did propound: Christ’s was not spread by Miracles alone, Grew by their Suff’rings who the Cross did own, Neither of these Mahometans can boast, Miracles wrought, Lives for their Doctrines left: But their Religi’on with their Arms encreast, A meer accession unto them at best; Their mighty Empire and in Wars succeed, Their Teachers as the pow’rful Motives press, Than which can nothing more fallacious be: Them to oppose the Ethnick Rites we see, Which Persians, Macedonians, Romans, spread, Conquest attending where they Armies led, Their thriving Limits stretch’t out vastly far: The Turks were oft impropersous in War; By Sea and Land how often were they beat? How forc’d in Spain to quit their ancient seat? What is so mutable a doubtful Chance, Which now the Good, now does the Bad advance, Can be no standard by which one may shew, Which is the false Religion, which the true? And that the less, since we can rarely find, That they the Justice of their Arms will mind, These often they injuriously extend, Where they no Provocation can pretend, Unles’s that they would strive this way t’ enlarge The bounds of Truth committed to their charge; Thus hood-wink’d Zeal should for those Deeds atone,

Than which nothing’s more irreligious known: God’s Worship in the Will is known to lie, Which whose forces, takes away the Tie; This may be wrought upon by gentle ways; ’Tis not of Will when one by force obeys: Where
the Christian Religion:

Where ever Prospectus such means do gain,
'Tis not that they believe, but poorly feign,
To shun the present, or impending pain:
Who does by Violence Assent compel,
Therein the weakness of his Cause does tell;
Yet they themselves take this pretence away,
For many People subject to their sway,
Have an Indulgence for their former way.
Nor do Mahometans scruple to own,
Men may be sav'd trusting in Christ alone.

Let's next the Precepts mutually compare:

One teaches greatest Injuries to bear,
And take our Enemies into our care;
Th'o' other usurps upon the Right divine,
While it Retaliation does enjoy
The Nuptial Band one renders ever fast,
And checks ev'ry occasion of distaste,
The other makes it but on pleasure last:
The Husband does what he would have his Wife,
Leading with her an undivided life;
By his Example teaches single Love,
More, there allow'd, to lust Incentives prove.
This calls Religion inward to the Mind,
That it may bring forth Fruits worthy Mankind:
That does its force in Circumcision spend,
With other things which to no good do tend.
This yeilds the temp'rate use of Meat and Wine,
There 'tis prohibited to eat of Swine;
Wine too, the Gift of God, is there deny'd,
Tho' thence, provided Moderation guide,
Body and Mind are with fresh Spirit's supply'd.
No wonder if before the perfect Law,
Men Childish Rudiments as previous law:
When from the Sun God did the Clouds withdraw.

And
And men its open Glories might discern,
Preposterous were to Figures to return:
Since Christ's Religion Men must perfect own;
What ground for adding to it can be shown?

Warmly Mahometans urge in dispute;
That to the Godhead we a Son impute;
When yet a Wife was never to him join'd:
As if the name of Son in God fulfill'd,
Something far more divine we did not find,
Than th'acceptation when to Man confin'd:
Besides a Female partner of his Love (prove,
Would much more worthy of the Godhead
Than many things which Mahomet has told,
As that his Hand is beyond measure cold,
Experienc'd by himself who did it hold:
That in a Chair he's carry'd up and down,
With other things which Reason must disown.
We, who the Son of God, blest Jesus call;
On an Idea no less sacred fall,
Than he, where he the Word of God does name;
And as an Offspring from his Mind it came,
Add here the Spirit supply'd a Father's force,
A Virgin bore him against Nature's course:
Him God did visibly to Heav'n translate;
These things does Mahomet himself relate;
All which evince that in peculiar way,
That he's the Son of God, we may, and
ought to say.

Beyond due bounds it would this Treatise swell,
Did we of all those idle Fables tell,
Which in the Achoran are known't abound;
As that some Angels, while the Cyp's went round,
the Christian Religion.

And a fair Virgin sat attentive by,
Taught her a Song with which to mount the Sky;
That oft the thither went with this inspir'd,
At last unto an higher flight being sir'd,
There caught by God was turn'd to a fixt Star;
That this was Venus, Pattern to the fair.
That while the World liv'd in a single House,
The Elephantine Dung brought forth a Mouse:
And that a Lion's Breath produc'd a Cat:
Nor, surely, less ridiculous is that,
Where he of a scape-Ram does Wonders tell,
Hung in the middle between Heav'n and Hell,
Which carries on its back Death's murdr'ing fiores;
And of excercing Banquets through the pores:
That each should have his Flocks of Wome-kind,
For his continu'd lusts, in Heav'n assign'd:
Their Faith in these we must a Judgment think,
Through which into Stupidity they sink:
Since chiefly, the bright beams of Light Divine
About them with commanding Lume shine.

This Argument I need no farther press.
Here not to Strangers only I address;
But unto them, as much, who Christ profess;
What's said already let's to use apply,
Follow what's good, and what is noxious fly;
While we with spotless Hands invoke his Aid,
Who things unseen and seen equally made;
Assur'd that all things in his Conduct share,
And not a Sparrow falls without his Care:
Him let's not fear who can the Body kill,
But who can Soul and Body crush at will,
Nor must we in the Father only trust,
To place the like in Jesus is but just;

K 2

Who
Of the Truth of

Who has obtain'd the only Name on Earth,
Through which the state of Happiness has Birth;
And yet in vain we call or God, or Lord,
Unles we yeild Obedience to their Word;
Him to a Life of Glory God will raise,
Who does his Will, not him who loudly prays.
Christ's holy Doctrine let's a Treasure hold;
Exceeding far that valu'd trifle, Gold;
Oft read those Books which shew what we believe,
Where none can be deceiv'd, who don't themselves deceive.

