

Wanbury
REMARKS

ON THE

DIVINE LEGATION

OF

M O S E S, &c.

IN

SEVERAL LETTERS.

BY

The AUTHOR of the MISCELLANY.

As that they imagine is to do me Evil.

They shoot out their Arrows, even bitter Words. PSALMS.



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To the MOST REVEREND the

ARCH-BISHOPS,

And the RIGHT REVEREND the

BISHOPS,

in hopes of their LORDSHIPS Ap-
probation and Countenance,

T H E S E

R E M A R K S,

Written from no other Motive than a most
sincere and affectionate Concern for the Ho-
nour and Interest of Religion,

Are most respectively inscrib'd, by their

L O R D S H I P S,

most dutiful Son

and Servant in

J E S U S C H R I S T.

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P R E F A C E.

BEING oblig'd, in my own Vindication, to reprint the following Letters, I think it proper to take Notice of a Report concerning the Author of them. Some have done me the Honour to ascribe them to one of the best Writers in the World; (tho' I may chance to be call'd a Sycophant and a Prostitute for doing this great Man Justice,) I mean, Dr. Waterland. Mr. W. in his Postscript to his Sermon, supposes several Persons to have been concern'd in writing them. The Truth is this. I first publish'd my Dislike of his Book, before I knew the Sentiments of others about it; and thought it a Book of such fatal Tendency, I would have endeavour'd to prevent the mischievous Effects of it, if I had stood single in my Opinion, and had been free of disobliging my best Friends. Before I drew up my Objections, I did, as I wish he had done, consult the best Judges amongst my Acquaintance; some of whom express'd their great Dislike of the Performance, and others mention'd the Particulars which gave them Offence, with their Reasons for being so much offend'd. From my own Remarks, and the Hints suggest'd in this manner, I wrote the six Letters. While I was so outrageously abus'd for my Remarks upon him, it was a great Pleasure to find that Mr. W. or his Friends, thought they were written by Dr. Waterland, and that they would not have given out such a Report if they had not had some Reasons for thinking that the Author disliked the Book as much as I did; and their being esteem'd worthy of such a Pen does me no little Credit.

Credit. It is a farther *Vindication* of my Judgment, that Mr. W. supposes a Club of Persons to be concern'd in drawing them up; as it shews, that in his Opinion, I am very far from being singular in my Sentiments, tho' I have had the Misfortune to be singular in bearing the Blame, and the Weight of their Resentments. I think, it would have been but a Piece of Justice to their Religion, as well as an Act of Generosity to a little inferior Person, violently attack'd by the Party for expressing the common Sense of Sound Divines, if some one of more Reputation in the World had appear'd publickly in Support of it; but I am so far from being ashamed of my Conduct in this Particular, or concern'd for it, that it gives me as much Pleasure, as it has procur'd me Odium and Ill-Will. — A very able Scholar has carefully examin'd the learned Part of Mr. W's Book, and I hope nothing will hinder the worthy Author from doing Antiquity and Religion so much Justice as to publish it.

Author of the Miscellany.





REMARKS

ON THE

Divine Legation of MOSES, &c.

LETTER I.



IN a Letter of mine, which you did me the favour to publish in the *Miscellany*, I took occasion to mention the *Divine Legation of Moses*, written by Mr. *Warburton*; express'd a great dislike of the Performance, and as great a distrust of the Author's Intentions. He has since printed a Pamphlet under the Title of, *a Vindication of himself*; wherein he accuses me both of *Ill-Breeding* and want of *Christian Charity*. The first of these Accusations gives me no Concern at all, since I never affected to be thought a *fine Gentleman*; tho' I desire and endeavour to be *civil* to every Body. But, as Mr. *Warburton* expresses himself, in a Passage which I shall afterwards cite out of his Book, it is pleasant enough to observe HIM accusing me of want of *Decency and Decorum*, who has treated others so *freely*, and with such an *assuming and scornful Air of Superiority* as was never exceeded, hardly ever equall'd by any Writer, but his Friend ——— (who gave us to understand that it was very rash in us to provoke such a Writer, for fear he should

turn his Pen against *Christianity*; and how he will be able to reconcile such a manner of Writing with the Rules of *true Politeness* and *Good-Breeding*, I am too ignorant of them to find out. The Charge of *Uncharitableness* affects me, both as a *Christian*, and a *Man*; but Mr. *Warburton*, at p. 13, seems to impute my Conduct to *indiscreet Zeal*; and again at p. 27, owns his Belief; that I am *sincere*, and *only unhappily agitated by a FURIOUS Zeal for the Cause of GOD and RELIGION*. I am oblig'd to him for his candid Construction, and shall hope for the Continuance of it if I attempt a farther Vindication of my self than I could expect him to make for me; and shew, that I not only had a *good Intention*, but *good Reasons* for acting as I did. I think verily, it would be a sufficient Justification of my Opinion of the Book and the Writer, if I were only to tell the World, what is strictly true, that I have the honour of being known to many Clergymen of as great Learning and Judgment and Candour as any in the Kingdom, who were as much offended as I was; so that the *furious Zeal* with which he kindly supposes me to be agitated is the less surprising and criminal in me, because it equally possessed others of the best Character. Nay, several of his own *Friends* have own'd enough to me to give a very ill Grace to their warm Resentments, for they confess'd that the Book (I use their own Words) has in it a *great many strange, bold things*, and *some that have a bad Aspect upon Religion*. This, I say, is enough to make any good *Christian* offended and Jealous; and why every good *Christian* should *not* be offended at *strange* and *bold* things that have a *bad Aspect on Religion*, and jealous of the Designs of such a Writer, I can see no good Reason. Be that to themselves. I only desire the impartial Attention of the Publick while I give my Reasons for thinking that the Book had a very bad Aspect and Tendency; why I did apprehend it to be highly expedient to animadvert upon it immediately, and not wait for the Publication of the 2d Volume; and whether the Author, in his *Vindication*, has removed all reasonable Grounds of Offence and Jealousy.