More faithful, more inspir'd the Pen-men were,
Than that they'd necessary Truths forbear,
Or wrap them up in any envyous Cloud;
Minds we must bring obsequiously bow'd,
Which if we do, our God will nothing throw'd,
By us to be believ'd, or hop'd, or done;
He'll perfect this his Work in us begun,
Will cherish and excite his growing Grace,
A pledg of what shall crown our finisht Race.

From imitating Pagans let's abstain;
First in their worshipping of Idols vain,
Nothing in truth but Names ill Spir'ts brought in,
To make Mens very Worship prove their Sin:
If of their Rites held sacred we partake,
Christ's Sacrifice to us we fruitless make.
Next let's not live in their licenti'ous way,
Who servilely the Law of Flesh obey.

Christians should to far nobler things aspire,
Beyond ev'n what the Jewish Laws require,
Or the proud Phar'ees, seeming to rise higher;
Their Right'ousness lay but in outward things,
Th' observing which to Heav'n none ever brings:
the Christian Religion.

Heart-Circumcision, not the work of hand,
With true obedience to Divine Command,
Are things in which we shall accepted stand:
God's Spirit must without resistance move,
And raise a living Faith working by Love:
This shews true Israels, those mystick Jews,
Who sing God's Praises, and whom he does chuse.
Diff'rence of Meats, Sabbaths, and holy Days,
Are shadows scatter'd by Messiah's Rays,
In him we the Comple'tion of those Types
should praise.

Mahometism may this 't our Thoughts suggest;
That in the Christian Law it is express'd,
That after Jesus many should arise,
Who should pretend their Mission from the Skies.
But tho an Angel should from Heav'n descend,
Did he another Doctrine recommend,
Than what Christ taught, and Miracles maintain'd,
We should reject, and think his Errand reign'd.
In various ways God heretofore did speak
To them who did his Will sincerely seek;
At last to such his only Son he sent,
Who did his Father fully represent,
The perfect Image of paternal Light;
Which in the bright Reflect'on feasts the Sight,
The Lord and Maker of the World's great Scene,
Whose Influence still throughout the whole is seen.

When for our Sins he had Atonement made,
He was immediately to Heav'n convey'd,
Where the officious Angels give him place,
Whom with a Throne of Glory God does grace.
Such being the Author of the Law we obey,
For something still more noble should we stay?
Of the Truth of

On this occasion we should call to Mind,
What are the Arms Christ's Soldiers have
affix'd,
Not such as bloody Mahomet enjoy'd;
Such as the Spiritual Warfare does require,
To raze those holds to which our Lulls retire,
Which to subvert God's Law boldly aspire.
Faith would a Shield invulnerable lend,
'Gainst all those fiery Darts the Demons send.
A righteous Life's a well-wrought Coat of Mail,
Which in no Circumstance is known to fail:
The hope of Happiness an Helmet proves,
Which danger from the threatened head removes:
Instead of Sword, the sacred Writ we find;
Piercing the close Receptes of the Mind.
Such Concord should unite each Christian Heart,
As Christ bequeath'd when he from hence did part.

We should not many for our Guides receive;
But him, the only One from God, believe.
Baptiz'd into his Name all Christians are;
Wherefore of Sects and Schisms we should
beware,
His seamless Coat 'tis impious to tear:
And that into this fault we may not fall,
Th' Apostle's Dictates we should oft recal;
Who bids each Man be temperately wise,
According to the measure God supplies,
That we, as in one Body, may together grow.
If more than others one has understood,
In their Instruction let him make it good;
If yet they can't arrive to the true Sense,
Still hope that God will farther Light dispence.

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the Christian Religion.

I'thin'trim let's act up to what we know; Our knowledge is imperfect while below, We shall be fill'd above where the clear Fountains flow.

Each in particular should have a care, Not t'hide the Talent fallen to his share; But to lay out the utmost of his Pow'r, That Men may close with Christ in happy hour; For this, as well as good Advice to give, He an Example of his Rules must live; That of the Master they may well conceive, Who see what Men in him alone believe; And they that Law may value as the best, Whose Purity is in their Lives express.

If any thing which I have offer'd here, Does under a good Character appear, Let God, from whom it came, the Praises bear:

And let the Sense of humane Frailty move, At least to pardon, what you don't approve; Think too of time and place when this came forth, Rather an Embr'yo, than a perfect Birth.

FINIS.
Virgil's Fourth ECLiGUE
faithfully translated.

Sicilian Muse! let's take a nobler flight; Shrubs and low Sylvan Scenes can't all delight; Yet if a Grove our Verses celebrate, That shall become worthy a Consul's State: Time, i'th appointed round, presents that Age, Which the Cumian Sybil did preface. The Virgin now visits the Earth again, And peaceful Saturn brings his happy Reign; While a new Offspring comes down from above:

May chast Lucina but propitious prove, And with a gentle hand forward that Birth, Which is to purge the Iron from the Earth, No Metal to allay pure Gold being known: This is the time Apollo mounts the Throne.


This
Virgil's Fourth Eclogue.

This Pollio! shall thy Consulship adorn,
This Age's Grace shall during that be born:
Hence shall the joyful Epocha begin,
While thou presidest is the fall of Sin;
No traces of former Guilt shall stay behind;
Nor shall it longer terrify Mankind.
He shall ascend unto a Life Divine,
Where mingled with the Gods the Hero's shine;
Himself conspicuous above the rest:
The Universe shall under him be blest.
And find the Father in the Son express,
The unforced Earth shall ready Tribute bring,
At the Nativity of thee its King;
The blushing Berry with green Ivy twin'd,
Th' Egypt an Bean, with Herbs of sov'reign
kud:
The Pails with fatning Goat's Milk shall run
o're,
Nor shall the Herds fear when the Lions roar.

Teq: adeo decus hoc eis, te Consule, inibi
Pollio, & incipient magni procedere mensae
Te duce, siga manent seaceris vestigia nostri,
Eruta perpetua solvet formidine terras.
Ille Deum virtutem accipiet, Divisq; videbit
Pamidias Herae, & ipsa videbitur illis
Pacatumque veget Patris Virtutibus Orbem.
At tibi prima, puere, nullo mensucale cultu,
Errantes hederas passim cum baccare tellus.
Mutilis, videnti colocalia fundet acantho.
Ipsaque domum referent disposita Capella
Ubera: nec magnos metens armenta Leonis.

All
Virgil's Fourth Elegy

All sorts of new-springing flowers thy cradle strew,
Crowning thy infant tears before the morning dew.

Serpents shall die, the poison's force decay,
And wild Assyrian roses clothe the way.
But when the hero's propitious, and the deeds,
The enlightened youth of the thread father reads,
And knows the grounds from whence true fame proceeds;
Corn shall enrich the fields, where none did grow,
And cheering grapes on common bushes grow.
From the hard oak shall rose and honey flow.
Yet there some remnants of old fraud shall be,
Which shall again provoke to try the sea.
A numerous neighbourhood with walls 'enclose,
And vex the passive earth with fur'wing ploughs:
Of a new Tiphys Stories shall be told,
Another Argus shall cull'd hero's hold;
Frenzied wars shall be begun, another Troy,
Shall an Achilles feel sent to destroy.

Ipsa tibi blandus iucundae curantula flores
Occidentis Serpens fallax herba venetis
Occidentes: Assyriam vulgo nascetur amonum.
At simul Herois labedes falla parentis
Jam legere; quo sit potestis cognoscere virtus;
Mollis paulatim flavescet campus arista,
Inculsis: rubens pendebit sensibus sua;
Et dura quercus fidabunt roscida melia.
Paucis semen suberunt veteris vestigia fraudis.
Quae tentare Thetis ratibus, quem crebere muris
Oppida: qui jubebat telluris infindere fulcos:
Alter est tum Tiphys, alteraque quae vehat Argo
Distant Heroes: eum etiam altra bella,
Aqr: iterum ad Trojan magnum mittetur Achilles.

But
Virgil's Fourth Elegy.

But when thou shalt in Years become mature,
The Sailer shall no more rough Seas endure;
No Ships shall coast about for Foreign Ware,
All things within it self each Realm shall bear,
Plough-thares no more shall tear the fertile ground,
No Pruning-hooks the bleeding Vines shall wound;
The lab'ring Ox shall from the Yoak be free;
Nor shall we Wool dy'd with false Colours see;
A natural Purple, or becoming Red
Shall, as he stalks along, the Ram bespread;
Lambs a more orient Red shall sweetly stain.
Such times as these the steady Fates ordain,
Working th'agreeing Links of the sure Chain.
Enjoy thy sacred Honours now in peace, (create!
Thou darling Son o' th'Gods! Jove's great ens-
Sec! how the tottering World expects thy hand,
Made to support the Heav'n's, the Sea, and Land.

Hinc ubi jam firmata virum te seeere atas,
Cedet eis se mari vecto, nec nautica penis
Mutabit merces: omnis feret omnia tellus.
Non rastros patetur humaneus, non vinca falces:
Robustus quoq, jam tauris juga solvet arator,
Nec varios discet mentiri lana colores:
Ipse sed in pratis arios jam suave rubenti
Maurice, jam creacio mutabit vellera lato;
Sponse sui fendi pastentes vestit agnos,
Talia fcta suis dixerunt currite suis,
Concordes stabili tatorum numine Parce.
Agredere o magnos (adris jam tempus) honores,
Chara Deum soloes, magnum Iovi incrementeum.
Aspice, convexo nutamem pondere mundum,
Terrae, praebus, maris, Coelum, profundum.

Nature
Virgil’s Fourth Eclogue.

Nature, behold! puts on a cheerful face,
Finding thy season flowing on apace.
Oh! that my life and spirit might suffice,
To praise the glories to which thou shalt rise:
While full of thee I should not fear to vie
With Orpheus, were the Muse his mother by;
Nor Linus, tho’ Apollo did inspire
His raptur’d son with all his holy fire.
Should Pan, ev’n in his own Arcadia sing,
Arcadia should to me the laurel bring.
By Smiles the knowledge of thy mother gain,
Thou perfect recompense of all her pain!
Learn by the smiles: where parents don’t rejoice,
No God, or Goddess made that house their choice.

Aspice, venturo latenter ut omnia seco.
O mibi tam longa maneat pars ultima vice,
Spiritus & quantum sat erit tua discere fatua.
Non me carminibus vince nec Thraciu Orpheus,
Nec limus: huius mater quamvis atq; huius pater
Orpheai Calliope, Linum formosus Apollo: (adsit:
Pan Deus Arcadia necum faciit judice certet,
Pan etiam Arcadia dicet faciit judice vicium.
Incipite puer puero rison coegos cere matrem:
Matri longa decem tulerant fasidia menses.
Incipite puer puero qui non visere parentes,
Nec Deus humc mensae, Dea nec dignata cubili est.

APPEN-
APPENDIX.


Despite not Prophecyings: Or rather, reckon not as if there are no true Prophecies.

CHAPEL I.

Of the Importance of Prophecies for confirmation of the Christian Religion; how the Sibyline Verses were preserved, and the Primitive Christians justified in their Appeals to them. Their Authority confirm'd, by a Passage cited as St. Paul's, by Clement of Alexandria.