The first thing that I shall take notice of as justly exceptionable and offensive in his Book is, his crying up the excellency of *his Method of Proof* so much above its real Value, and depretiating the *external Evidence* which all wise Men have ever thought the best and safest way of defending *Revelation*. If Mr. *Warburton*, (after being well assured, from mature Examination of this Scheme, with the Advice

Divine Legation of MOSES, &c. 3

of able and discreet Friends, that it was a *safe* one, at least, and such as could give no Advantage to the *Infidels*; had contented himself with calling his Work, instead of a DEMONSTRATION, a *Modest Essay towards an additional Argument for the Divine Legation of Moses*; if he had decently preferr'd it with due Acknowledgments to other Writers, and a just Commendation of the *prime, standing Arguments* (with which no others ought to be compared, so far as they are from deserving to be *preferr'd* to them) and had only said, that his *New Argument* pretended but to make a small Addition if found to be just, but if otherwise that we are perfectly safe in the *Old ones*; I say, had he recommended his Work in this decent Manner, every one would have been inclined to favour him, and no body would have blamed a laudable Design of throwing in something new into the common Treasury. Thus the pious Mr. Norris and several other good Men have aimed at *New Arguments* to prove the *Being of a God*, which at last turned out mere *Paralogisms*, as this pretended *Demonstration* is likely to do. But so long as they were modestly offer'd, without any Endeavours to depreciate the *prime Proofs of unquestionable Validity*, there was no harm done. On the contrary, this Writer, (whether with an intent to support the Cause which he pretends to defend, or out of vanity to raise the Credit of his own Demonstration and Abilities, I do not say) ventures upon a Scheme that is in itself very dangerous, and sets out with depreciating the *external Evidence* and giving the preference to *internal*, for which the *Infidels* will return him thanks. But let us see how he manages this Matter, in order to shew the Reasons why he would have the *Preference* given to the *internal Evidence*.

He pretends, p. 1. "that it is in its own Nature more simple and simple, and even capable of *Demonstration*, while the other, made up of *dissimilar Materials*, and borrowing Aid from *without*, must needs have some Parts of unequal Strength." To which I answer, 1. The Legation is not, which Evidence may be thought best in the general, but which is *best fitted*, or *most proper* to any particular Case. This Question is about a *Fact*, viz. *Moses's Divine Legation*. The Evidence proper to *Facts* is *external Evidence*, while the Evidence proper to *Science* is *internal*. Therefore giving the Preference to *internal Evidence* in a Question of *Fact*, is making a Trip in the *midst*, and setting out under a gross Mistake of the whole

whole Case. 2. Besides, it is contrary to our Lord's own Doctrine, who has given *Preference* to *Miracles* above all other Evidence of his Mission. *If I had not done amongst them the Works that no other Man did, they had not had Me.* &c. John 15. 24. They might have been comparatively excusable in neglecting any other Evidence, therefore *MIRACLES* are in his Judgment preferable to any other, and sufficient for a *rational Conviction*, or else our Saviour would not have condemn'd them for not being convinced by them. Compare John 5. 36. 10. 25, 37, 38. 14. 11. — 3. Mr. Ditton has well shewn in his *moral Evidence* (in his Book upon the Resurrection) that the *external* Proofs are tantamount to *Demonstration*, and carry as great Credibility in them. 4. The pretended *internal* Proofs in such a Case are not only *weaker*, and *less proper*, but more *Dissimilar*, and *borrowing Aid from without*; as sufficiently appears from his *Apparatus*, which makes a large Volume; and I suppose the Second Volume will not be less; and all this to prove one single Syllogism.

2. He pretends that *internal* Evidence is by its nature *perpetuated*, while the *external* by length of Time weakens and decays. This is *gratis dictum*. The *external* may grow *stronger* by Age, taking in the Miracles not of one Age only, but of two, three, or four. As to the Truth of a common historical Fact, it would be wrong, for instance, to think that the Evidence of there having been such a Person as *Cæsar*, or *Alexander*, is less credible *now* than it was a thousand Years ago; or that it will *weaken* and *decay* in a thousand Years more, if the World should last so long. The World may grow more and more *wicked*, and less attentive to Evidences of any kind, as past Experience shews how apt Mankind have been to *degenerate*. But this does not prove that the Evidences *themselves* decay; or, if it does, it *equally* concerns *all* sorts of Evidence, the *internal* as much as the *external*. Mr. Warburton censures (p. 2.) Mr. C——g's whimsical and partial *Calculation*, to make the Reader believe he has nothing to do with that Scheme. But the Fault of the Scheme lay not so much in the *Calculation*, which might be fine and curious, and worthy of a *Mathematician*, but in the *false Postulatum* of a *gradual decay* which he went upon. In this Mr. W. chimes in with him, rejecting only the *last* part of Mr. C——g's Performance, and adopting the *worst*.

3. He says, farther, that the *Internal* Evidence must be *preferable* to the *External*, because it cannot support itself with

without it. A very shrewd Argument indeed! Because the *Head* cannot say to the *Foot*, I have no need of thee, therefore the *Feet* are nobler than the *Head*. He forgot that he was to prove that *internal Evidence* was nobler than *external*. Both are good in their *Order* and *Degree*, but he that turns the wrong End upwards, and sets the *Heels* where the *Head* should be, either *judges*, or *designs* very ill. Very thoughtful and considerate Men, Men of clear Heads, and heartily well affected to *Christianity*, (such as Mr. *Ditton*, Dr. *Rogers*, the *Dean* of *Christ-Church*, and many more) have duly examin'd into the comparative Value of *internal Evidence*, and have very justly given the *Preference* to *external*.

4. But Writers, it seems, have declined meddling with the *internal Evidence*, because of the *Difficulties* of it, and because of the *vast Attainments* it requires to be competent Masters of it. I shall give them in the Author's own Words, as being the most curious *Bill* that any Undertaker of *great things* in any Age, or Country, ever gave out. Thus they are set forth, p. 3. "The Reasoners of the *internal Proof* must, besides these, (*viz. Church History, common Diligence, and Judgment*, which he had observ'd, were all the Requisites for the *external*) "have a thorough
 " Knowledge of human Nature, civil Policy, the univer-
 " sal History of Mankind, an exact Idea of the *Mosaick*
 " and *Christian Dispensations*, clear'd from the *Proto* and
 " *Grounds of School-Subtilties* and *Church Systems*; and a-
 " bove all, should be blest'd with a certain Sagacity to in-
 " vestigate, the Relations of human Actions, thro' all the
 " Combinations of *natural, civil, and moral Complexities*." So wonderful a Man must he be, who can be equal to this *internal Evidence*. And can the Author modestly pretend to these vast Attainments? In pure Decency he was forc'd to own that such a Pretence would be *ridiculous Arrogance* in him, and therefore allows that *Humility* and a *Love of Truth* might be sufficient. No, but he had before made *Humility* and the *Love of Truth*, INSUFFICIENT, by mentioning the other Attainments as what have deterr'd others from the *internal Method*; for, an Attainment that was *not* requisite for any Undertaking, could not be thought to deter any one from it. So that when he undertook this great Work he certainly thought himself possess'd of all those *prodigious Abilities*. Be that as it will. Let this Writer's Abilities, *natural, or acquir'd*, be ever so great: Let him be ever so well qualified for the Manage-
 ment

ment of this unwieldy Argument, what Provision has he made for the Capacities of his *Readers* who are to believe the *Bible* upon the Strength of it? As it requires his *uncommon* Attainments to do Justice to the Argument, it requires a capacity as much above the common level of *Readers* in order to understand the force of it. But, surely, the *Evidences* of Religion ought to be calculated for the *Bulk* of Mankind; and those are the *best* Evidences which are most fitly adapted to answer that End, and Use. By this *Writer's* Account, therefore, if any Person has a mind to be *star'd* at as a *Prodigy*, the *internal* Evidence is the fittest for his Purpose; but *we* say, if he should choose rather to *instruct* and *edify* common Christians, he ought to prefer *external* Evidence as most suited to their Apprehensions, and, consequently, most likely to convince them. Probably, therefore, it was *Humility* and *love* of *Truth* that made *others* decline his Method. They saw it was not a *wise* Method to serve *Truth* by, and they would not go out of the *common Way* to *disserve* it.

Mr. *Warburton* in his *Vindication*, p. 23, 24, endeavours to purge himself with respect to *undervaluing* Miracles, and says, that, tho' he might, perhaps, *overvalue* INTERNAL Evidence, yet he has not *undervalued* the other. A poor Evasion! For he spent some Pages upon the *comparative* Value of the two Evidences, giving the *preference* to one *above* the other. Therefore, the *overvaluing* one in that *comparative* Light is *undervaluing* the other, as it makes the *external* Evidence *inferior* to the other, and of *smaller* Account; a Point wherein he is manifestly wrong. If I adorn one thing with *false* Colours, not *comparing* it with another in order to *prefer* it to that other, it is then barely *overvaluing* that thing. But if the Design of the *false* Colours be to make it appear *preferable*, (when it really is not) what is this but *depressing* the other *comparatively*; not making it *less* than it is in *its self*, but less with respect to that with which it is *compared*. If, for instance, allowing *me* to be a *Man*, any one should make my *Servant* *More than Man* in order to set my *Servant* *above* me; is it not *undervaluing* me to make my *Servant* my *Master*; my *inferior* SUPERIOR to me? And it is that very kind of *Undervaluing* which we most dislike, and would chiefly guard against. Let him set the *absolute* Value of *internal* Evidence as high as he pleases, it gives no Offence, provided only that he *prefers* the *external*. It is the *Preference* only we contend for, and he that does *not* give the preference to

external

external Evidence, gives it not its *due value*, but *undervalues* it. The ill Consequence of so doing is removing the Dispute from its *proper Ground* (as Dr. Rogers justly observed,) engaging the Infidels at a great Disadvantage, and in that very Way which they most *wish for*, and have all along employed their utmost Art to draw us, if possible, into. Since Dr. Rogers wrote, at least, we have been upon a right Foot; and now, ten Years after, this Writer is endeavouring to bring us back to the wrong one. His *Demonstration*, if he could make one of it, could never make us amends for changing our posture of Defence, and deserting our strong holds.

The natural effect of this *Preference* given to the *internal* above the *external* Evidence, as far as his Argument can prevail, will be, the *weakening* its Force upon Men's Minds, taking off so much from the Evidence of the Truth of Religion, and serving the Cause of *Infidelity*, whether he intended it, or not. But what if, after all these *disparaging* Things said of *external* Evidence, it should appear that Mr. Warburton's Evidence is of the *external* kind? If, after he has depreciated the Arguments from *Miracles* and lessen'd its Credit, he himself should resolve all his Proof into *Miracle*? This is undeniable; that by *internal* Evidence he does not mean the same thing which those against whom he writes have always understood by it, or the same which he himself has represented it in the first Paragraph of his Book. p. 1. speaking of the *Nature* of the *internal* Evidence he observes, that it is *by its own Nature perpetuated*. The reason of which he assigns in the following Words. *For the NATURE and GENIUS of the RELIGION defended affording the Proofs of the first kind (internal) these Materials of Defence are inseparable from its Existence.* Now, by the *Nature* and *Genius* of a Religion, according to the common and ordinary Sense of the Words, cannot be understood any thing more than the *Nature* of the *Doctrines*, *Duties* and *Institutions* of any Religion. In this Sense Dr. Conybeare and others are to be understood when they attempt to shew the *Excellency* of our Religion, that it is *worthy God*, but that, properly speaking, *there can be no internal Evidence of a Revelation at all*, since it does not follow from a Religion's being *worthy of God*, that it is *extraordinarily* reveal'd by God. If, indeed, there appears any thing in the *Doctrines*, *Duties*, or *Institutions* of a Religion as much *above* the Power of *human Reason* to discover, or contrive, as there is in the *Miracles* of *Moses* and the *Prophets*,

phets, of Christ and his Apostles, above the Power of Man to perform, then the *Nature* and *Genius* of this Religion is as much *miraculous* as any of the *Faëts* by which we prove Revelation; and whether we shall think fit to call this Evidence *internal*, or *external*, the *Nature* of the *Argument* will be the *same*, and the *Proof* of the *sante-sort*. But this I presume, is not what Mr. *Warburton*, any more than Dr. *Conybeare*, means by his *internal Evidence*. What he means, we do not as yet *exactly* know, but we very well know that he does not mean by *internal Evidence*, that kind of Evidence which the Doctor and other modern Advocates understand by it. In short, the Method by which Mr. *W.* attempts to prove his Point, (as far as we can yet see into his Scheme from the several Hints drop'd up and down) is as much founded on *external Evidence*, as the common Proof of Christianity is on *Miracles*. The only difference lies here. In the latter Case there were only a certain Number of Miracles at *first* sufficient *ad Constituendam Ecclesiam*, in the former there was a *continued series* of Miracles *post Constitutam Ecclesiam*. But in both Cases the *Miracles* did not arise from the *Doctrines*, or the *internal Constitution* of the *Religion*, but from the immediate and *extrinsic* Interposition of God, which had no *natural* Connection with the *Doctrine*, but operated *consequentially*, as *Miracles* do in all other Instances. Upon the whole then Mr. *W.* has by his Affectation of Novelty, or some other *private Reason*, been led to lessen the Credit of that very Evidence, which he himself-must at last be forc'd to make use of.

But which ever of these Senses be his real Meaning, he injures both *Revelation* and the *modern Advocates* for it. If he means by *internal Evidence* no more than the *Nature* and *Genius* of a Religion, this they *have improved* to the best Advantage; but then, this being, if any strict Proof at all, yet so greatly inferior to the *external*, he does great Disservice to *Revelation*, by giving the weaker *Preference* to the stronger Evidence. If his *Internal* be but another Word for *external Evidence*, here again he does Injustice both to the *Cause*, and its *modern Pleaders*; the *first* he injures by lessening the Credit and Influence of that very Argument which he proposes to use in its Defence; the *latter*, by censuring them for *not* cultivating that Evidence which he censures them *for* cultivating in such a Manner as to prejudice the Value and Influence of the *Internal*.