Of all the Arguments excellently urg'd by Grotius, and but enervated by my Rythms, there is none which seems more undeniably to enforce the belief of a Deity, and the Religion which Christ Jesus taught Man-
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Mankind, than the Evidence that there have been, at least in some Ages of the World, such Predictions as have manifested a fore-knowledg of those future Events, of which it was impossi-
ble to have the least intimation from any Cause, or Sign, appearing only by natural Light; and that such an one as the blessed Jesus, had been fore-shewn, and was accordingly expected, about that time when he first convers’d among Men.

Numbers not injudicious, may be impos’d upon with appearances seemly miraculous, either by a Confederacy, flight of hand, or natural Ma-
gick, in applying the occult Qualities of things new and strange.

But it must evidently be beyond all humane Power, to know future things in their remote Causes, the Causes themselves not existing till many Ages after; nay, where the Causes act ar-
bitrarily, and consequently the Effects are wholly contingent.

Whether the Instruments of conveying to Mankind the notices of such things, were actu-
ated by good or bad Spirits, is not of any Conse-
quence here; since if they were bad, it shews the influence of a superiour Being, which makes the very Devils subservient to that Power, which was to destroy their Kingdom.

And it cannot but be look’d upon as a great Mercy and Providence of God, that he not only left witness of himself among the Jews, in those Prophecies, which sufficiently pointed out the Time, Place, Person, and Character of the Messi-
ab. But that the Gentiles might have no pre-
tence that these were Juggles, and a mere Con-
spiracy against their ancient and establish’d Rites,
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be so ordered, it, That the Roman Capitol should become a Sanctuary, and Depository of those Divine Truths; That there the Sibylline Writings, which describe that pacific Prince, who was to be born of a Virgin, so clearly, that thence is now taken the main Objection against their Authority; should be preferred with that care, which might prevent all manner of scruples with unbiased minds, against those mighty Testimonies (c) Justin de-
dicates his Apo-
logy to Antoni-
mus Pius, who
began his Reign
A.Christi 139.
the Apology sup-
posited to be wrote
about the year
150. vide En-
feb. Hist. lib.4.
c. 12. Cluv. E-
Tallents Tables.

To those therefore the Primitive Fathers, (a) Justin Martyr, (b) Clement of Alexandria, (c) Tertullian, and Origen, even the last of which was born within the second Century, appeal’d in their Disputes with the Heathens, or Apologies for themselves. (d) Celsus his Objection, That the Christians had inferred many, and blasphemous things into the Sibyle Books, is so far from an Objection that ought to weigh with us; that it is a Confirmation of our Faith, and that those Writings contained such things of one to be born into the World, as the Heathens accounted it Blasphemy to ascribe to any but their Gods, or the great Jove, or Jebova.

Origen’s Challenge, for Celsus to shew what the Christians had inferred, not being answered, were of it self a sufficient disproof of this Ca-
fumny: but ’tis strange it should be taken up
with Clement. Christians now, especially by the Learned (e) I- Vid.Cluv.p.294
fane Vossius, who in the main defends the Siby-
line Writings; for what ever may have been ad-
ded through the officious, or mistaken Zeal of
(e) v. Vossius
any Christians since, ’tis highly improbable that de Sibyllinis
it should have been so in Celsus his time, or as Oraculis.

long as the Capitol stood, to which the Heathens
would
would certainly have refuted, to falsifie the Quotations made by the Christianis, if they had not been exactly true. Nor can it be imagin'd how the Christianis should at any time, after the birth of our Saviour, till the burning of the Capitol, which was about the Year of Christ 395, be able to thrust in any spurious Copies among those which were receiv'd by the Heathens.

For before our Saviour's birth, (c) Augustus had made a Collection of those Books of the Sibyls, which upon examination were found authentic; these were laid up in two gilded Hutch's, under the foot of a Pillar in the Temple of Palatine Apollo, where they were preserved as the most (d) sacred Possession which they had. And whereas at first two, and after that ten, were appointed the Keepers and Priests of those scatter'd Oracles, which they had formerly gathered together, fifteen had the Charge of this new Collection; and in all Emergencies of State, or portentous Accidents, these Quindecemvirs consulted the fatal Books, as they call'd them, by the Decree of the Senate, and without such Decree these Officers were not to acquaint the People with any Verse there.

Nay, there was great care taken that they might not be cheated with new, or false Copies; when in Tiberius his time, Caiusius Gallus, one of the Quindecemvirs, presid'd for a Decree of the Senate, for having a Book then found, treasure'd among the other Writings of the Sibyls (whether there...
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there was but one, or more, Tacitus, who relates it, would not determine.) Tiberius tells him by Letter, that he was ignorant what was the ancient Custom upon such a discovery, which was, to have every Verse read and weighed in full Senate before it was received, and then the matter was to be left to the Priests, that they might use all possible humane means for discerning the true from false.

That the Christians therefore could not cheat them in this matter, and would have been disproved by authority of the Senate, if they made any false Quotations, cannot be doubted.

The only Question remaining is, How the Christians could come by any of these Writings, which were kept with so much caution, that none were admitted to them but the immediate Officers intrusted with them, nor could they publish them without a Decree from the Senate: And further yet, as it is in Tiberius his Letter mentioned by Tacitus, Augustus made a Law, That whenever any Copy of such Writings should occur, it should within a day be carried to the Pretor, or Mayor of the City, and that no private Person should retain any by him.

Notwithstanding all which, it is easily supposable that the Christians, and others, might have made large Collections of those Predictions which were there treasured up: And Augustus his Decree seems to concern only what looked like Originals, or were Copies from other parts, of which they had nothing in the Capitol.