Yours, &c.

L E T T E R II.

THE next Part of this Writer's Conduct which I shall mention, as very *offensive* and *suspicious*, is exactly of a Piece with the other. As he has not given to the *external* Evidence its due Value, and given more than he ought to have done to the *internal*, so he has lessened the Merit and Reputation of the *Advocates* for the *external* Evidence, and been as forward to adorn the Characters of *Infidels* with Compliments that are as undeserv'd, as they are indecent for a Christian to bestow upon them. I had in my first Letter, (but very rashly it seems) accus'd him of saying, THE ENGLISH CLERGY had undertaken to PROVE Christianity before they UNDERSTOOD it; and in his *Vindication* (p. 23.) I find these surprizing Words, I solemnly declare that in the Passage above quoted, I meant no ENGLISH CLERGYMAN whatsoever. That the Reader may the better judge of the *probable Sincerity* of this solemn Declaration, and of my Rashness in concluding that the *English* Clergy were in his Thoughts, I must be forc'd to cite the Passage at length, because the *Vindication* takes but part of it. It is towards the Bottom of p. 2, and stands thus.

And it is not without Occasion I take Notice of it. For who, in this long Controversy between us and the Deists, hath not applied, to certain late Advocates of Revelation, what was formerly said of *Arnobius* and *Lactantius*, that they undertook the Defence of *Christianity* before they understood it. A Misfortune, which the more careful Study of the *internal* Evidence would probably have prevented. Notwithstanding which superior Advantages, it hath so happened, that the *internal* Evidence hath been hitherto used as an *Introduction* only to the *external*; and while by this latter Men have prov'd our Religion actually Divine (If he really thought so, what Occasion for making Experiments when the *old tryed* Arguments were so successful? Or for undervaluing Means that had effectually answer'd their End?) they have gone no farther with the former, than to shew it worthy indeed of such an Original. But from the State in which the *internal* Evidence at present lies, a great Writer (here in the Margin he refers to Dr. *Conybeare* by Name) hath drawn a quite contrary Conclusion. I from the small Progress hitherto made in it, exhort to its better Cultivation; he from

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“ the same Fact, concludes, that, *strictly speaking, there can be no internal Evidence of a Revelation at all.*” Before we examine it upon the Point in Question, I beg the Reader to compare it with my last Letter, and see whether he has not used the Words, *internal and external Evidence*, in a *fallacious Manner*, and injuriously aspers’d those great and worthy Men who have lately engaged in the Cause of *Christianity*. But we are to enquire *whom* he meant by *certain late Advocates*; whether *Englishmen*, or *Foreigners*; whether *Clergymen*, or *Laymen*. In his *Vindication* (p. 22.) he asks this Question; *Have none but ENGLISHMEN wrote, of late, in Defence of Christianity?* Yes; But to whom does Mr. Warburton make the Appeal? To *English Readers*. In what Manner? Thus. *For WHO in this long Controversy between Us, and the Deists, hath not applied, &c.* He here supposes the Case to be so *very obvious* that his Readers *in general* must have observ’d it. But how can this possibly be if he means it *only* of those who have written in a Language which *few* of his Readers understand, and *fewer* read. His next Question is; *Have no ENGLISHMEN but the ENGLISH CLERGY wrote in Defence of Christianity.* He should have added, as he did in the former Question, *of late*, for it is material, tho’ he has omitted it. I desire him to name those *English Laymen* who have, *of late*, appear’d in the Controversy so professedly as to be concern’d in this Affair about *internal and external Evidence*. I dare say, *not one*. But if *some few* had done it, as the *Clergy* compose the *main Body* of our late Advocates, it would be more natural to suppose that *they* should be in his Thoughts, than one, or two *Exceptions* among the *Laiety*. He goes on. *If neither of these Questions can be answer’d in the Negative, what Possess’d the Letter-Writer to bear witness against Me, that I have any where said, that the ENGLISH Clergy have undertaken to prove Christianity without understanding it?* If he means, that those two individual Words, *English Clergy*, are not used, ’tis true, but the Evasion is exceeding trifling. For that he has *virtually* said it of them, I have shewn; and that he *actually meant* it of them, is most evident. And now, since Mr. W. has ask’d me some Questions, I shall in my Turn take the boldness to ask *him* one. What could Possess the *Vindicator*, to make *so solemn a Declaration* against a plain Fact under his own Hand; for, in the very Passage its self, where he makes the Observation, he refers *by Name* to an *English Clergyman*; and yet he *solemnly insists* upon it, that

that no *English Clergyman* was then in his Thoughts. Perhaps he referr'd to *Dr. Conybeare* without *thinking* of him. Nay, he has a *Demonstration* at hand to shew that, tho' by some strange, unaccountable Accident he *named* him, yet he *could not think* of him. So far from it, says he, *I expressly say in p. 19 of the Dedication,* "that the Clergy of the *establish'd Church* are they who have been principally watchful in the common Cause of *Christianity*, and MOST SUCCESSFUL in repelling the Insults of the Enemies." *Most Successful*, I perceive, is put in large Letters, but they prove but little, much less can they *disprove* the reality of a *plain Fact*. But as to the general Character of the *establish'd Clergy's* Writings in this Controversy, Mr. *W.* may think that they have wrote the *most* and the *best* in the Controversy, and with the *most Success*, or *Effect*, and yet be of Opinion that they have been mistaken as to the right Management of the Cause, and have not *clearly* prov'd the *Truth* of *Christianity*. But in my Judgment Mr. *W.*'s Plea makes the Matter worse. He says, the Expression is *General*, and he might mean *Laymen*, or *Foreigners*, as well as *Clergymen*, and *Englishmen*. This makes strongly against him. If he had *specified* any particular Set of Advocates, whether at *home*, or *abroad*, whether *Laymen*, or *Ecclesiasticks*, he had left to *Christianity* the rest of the *modern* Advocates for its Support, but now the Charge is *General*, and the *Observation* equally extends to *all* that have defended *Christianity* by the *external* Evidence. He has *named* *Dr. Conybeare*, not as a *singular Instance*, but as an *Example*, or *Illustration* of his Meaning. And, for any thing that appears in the Charge, or in the *Defence* of it, it may be his Opinion that *none* of the Advocates in the *external* Way have *proved*, or so much as *understood* *Christianity*. If so, I dare venture to say, it *never will* be prov'd. But I do not *fix* this Consequence upon his Intention. The Gentleman should be more cautious how he puts himself upon his Country, after so weak a Defence, lest when he calls so loud for *Justice*, they should be the less inclined to shew him *Mercy*.