But in Tully's time the Sibylline Writings were in all peoples hands, and some seem to have made

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And *Tully* takes notice of a Decree of the Senate against the reading of those Books, as obsolete, and antiquated; but thinks it reasonable that this Decree should be revived to prevent Superstition; but then there was no restraint to keep Tully, and the other Enquirers of that Age, from satisfying their Curiosity about these; And several of their Verses are mentioned in the Authors of those Times, agreeably to which *Lattamius*, who was born within the third Century, says, that the Sibylline Verses which the Christians then *urged* against the Heathens, were taken out of *Tully*, *Varro*, and other Ancients, who died before Christ was born.

And that these Verses were in many hands before the middle of the second Century after our Saviour, is evident in *Justin Martyr*, who imputes it to the prevalence of Devils, or *Damn* that the Sibylline Books, among others, were to prohibited; yet, says he, "we not *only* possess them without fear, but (as you see) offer them to your view.

Which shews that the Prohibition *extends* only to Men of their own Rites; and the Decree against the reading of them, seems to have revived to prevent the *spreading* of Christi not that it was always *inforced*. *Justin*
APPENDIX.

the reading of these was made capital; 'That by Jut. Mar.
'fear they might turn away Men that are apt to
believe the knowledge of Good; and that they
may keep them Slaves to themselves.

Upon three accounts it is easily to be conceiv'd,
how the Sybils Verses should have been publick.

1. It might have been through the Treachery
of Officers entrusted with them, who might
have privately transcribed them, as Attilus did,
who was one of the two entrusted with the
Collection then made, and for the breach of that
Trust suffered as a Parricide.

2. The occasions of consulting these Verses
were very frequent and numerous; and the Ver-
ses which were then made publick were, no
doubt, carefully preserv'd, and communicated
from one to another.

3. Those Writings which were kept in the
Capitol before Augustus his time, were for the
most part Transcripts from what were recorded
in several parts of Greece; from amongst these
and others, Augustus made his Collection; and
as it was no difficult thing to have recourse to
those places, from whence any of them had been
transcribed; no more was it to have sufficient
Evidence, which, among the Verses so recorded,
were transcribed and carried into the Capitol.

Upon which Considerations, I should think
it no more strange, that many Sibylline Writings
should be in the hands of Christians while the
Capitol stood, agreeing with Verses there recor-
ded, than that several Copies of any Book, should
agree with the same Original: and as the Chris-
tians, by quoting the Sibyls to the Heathens,
shewed their assurance that the Quotations were
right,
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right, and of such Writings as the Heathens themselves received for Authorities; so their not being disproved in particular instances, the Jews, that their assurance was well grounded.

And this will be further evident, if any one of the Apostles at any time used their Authorities, either to Heathens, or Christians; for tho’ this Argument was not so necessary, that we ought to suppose the Apostles inspired to know the Contents of these Verses, before they came to their hands: Yet we cannot think, that the holy Spirit, which was to lead them into all Truth, would suffer them to quote any thing adulterate; nor is it to be imagined that any Christian then, could have counterfeited these Verses, and not be discovered.

Clement of Alexandria, speaking of God’s Mercy, not only to the then Christians, and Jews, but to the Gentiles also, and of his having raised up Prophets among them, says, “Besides the Preaching of St. Peter, St. Paul manifestis, or will manifest, the same, who says,

“Observe the Sibyl how she declares one God, and the things which were to come: Take and read His passions, and there you will find it much more clearly and plainly of the Son of God, &c.

That this passage is not to be found among the Writings of St. Paul now extant, is not of it self of greater weight, than if any of the Primitive Christians should have mentioned some expression, or action of our Saviour’s, of which a clear Tradition then ran; tho’ it were not recorded by any of the Evangelists: whereas St. John concluding his Gospel, says;

John 21. 25. And there were many other things which Jesus did,
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did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose the World itself could not contain the Books that should be written.

Tis evident, by the manner of the Quotation, that what Clement cites as St. Paul's words, were among them to whom he wrote, as much accounted St. Paul's, as any passage which he cites from St. Peter, was thought to be his.

So that there is no more in this Objection, than that this has not been transmitted down to us, in the same manner with the rest of S. Paul's Writings.

But, circumstances considered, we are not here so much as to examine whether Clement, who mentions this, was one of integrity; but the only Question will be, Whether he, and others of that time, might have sufficient evidence, whether any Writings, which went under the name of any Apostle, were in truth his whole name they then bore? Nor can there be any great Question of this here, if we consider, that Clement finished his Book in the time of the Emperor Severus, who died Anna Christi 212, St. Paul died about the Year 67 or 69; so that here were but 145 Years at the most, to preserve Euseb. Epit. the Tradition, and not 100 to Clement's being of years of understanding; and Polycarp, aDisciple of one of the Apostles, lived till the year of Christ 168. So that, with him at least, Vid. Euseb. Clement and others then alive, might have conversed, and Vid. Tertullian Tables possibly with some of St. Paul's own Followers.
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To say there were no Revelations before concerning the Messiah, were to deny the holy Word which records the Prophecies among the Jews, nay, and that of Baalam the Moabish Sorcerer.

Yet there is no doubt but the Apostles and Prophets under the Gospel, had a more steady Light to guide them; and herein the Sibyls seem to have been far short of the Christian or Jewish Prophets.

1. That they themselves understood not the true meaning of what they spake in a Divin Fury.

2. Nor could they bring any Evidence to satisfy the World of the truth of what they foretold; and therefore, how clear soever the Predictions seemed by the Event, they were obscure till then, and of little or no use at first, especially in comparison with those which were uttered for the Comfort of God's People, and were often publickly attested by convincing Miracles.

3. And the People among whom they were delivered, had not those Anticipations, or Pre-dispositions, which might fit them for the receiving that Light. So that what would have brought a clear Day to others, could make but a very little dawnning with them, by reason of that Darkness which encompass'd them; and upon that account their Light was to be accounted weak, as not able to disperse the Clouds which lay in the way; and by how much the first Rays were requisite; by so much were Illuminations the more imperfect.

Cie. de Div. H. i. 2. The second Head observsable in Vam what he urges out of Tully, who, in
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Book of Divination, represents his Brother Quintus his Arguments to show, that there was such a thing as a fore-knowledge of future Contingencies; for which Tully owns, that he brought many (a) clear and illustrious Instances known among the Romans.

Being to answer his Brother's Arguments he says; He (b) affirms nothing, in all things is only upon the enquiry, for the most part doubts, and distrusts himself, or his own Arguments.

dicit; sed in nihil ut affirmem, quzram omniz, dubitas plerumque, & mihi ipse diffidens. ib.

And that which he seems most to triumph in, is, rather a cavilling at the definition of Divination given by his Brother, than a disproving the possibility that the Gods should certainly fore-know what is to come to pass, and communicate that knowledge to Men, without destroying the nature of Contingency by any compelling necessity.

1. When he comes to object against the Authority of the Sibylline Writings, one Objection against the Sibyll.

2. Another is, that the Acrosticks, in which sort of Verse the Predictions, or most of them, were wrote, shew them to be rather the Effect of wife, Art and Diligence, than of Incitation and Fury: pag. 39.

As if that Power which inspired the Sibyl, could...
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could not as well do it in that manner, as in one more negligent: Besides, it could not derogate from the Prediction, if the substance of what was imprinted on the Mind, from whatever Spirit, was afterwards regularly digested; if this were before what was foretold came to pass.

3. The last Objection is against the Faithfulness of the Officers, who were entrusted with this their sacred Possession.

One of the Predictions, which in Tully's time was pronounced as fitting for the occasion on which they were then consulted, being that mentioned by Grotius.

*Quem re vera Regem habeamus, appellandum est: esse Regem si salvi esse vellemus.*

"That he who in truth was our King, ought to be called or owned for King, if we would be safe, or save'd.

Tully, who was an Enemy to the name of King, says,

*Cum Antiistisibus agamus, ut quidvis potius ex illis libris quam Regem proferant.*

"Let us manage the matter so with the Officers, that they produce out of those Books any thing rather than a King.

Upon this Vandale enlarges, as if it were a mere trick of State, and that the Officers made the Sibyls speak what should be thought for the advantage of the Senate, to whom the Verses were to be first shewn; wherefore, says he, Cato, who durst not wholly tax them of Fiction, would have them seen by the People first: admit this to have been never so true, yet it can signify nothing here, in relation to those Verses which so plainly describe our Saviour, as shews that
that they could not be counterfeited to serve any Interest of their State.

Besides, no more can be infer'd from Tully's words, than that the Officers, among those which were the true Verses, took out such as they thought fit for the present occasion: nor was more implied in Cato's demand, which had took effect, than that 'twas reasonable the People, as well as the Senate, should have a Judgment of what was fit then to be divulged, lest they should be kept from the knowledge of what might be of great benefit to them: and this (e) Dion shews that Cato aimed at.

But notwithstanding all that Cicero urges for dispution sake, I conceive his Letters to Lentulus shew, that he did not comemn the Sibylline Writings.

Pholomy, King of Egypt, was forc'd to fly to Rome for Protection against his Rebellious Subjects: having been there for some time, and being made acquainted with a Prediction, which he thought fore-told, that he should be carried back into his Kingdom without Arms; he préift hard, and brib'd high, to have this effected for him. Dion, who lived about 200 Years after, says, that it was contained in the Sibyls Books; 'If a King of Egypt come wanting Aid, do not deny him Friendship, but help him with no Forces; for if you do, you will have trouble and danger. And to the same purpose the Poet Lucan, who died Anno Christi, 65, had it before.

Haud equidem immerso Cumana carmine vastis Luc. lib. 8.
Caenae, ne Nile Pelusia sanctarum,
Hesperius Miles——

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The
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Th' Italian Souldiers of Egyptian Air,
Cumean Sibyl justly hide beware.

This either was the opinion of the Priests
upon the words of the Prediction, or else was
the account spread after the Birth of Christ,
whose carrying into Egypt exactly agrees with
Tully's account of this Prediction, which was,


That a King should be carried into Egypt with-
out a multitude, and was never verified in any
other, than this Spiritual King. It being thought
that Ptolemy was the Person design'd by the Pre-
diction, there was great striving for the Honour
of executing the purpose of the Gods in carry-
ing him home.

This Lentulus was very ambitious of, and
had a former Decree of the Senate on his side:


ad Len. 7.

Cicero lays a project for his performing this,
which was, that he should place Ptolemy at Pto-
lemais, or some neighbouring place, from whence
he should go to Alexandria with a Navy and
Army, and when he had settled it in peace and well
garrison'd it, then Ptolemy might return into his
Kingdom. Ita fore ut per se restituatur, quem-
admodum Senatus initio censuis, or sine multitudi-
dine reducatur, quemadmodum bonum religios
Sibylla placere dixerunt.

So he may be restored by you, as the Senate
at first decreed, and may be brought back with-
out a multitude, as the religious men said it plea-
sed the Sibyl.

And what was Cicero's Opinion concerning
this matter, appears by a passage in his fourth

Epist. 4. Epistle to Lentulus.

Nemo
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Nemèst qui nescias, quo minus discussio fieret per adversarios tuos esse factum, qui nunc Populi Romani nomine, te autem verò sceleratissimi trentinio: si qua constanter agere fatis providum est, ut ne quid Salvius auspiciis, aut Legibus, ut eisiam sine vi, agere possint.

'No Man is ignorant that your departure is stopped by your Adversaries, who use the name of the People of Rome to cover the most infamous Robbery: If they attempt any thing, sufficient care is taken to make it known, that nothing can be done without contemning the Prophecy, and the Laws, and indeed without force.