The Slurs which he throws upon *particular Persons* I have not Time to take Notice of. The Case of the *Fathers* may be considered at some convenient Opportunity. But I must not pass by the contemptuous Sneer and hard Reflection which he casts upon the *primitive Advocates* for *Christianity*. The *Moderns* are accused of *Ignorance*, but the *Antients* wanted *Discernment* and *common Honesty* too. P. 407.

Speaking of the Methods then used against Christianity, he says; "But their *chief* Strength was in the forged Books of *Hermes*, which they added to, and interpolated, the better to serve their Purpose against *Christianity*; upon which he makes this Remark. It is *pleasant* enough to observe how the primitive *Christians* defended themselves against the Authority of these Books. One would have imagined, they should have detected the Forgery, which we see, was easy enough to do. Nothing like it: Instead of That, they opposed Forgery to Forgery, and added *themselves* some Books, to this noble Collection of *Trismegist*: For, they too, as well as the *Pagans*, had their *Platonists* for such Services; who in these Books have made *Hermes* speak plainer of the Mysteries of *Christianity*, than ever the *Jewish* Prophets had done." Then he applies to their Conduct in this Affair the vilest piece of roguish Craft, that the most profligate *Solicitor at Law* ever put in Practice. Says he; "Their playing *Trismegist* back upon their Enemies puts me in mind of that known Story of the Law Solicitors: The one had forged a Bond against the other; who instead of taking Time to detect the Knavery, chose rather to find Evidence to prove that he had discharged it at the Day." Without enquiring into the true State of this Matter, (which it is not my present Business to do) suppose these Christians to have acted as *infamously* as he has represented, was it the Business of an *Advocate* for Christianity industriously to *expose* their Wickedness, and needlessly give Occasion of *Scandal* and *Triumph* to those who are so ready to take it? Was it *pleasant enough* to him to see a Conduct in the *primitive Christians* so disgraceful and injurious to our Religion? Shocking! I should have thought a sincere Christian would have been *greatly concern'd*, and not so *highly delighted*, on such a melancholy Occasion. Can Mr. *W.* expect us to think him our *Friend*, while he acts the Part of a sly and bitter *Enemy*? Let him tell us by what Rules of *Common Sense* we are to judge him, and *Charity* shall direct us in the Application of them.

If Mr. *W.* be a sincere *Christian*, you see how very free he makes with his *best Friends*, tho' he thinks it so very *rude* in any body to take Freedoms with *him*. Perhaps it may be an Instance of *Politeness* to lay aside all *Ceremony* with those whom we respect, and indulge a Liberty, now and then, when we are in the Humour, to *censure*, or *bantter* them. When he has to do with the *Enemies* of *Christianity*:

tianity, lest he should be thought *narrow* in his Notions, tied down to *Church Systems*, or any ways *prejudiced* against them on Account of their *Infidelity*, he is extremely nice in the Observation of the *highest Punctilio's*. If he has occasion to cite an *Atheistical* Passage out of *Strabo*, he himself is the *Herald* to proclaim the Author's Abilities, and to inform the Publick, that his *Knowledge of Men and Manners was as extensive as the habitable World*. When he alludes in *Varro*, he is careful to let us know, that *this Atheist had a Genius as extensive as the Roman Empire*. If he did not seem to be very much in earnest in his *Encomiums*, I should be apt to suspect that he intended them as an Instance of the true *attic Irony*. In the Case of *Bayle*, he has acted the Part of a *Gentleman* even to an Excess, and complimented both his *Understanding* and *Morals* at the Expence of *Truth*. This *French Writer*, whom Mr. *W.* styles the *indulgent Foster Father of Infidelity*, maintains, that a *Society of Atheists might subsist and live very comfortably together without the help of any Religion to bind them to the Observance of social Duties*. Mr. *W.* very justly calls this a *Paradox*, and blames Mr. *Bayle* for defending it; as he does Mr. *Hobs* for excluding *Religion* not only as *useless*, but as *hurtful to Society*; Lord *Shaftsbury* for carrying the Power of *Taste* and *moral Sense* too high; and all other *Infidels* who differ from him as to the *Necessity of Religion to the Support of Society*. But this is not condemning their *Infidelity*, but their mistaken Notions as to the *necessary Means of supporting Society*. As his Scheme obliged him to introduce so many *Infidels* into his Work, and his *Good-Manners* requir'd that he should be very civil to their *Persons* and *Papacities*, in Justice to *himself* and to *Religion* he should have been the more careful to declare his Abhorrence of their *Atheistical Principles*, AS SUCH, without any Regard to their *Influence on Society*. And yet, as far as I can recollect, (I am sure, I would not willingly injure him) he has not used these Precautions, but express'd himself in such a Manner as he might have done consistently with Truth, *supposing* that he *were* as mere an *Infidel* as any of them; while his Praises of their *Abilities* are as profuse and lavish, as it is *natural* for us to bestow upon our *most favourite Friends*. Of Mr. *Bayle* he is so extravagantly and passionately fond, that he has almost *deify'd* his *Genius*, and *canoniz'd* his *Morals*. He is a *Writer whose Strength and Clearness of Reasoning can be equal'd only by the Gaiety, Easiness and Delicacy of his Wit*. But this is not enough for him by a great deal. He

perverted Human Nature with a Glance, (an Expression not applicable to any Being, but that Omniscient One whose Existence he denied,) *struck into the Province of Paradox,* as an Exercise for the restless Vigour of his Mind. To compleat his Character, he had a Heart practiced to the BEST PHILOSOPHY. Mr. Bayle was undoubtedly a Person of polite Literature, and great Ingenuity, with an agreeable manner of Writing, but he had rather a fine and curious, than a deep and strong Genius, or sound Judgment. However, we will allow something for Affection, which will magnify its Object, and run out into luxuriant Expressions of its Admiration. It cannot only adorn its Object with imaginary Perfections, but change its very Nature, and make him, who was a Man of the grossest Lewdness, and open Profaneness, appear to have an Heart practic'd to the best Philosophy. As if he were in Pain lest the World should not be inquisitive enough into his Writings, he says, a Writer of this Character will deserve a very particular Regard: for PARADOXES, in such Hands, will always be productive of something for Use or Curiosity. This curious and useful Writer is reckon'd, both by Believers and Infidels, to have done more towards corrupting the Principles and Morals of Mankind, than almost any other; and accordingly it is very wise in the Infidels to recommend him so industriously, as they do: But for that very Reason, it was offensive and suspicious in Mr. W. instead of guarding incautious Readers against such dangerous Writers, to help the Infidels to give Credit and Success to the Works of Mr. Bayle. But, it seems, so skilful was this philosophical Chymist, that under his Management the most venomous Poison may produce the most useful and noble Medicament; and what would subside into rank offensive Impiety in the Hands of a Collins, or a Toland, (Athiests of less Experience in such chymical Preparations,) HE can direct to the Confutation of Tindal, and the Service of Christianity. (p. 33, 34.) If I were disposed to be as merry with Mr. W. as he was with the primitive Christians, this wild Rant affords as much Scope, and a much fitter Occasion, for Mirth.