Where he charges Lentulus his Opposers as the most wicked Robbers, or Invaders of that Right, which he looks upon as given him by the Prediction, and the Law, meaning the first Decree of the Senate; and tells Lentulus that he had acquainted the People with this.

'Tis very improbable that Cicero (as Vendall would have him) look'd upon Religion but as a Pretence, when he himself uses its Authority: indeed he says 'twas the Opinion of the Common People, that Religion was but pretended in the business.

But herein is demonstration, that Cicero thought the Sibilline Writings sacred, in that he opposed Cato's pressing to have the Verses relating to that occasion published, as nefarious, or prophane; and of such a nature, that the fear of it diverted him from the immediate service of his Friend, as what was of much less consequence.

Nos,
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Ep. ad Lent. 5. Nos, says he, cum maximo Concilio, studio, labore, gratiâ, de causâ regiâ nitcremur; subito exurta est nefaria Caesaris promulgatio, qua nostra studia impediret, & animos a minore curâ ad sumnum timorem traduceret, &c. Caesar quidem quaque modo se fere, rupserit, proficissimus.

When we were using our utmost endeavours, by Counsel, study, labour, favour, in the Cause of the King; of a sudden Cato's nefarious promulgation hapned; which gave us an interruption, and diverted our minds from a less care, to a Fear of the highest nature, &c.

What ever is the consequence of it as to our affairs, I think it my duty to refult Cato.

These Passages compared together, make it evident, that Cicero was far from contemning the Sibylline Writings: but admit he slighted them never so much, yet no Man can evade those Testimonies which he involuntarily gave to Christianitv, in shewing, that before Christ was born there were Predictions preserved in the Capitol, and publithed in Rome, which spake,

1. Of a King, whom Men ought to own for their King, if they will be saved.

2. Of a King to be carried into Egypt without a Multitude; which could not agree with King Ptolemy, for he was carried thither by Gabinius, with a powerful Army, which beat out Archelaus, whom the Egyptians had set up for King.

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CHAP. III.

What is offered in the two foregoing Chapters, confirm'd by Virgil's fourth Eclogue, and the Translation of it asserted.

That the first was meant of the Salvation of Mankind, by one, whom all ought to own for King, can be no question to any who shall impartially consider the first Eclogue of Virgil in the Original, or my Essay towards a Translation of it; which, tho' it lose much of the Spirit by the Transfusion, I shall here justify to be so far true, that there is nothing inserted or varied from the genuine import of Virgil's Expressions, to make the Prediction more plainly to denote our Saviour, than Virgil's account makes it.

Tho' Vandale thinks it a mere Dream that Virgil, or others, were permitted the Inspection of the Sibylline Verses through Augustus his favour, yet elsewhere he owns, that tho' the Books were not to be consulted without a Decree of the Senate; yet in Jul. Caesar's time the Officers made an inspection by the sole Authority or Direction of Caesar, who was Emperor, and Chief Pontif: And if in this the ancient course of expecting the Senate's Decree was broken, why might not Augustus as well break the other, and order that a private Person should have the inspection?

But however Vandale himself owns, that these Verses were dispersed through all Grecia, Asia, Africa, and other Regions, when Augustus made

M his Vandale p. 90; Quicquid non-nulii Tolumni p. 460.
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his Collection; and where Virgil saw them is not greatly material here, but that he had seen Verlices which pas'd for Cumean Sibyl's, and wrote to one who is presumed not to have been unacquainted with them, appears, when he says;

Ultima Cumae venit jam carminis atas.

Nor can Pollio well be thought to have been a Stranger to the Predictions of the Sibyls, being the first, who, by Augustus his order, afterward made a publick Library at Rome; which must have been, as he was thought the fittest for such a charge.

The Commentators seem industriously to cause a Cloud over Virgil's Representation of the Prediction, which he mentions to Pollio: and we have it that this Poem was made to celebrate the Birth of Pollio's Son, that some Eclogues are applied by Virgil to Pollio himself, others to Augustus, the rest to the Son of Pollio.

Where they seem to mind neither the time when it was wrote, the manner of the Expressions, nor the contexture of the Poem, which one of the most noble and best turn'd that gilever wrote, they would make confused, unworthy any Man of Judgment.

The Poem itself shews, that 'twas composed in Pollio's Consulship, which was in the 713, after the building of Rome, about 14 Chrifl, this was during the Triumvirat of Vinius, Anthony, and Lepidus; wherefore I think that there is any ground to believe Virgil spake otherwife, than only of what happen in Pollio's Consulship, when he fa"
Te Duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri,
Irrita perpetuâ solvent formidini terras.

This indeed a great Poet has rendred,

"The Father banish'd Vertue shall restore,   Mr. Dreyden,
"And Crimes shall threat the guilty World
"no more.

And the Commentators take Te Duce, to be
the same with Te Authore, and that Virgil means
either Augustus or Pollio, and the Crimes to be
the Civil Wars between Augustus and Anthony
at Mutina: whereas this was before Octavius
took the name of Augustus; nor is there any
thing to lead to him here: Besides, Octavius and
Anthony were reconciled at least the Year before
Pollio's Consulship, and Pollio was on Anthony's
side while the division lasted; so that there is no
colour to think that Virgil meant that Pollio was
V. Epit. ad Livum lib. 120.
to compose the Civil War after it was over, or to
impute to him the Success of the opposite Party.

There were more of colour in the Supposition, V. virgilii
that Pollio being one of the three, who were ap-
vitam.
pointed to divide the Lands of some, who were
Criminals in oppressing Octavius his having the
Command of the Army, tho decreed by the Se-
nate: Virgil, having been connived at by Pollio,
thanks him for freeing him from the fear of what
he might justly have expected to suffer; yet I
question whether Virgil would term one the
Author of what he did, as joint Commissioner
with others; nor would he upon such an account
say,
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Perpetua solvent formidina terras.

As if the whole Earth were concerned in Virgil's Fears.

And by attending to the time when this was wrote, we find that

--- tum jam regnat Apollo.

And

Pacatum, reget patriis virtutibus orbem,

could not be meant of Augustus, who assumed not that name till the Battel of Actium was over, which was about the Year of Rome 718, five Years after Pollio's Consulship, when this Poem was wrote.

2. If we observe the manner of the Expressions, we shall find, that whereas Pollio's Son is reputed the chief Subject of the Poem; how much soever a Poet may be allowed to strain his Characters, no Man can imagine that Virgil would acribe such high and mighty things to the Son of a Consul, when he was little more than Titular, under the check of the Triumvirs; durst he call him the Offspring of the Gods, the great encrease of Jove, and suppose that he should restore the Golden Age, and that Heaven it self expects support from him? this would have been no les than Crimen leae Majestatis.

But, to put this out of Controversy, 'tis all applied to one who was expected to be born; when the Commentors will have it in celebration of Pollio's Son's Birth.

3. If we observe the Connexion of one Verse to another.
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It appears that Decus eui, the Grace, or Glory of that Age, who was to restore the Age of Gold, was expected to be born during Pollio's Consulship, that while he was Consul the Sins of Mankind were to be taken away; nor can any think it supposed to be done by any other, than by him who is called the great encrease of Jove, who was to ascend into Heaven, and to govern the World with his Father's Vertues, which I may well render by expressing his Father.

The Clouds being thus removed, these Particulars appear with a clear Light.

1. That the Cumaen Sybil spake of a Virgin, which might then perhaps be thought meant of Virgo. Astra, because of the glorious things said of her,

2. That there was expected a wonderful Revolution, a Restauration of the state of Innocence, or Golden Age, such as the Poets fancied to have been in Saturn's Reign, and in truth was under the Primitive Theocracy.

3. That this was to be at the Birth of a Man-Child, to whom are ascribed such things as no poetical Licence, without warrant from a Prophecy or Prediction, could excuse.

And tho I may seem to strain, where I call him (the Rythm requiring it) Earth's King, nothing les can be implied from,

Pacatumq; reget patriis virtutibus orbem,
Aggredere, * magnos, aderit jam tempus, honores.
Adspice convexo mutantem pondere mundum,
Terraeq; Tractatusq; Maris Columq; profundum.
Adspice, venturo latentur ut omnia saelo, etc.

Where
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Where the Poet invites him to enter upon his appointed Honour, or Office, of governing the World, nay, and Heaven itself.

Could these things be with any colour ascribed to the Son of Pollio? Nay: and does he not suppose him to be more than Man, not only when he says,

Illa Deum vitam accipiet, &c.
Chara Deum siboles——

But more plainly, where he calls him,

———Magnum Jovis incrementum:

Where the Increase of Jove seems to shew that tho he had an Hypostasis, or Personality, distinct from the Great God, yet is one God with him, Jove being spread out or increas’d, with another Person, but his Godhead undivided.

With those Divine Mysteries which Virgil reports from the Sybil, he seems to joyne some political Flourishes of his own, as that the Earth should pay this Infant an early Tribute of Stores; that when he grows up the Oak should yield Honey; and that when he is arriv’d to Manhood, Nature should die the Flocks with most pleasing Colours without the help of seed and the like.

But I know not but another part, which interpreted of a fancied Platonical Revo’ may have a truly moral Signification.

Pauca tamen suberum veteris vestigia fi
Alter erit sum Tiphys, &c.
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Where this may seem not so much to foretell from Prophetical Inspiration, as by a moral Judgment; that the former Sins were purged away, yet that would not remove the capacity of sinning, but that the same, or like Crimes and Follies, should be in the World again, till the subject of the Prophecy should come to maturity.

Hinc ubi iam firmata virum te feceris atae.

Which might be rendered; Till the perfect Age of the Church. And this perhaps a Millenary would apply, as a Prediction of Christ's Reign, at his return to the Earth before the general Resurrection.

But waving what may be doubtfull, or wholly poetical; what has been here said, together with the account how carefully the Sybils Prophecies were kept, and examined by the Romans, and with the Justification of the Primitive Christians in their Appeals to them; may satisfy any Man, who impartially considers, that Virgil's fourth Eclogue is, in the main, an account of the Cumean Sybil's Prediction, of such an one expected to be born about that time, as Christians maintain, and none could ever with any colour deny, the Author of their Faith to have been.

That this account was wrote before the Birth of our Saviour, can be no question, unless we will think that some Christian, was not only Poet good enough to counterfeit Virgil's Vein, but had the art to slide it in so well, and so early, that none should be able to discover the Cheat, by shewing any Copies wherein this was omitted. And besides, all this Artifice would have been
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been to no purpose, unless at the same time he could have prevailed upon the Keepers of the Sybilline Writings in the Capitol, to let some Verses be foisted in to countenance the matter.

For tho this Account was given by Virgil before Augustus made his Collection; yet we should have heard of it before now, if there had been nothing in the Capitol to warrant Virgil's Quotations.

And in truth, the lewd Interpretations which have been put upon this Poem, shew, that 'twas thought more easy to cast a blind, by making Virgil write with unallowable poetical License, and without any manner of coherence, than to gain Credit in the denial that this Poem was Virgil's. If they believ'd their own Interpretations; we may well say, 'twas because they thought of no Person to whom they might apply the Character, which no Man, after reading the Scriptures, and Grotius, can deny to belong to our Saviour, and to him only.

FINIS.