In our own Country, there came out not long ago, the Life of Hémer. This Book, like Mr. W's, had a great deal of Reading in it, but not so much Ingenuity and Sprightliness. It was written in a conceited stiff way, and with such Obscurity, that it was not so much read, nor at first much understood; but now, I think, the Design of it is known and allow'd to be an Infidel one. Yet this is another

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Writer that Mr. *W.* thinks worthy of his publick, his *highest* Commendation. The Author is reputed to be a *Scotchman*, and his Character so remarkable, it may be worth Mr. *W.*'s while to enquire into it (if he has not already heard of it) that he may be able to give him his due Praise, by commending his *Heart*, as well as his *Head*.

His Friend — is another of our Countrymen, who, by way of Recompence for the Loss of his Character with *narrow* Minds, has the Honour of being number'd in Mr. *Warburton's* List of *Worthies*. It must needs be extreamly offensive to all good Christians to see the *Enemies* of our Religion complimented and recommended in a *profess'd* Defence of *Revelation*. But to those who know nothing more of Mr. *W.* than his Writings; his Conduct in respect to — looks like an intended *Insult* upon *Christianity* and the *Common Sense* of Mankind. This Author's Writings had undergone a Trial before able and impartial Judges; were sentenced as *Infidel*; the Author was deserted by his intimate *Friends*, who before had a good Regard for him, and lik'd his Acquaintance. Yet this very Person, thus condemned, and thus discarded, as a known Enemy to us, Mr. *W.* ventures publickly to espouse, and highly to extol; not only in his *Book*, but in his *Vindication*, after he knew how much the Publick was offended by his *first* Compliments. He seems determined, at all Adventures, to stand, or fall by his Friend. His Friend is obliged to him for a kind Intention, but he would, perhaps, have been better pleased if Mr. *W.* had not reminded the World of his *able Services*. In another Point, respecting the *Doct'or's* Credit and Interest, Mr. *W.*'s great Generosity has got the better of his Judgment. It has often been observ'd, that crying up a Lady for a celebrated Beauty, when she's only passable, or, at most agreeable, is doing her hurt. He would pass very well, and readily be allowed the Merit of a clever smart Writer, if his Advocate had not improperly rank'd him amongst the first Class of Geniuses in the *Argumentative* Way. These unjust Claims provoke People to weigh out his Reputation in a more exact Proportion to his Title to it. They will enquire into the *History* of his Works, and find him to be but a *Plagiary*, where he sets up himself for an *Original*. He robb'd a *French* Author; travell'd; and at his Return put off his *stolen* injudicious Remarks, for choice *new* Things, imported fresh from *Italy*. Mr. *W.* was as unfortunate in his high Encomiums upon his *Morals*. *Temperance* and *Chastity* are *Virtues*; *Spleen* and *Malice*, and *Envy*; *Pride* and *Vani-*
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nity are *Vices*, tho' not *Vices* of the *Body*; and *Vices* greatly prejudicial to Society, and as odious in the Sight of God: But if Mr. *W.* had not over-rated his Friend for the Sake of the former, he might have met with the less Censure on account of the latter.

The *Vindication* offers at a Proof of his Friend's Faith, and I heartily wish it had produc'd a satisfactory one. I shall afterwards consider what he has said both for him and himself. I shall conclude *this* Letter with a short Remark upon a Passage or two in the *Vindication* that have a strange Appearance, taken by *themselves*, but look much worse when compared with the Pains he has taken to give Reputation to *Infidel Characters*: P. 8. of his *Vindication* he observes that "*Infidelity* is become so *reputable* as to be esteemed a Test of superior Parts and Discernment." What? *Reputable* in the Abstract? What an Insinuation is this! *Reputable among Infidels*, he should have said. But the Argument requir'd more, and so he said, *Reputable* without Restriction, or Guard. Again at (p. 35.) the same Observation is repeated. "There are, and those esteemed sincere *Christians* too, who would have taken the Names of *Infidel* and *Heretick* for Favours at the Hand of the Letter-Writer." It may be so, but I'll assure him I never give those *Titles* by way of *Compliment*; and if Mr. *W.* knows any *Christians* who can see *Charms* in such *Titles*, he is welcome to their Acquaintance. But, if, as he says, he himself is *not* charm'd with them, it is very strange Conduct in him to talk of *sincere Christians* who do not think it an *Infamy* to be reckon'd *Infidels*. Does not this look as if he wanted to take off the Horror and Odium that ought to attend them?

If you'll favour me with the Publication of another Letter, I shall offer some Observations upon the *Medium* of his *Demonstration*, and endeavour to shew what Danger we have reason to apprehend from his *Scheme*, and how much it concerns us, in common Prudence, to guard against the Designs of the Author.

Yours, &c.

LETTER III.

I COME now to enquire into Mr. *Warburton's* SCHEME, and see what great Reason all sober Christians have to be offended with it; to be very jealous of his

his Design in advancing it; and to guard in time, against the Mischiefs it may do.

We object to his Scheme as a very dangerous one, in that it obliged him strongly to prepossess his Readers against *Revelations* in general, and *Religion* in general, before he enters upon his Proof of a *particular* Revelation and Religion. He has been very industrious to search into *Heathen Antiquity* in order to shew that *all wise Lawgivers pretended to Revelations and Inspirations*, in order to give Reverence to their Character, and Force to their Laws. But I am afraid Mr. *W.* will not make his Readers the more inclin'd to believe the *Inspiration* of the *Old Testament*, or the *New*, or the *Divine Authority* of *Moses* and *Christ*, by shewing that the *pretence to Inspiration* has been *Universal* amongst Law-givers, and that it was *but* a Pretence. Will not a great many be too apt to make this Inference? *Moses* and *Christ* pretended to be *inspir'd*; so did all other *wise Lawgivers*; therefore it may be as *mere* a Pretence in *Moses* and *Christ*, as in all the rest. If the *Law* and the *Gospel* be, as they are allowed to be, very *wise Institutions*, this is indeed a proof of the *Good Sense* and *Wisdom*, but not of the *Inspiration* of their *Institutors*. For this we must have recourse to the Evidence of *Miracles*, which Mr. *W.* does not seem to think is so satisfactory as we were wont to esteem it.

But he goes farther, and lays the Foundation of a strong *Prejudice* against *all Religion*, that is, against the Belief of a *Providence* and a *Future State*, which cannot, according to my Apprehension, be a very prudent Scheme. This Method might be *necessary* to his Scheme, but then it was an insuperable *Objection* against the Scheme, if *Revelation* could be prov'd any other Way: And, God be prais'd, it has stood its Ground, upon the Foot of *Miracles* for above 17 Centuries, and will, I am satisfied, be able to stand upon no other. Why then should a Writer of *so much Seditious* reject this *old successful* method of Proof, for one which may *prejudice* a great many against the Belief of *any Religion* at all? Which will most likely be the case, if they should believe *his Representation* of *Antiquity* to be true? He has labour'd to shew that all the great *Genius's* of Old, (In my last I observ'd how violently he magnified the Capacities of *modern Infidels*;) all the *Lawgivers* and *Philosophers*, the Men of the greatest *natural* and *improv'd* Understanding, look'd upon *all Religion* as a *Cheat*, and used it only as a *Political Engine*. Now, if there be a *Providence*, one

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would think, Men of the *best* Understanding and Knowledge should have found out that *important* Truth, as well as the *ignorant Multitude*. It is very strange that only *Socrates*, out of such a vast Number of learned and great Men, in so many Ages, should *believe* it. If it be *capable* of being *prov'd*, (which *St. Paul* expressly affirms) the *virtuous* Men amongst the *Philosophers* were better qualified, than less improv'd Minds, for such Inquiries; and yet, according to *Mr. W's* Account, *all the most competent* Judges, *and only* excepted, *disbeliev'd* a Providence, tho' they thought it necessary to teach the Doctrine to those who knew no better. And if they could, by *Reason*, find out *this* Truth, they might as easily come at some Knowledge of a *Future State* as a *Consequence* of the other. I appeal then to *Common Sense*, whether the spreading such a Notion as this, with all the *Atheistical Reasons* which *Mr. W.* has assign'd for their *Infidelity*, be not the most ready Way to induce *unthinking* and *licentious* Persons to believe that, tho' learned and wise *Jews* and *Christians* have taught the Doctrines of a *Providence* and a *future State*, yet they believed the Truth of them no more than the *learned* and *wise Heathens* did; and, I presume, *Mr. W.* will allow that whoever disbelieves a *Providence* and a *future State*, upon *Atheistical Principles*, will not believe any *Revelation*. *Mr. W.* is aware of this Objection against his Scheme, acknowledges it, and attempts an Answer to it, but such a one as is so far from being *satisfactory* to *my* Apprehension that it is wholly *unintelligible*. Say, that these Truths were at first *supernaturally reveal'd*, and handed down by *Tradition*; or that God *imprinted* them on Men's Minds by way of *Instinct*; or suppose the Belief of them to have ever obtained in the World, by any other Means whatsoever; it is impossible in any tolerable Manner to account for so *universal a Disbelief* of them, amongst the learned and *virtuous Philosophers*, without resolving it, as *Mr. W.* does, into such Reasons, as, in their Opinion, shewed the *absurdity* of the *Notions*. If the *Original* of such Belief be *Instinct*, the *Philosophers* must have believed it as well as others, since *Instinct* is such an Impression upon our Nature by the Author of it, as *all* at first enjoy'd, and few could quite get rid of. If we resolve it into a *supernatural Revelation*, yet if the *Notions* be *agreeable* to Reason, tho' *Reason alone* could not have *discover'd* them, it is still equally strange that such *Rational* Opinions should continue to obtain amongst the most *irrational* Men, while those of the *strongest* and *most approv'd* Reason.

Reason; and *most perfect Morals*, universally rejected it. And in the 1st Sect. of the 2d B. p. 93, he carefully points it out to the Reader's Observation, that, as *Religion* was believ'd only by the *Populace*, so "all the National Religions of the ancient and modern *gentile* World are so gross and irrational that they could not be the Result of the Discoveries of *improv'd Reason*, but were plainly fitted to the *Capacity* of Minds, yet rude and uncultivated." Then he instances in two Kingdoms, the *Mexicans* and *Peruvians* in the *South*, and the *Canadians* in *North America*; "the first of which, he says, had a Religion *formed* and *settled*, but such a Religion as discover'd something worse than mere Ignorance, but which could never be the Result of *speculative Thinking*: However, a Religion it was that taught the great *Articles of the Worship of a God, a Providence, and a future State*." Then he asks, "how happen'd it that these two great Empires had a Religion, and the *Canadians* none, but that their *Founders* saw it was necessary to establish and perpetuate one *for the Benefit of the State*. A Circumstance that the *Canadians* never were under:" So that the *Origin of Religion* is here plainly ascrib'd to the *Magistrate*, and the *Intent* of it confin'd to the purposes of *Civil Life*; for which Reason he supposes the *Magistrate* to have so framed it, as to fit it to the *Genius* and *Temper* of the Nation. Whoever carefully considers this and the following Section will see my Observation abundantly made Good. Indeed, he has said in one Place of this Sect. p. 92, that *Religion was of popular Belief, even before Civil Policy was instituted*, and at the End of his Book offers at an Argument for Religion grounded upon this *popular Belief*; yet in the very Place where he makes the Assertion, he destroys it again. I shall cite the Passage because it is strong. "Yet *were* there formerly, and now are, many Savage Nations that long lost all Traces of Religion: A Fact that implies some extraordinary Care and Art in the *Magistrate* for its Support: For, if Religion has been supported in *all Places, at all Times, and under all Circumstances*, where there was a *Magistrate* and *Civil Policy*; and scarce in *any Place, or under any Circumstance* where these were wanting; what other Cause than the *Magistrate's Management* can be assign'd for it? This, to considering Men, will be *of weight*."—For what, I ask? Why plainly to shew, that, in his Opinion, *Religion* was not from *God*; not from a *supernatural Revelation*; or *speculative improv'd Reason*; or from *innate Notions*; but from

from *Civil Policy*; and that it has been constantly preserv'd by the *Power*, as it was originally invented by the *Wisdom* of the *Magistrate*. If this be not his Meaning he should have taken more care of his Expressions, for this is the obvious Import of them; and what makes it the more probable that he *really meant* what he has express'd, is this; that it is of a Piece with the *general Tendency* of the Book. But, he goes on to make his *Meaning* still clearer by *Reasoning* upon the *Fact*, tho' his Reasoning be not conclusive. He is very particular, (p. 94, 95.) in setting forth the Advantages the *Canadians* had, above the *Mexicans*, of coming to the *Knowledge of a superior Being*, and their Care in making as much Improvement of their Faculties and Opportunities, as their Brethren in the *South*; notwithstanding which the Issue prov'd contrary to what might be expected; the others had a *Religion*, and these had *none*. *Who then, says he, can any longer doubt that this was owing to the Care and Contrivance of the Magistrate?* Now, can any Thing be fuller and plainer? If the *Knowledge of a Supreme Being* were attainable by *Reason*, the *Canadians* had better Opportunities and Capacities than the *Mexicans*, and are allow'd by *Historians* to have made as good an Improvement of them, and yet, for want of the Aid of the *Civil Magistrate*, they had *no Religion* at all, while the *Mexicans* had a *Religion*, and a *Religion fitted*, by the *Wisdom* of the *Magistrate* to the *People*. And as he resolves the *Origin of Religion* into *Civil Policy*, so he gives the *Egyptians* the Credit of being the *first Inventors* of this useful Contrivance; the *first that establish'd Religion*, p. 96. which he says, (after having quoted an Authority to confirm the *Fact*) was the same thing as affirming of the *Egyptians*, that they were the *first and wisest policed People*, p. 92. His citing an *Historian* attesting a *Fact*, and then making a Remark in consequence of the *Truth* of it, without intimating the *least doubt* of its *Truth*, is allowing it to be true. This is the Account he gives of the State of *Religion* amongst *Heathens*; and as unfavourable a one to *Revelation* as the Heart of an *Infidel* could wish. Let us now enquire into his Scheme with respect to the *Jews*. The *Heathens*, the most *intelligent* and *rational* Part of them, he represents as *Atheists*; ignorant of that *God* who created them; of that *Providence* which govern'd them; of that *Eternal State* for which they were intended; and oblig'd to have Recourse to *Fiction* and *Imposture* for their mutual assistance in *Society*. The *Jews*, indeed, according to what he has told us of his *System*, did believe a *God*, and a *Providence*,
but

but (as far as we can judge of it at present) not such a particular Providence, with respect to *Individuals*, as *Society* and *Religion* require for their Support. Tho' God made a particular Covenant with that People, gave them an extraordinary Revelation, and promis'd them singular Blessings which were never fully perform'd in this Life, it does not yet appear that Mr. W. thinks, they had any Intimation of the most important and essential Truth of Religion, a future State.

I. In p. 6. He declares the *Medium* of his intended Demonstration to be, the Omission of a future State in the Jewish Dispensation. He does not explain what kind, or what Degree of Omission he means: Only, that it is such an Omission as the *Deists* have laid hold on; pretending it to be an Imperfection which makes the Dispensation unworthy of the Author to whom we ascribe it. So, it seems, he yields to the *Deists* the very Point which they contend for, and builds his Demonstration upon the Fact upon which they ground their Objection. This, indeed, is fighting them with their own Weapons, but we have too much to fear from such an Engagement. He grants, that there is such an Omission as they pretend there is. This is a Concession never made before to the *Deists* by wise and good Men, but constantly denied, (as represented by the *Deists*) and clearly confuted; particularly by those two excellent and judicious Writers, BISHOP BULL, and the GREAT Dean of St. Paul's, Dr. Sherlock; the former, in his Posthumous Pieces; the latter, in his admirable Book upon a future State. What reason then have we not to be greatly alarm'd at this Novel, and, in our Opinion, destructive Scheme? Or why should we sit silent and patient all the while, waiting for a Demonstration built upon a false Fact, so far as appears? Or why should we suffer that Fact to pass current, and be imbib'd by unwary Readers, unless it had been more carefully explained, and better guarded, than the Author has yet guarded it? For the present, the Fact is supposed to be such as the *Deists* pretend it to be: And in that Light it is neither consistent with our Lord's express Doctrine against the *Sadducees*. *Mat.* 22, 23—32. *Mark* 12, 18—27. nor with St. Paul's in *Heb.* 11. Either therefore the Argument is foreign to the Dispute with *Deists*, if the Fact be not understood according to their Notion of it; or if it be so understood, it is a wrong and a dangerous Concession, contradictory both to the *Old Testament* and the *New*, and sapping the very Vitals of true Religion. To say that a future State was omitted in the Jewish Dispensation, is not a true Proposition, unless guarded

guarded and qualified with several Distinctions and Limitations. Taken *simply, absolutely*, and in those *general* Terms, it is very *false*, and of *pernicious* Tendency. Why then does Mr. *W.* offer to spread it in those *general* Terms among the Populace? Or, if he wants Attention, or Discernment to distinguish rightly in such a *momentous* Article, and lays his Foundation of a *Proof* of the Scriptures in a Fact that is *subversive* of their Truth, why must others forbear to *remonstrate*, when the Mischief is already working, and no Antidote applied?

2. He says, *the Doctrine of a Future State did not make part of the Mosaic Dispensation*, p. 7. He has not added, *as Mosaick*, which he should have done, to remove *offence*, and to prevent the *deception* of his Readers. The *Mosaick* Dispensation *did not, could not disannul* the *Patriarchal*, as St. *Paul* has clearly prov'd, but it took it in, or rather was grafted upon it: and there can be no doubt but that the Covenant with *Abraham* (which was the *Gospel* Covenant) contained a *Future State*. Dr. *Sherlock* in the Book above-mentioned, and which I would recommend to Mr. *W.*'s careful Perusal, has explain'd this Point very fully and unanswerably. Therefore the *Jewish Dispensation*, which in its complex View comprehended both *Patriarchal* and *Mosaical*, did undoubtedly take in a *Future State*; and so the Doctrine of a *Future State*, tho' not properly taught by the *Law*, consider'd as the *Shell*, or *Cover* of the *Patriarchal Religion*, or *Gospel Covenant*, yet obtained *under* the *Law*, or *Jewish Dispensation*. Nay, Dr. *Sherlock* has a distinct Chapter to shew, that, tho' the *Law of Moses* contain'd no *express Promise* of another Life, yet the whole *Mosaical Dispensation* is one continued Proof of it; if we will allow that God had any wise Design in that Dispensation, or the *Jews* any common Sense to understand it. And it is my Opinion that, if Mr. *W.* be a sincere *Christian*, and will seriously examine the *Dean's* Arguments, he will see himself under a necessity of giving up his own Scheme, as being absolutely inconsistent with the *Bible*. No doubt, he thought himself exceeding smart when he told me, in his *Vindication*, that the FOUNDATION is *not* the HOUSE, but I would have him remember that the *Foundation* is the *Support* of the House, and if he lays the *Foundation* of his Building in the *Ruins* of it, he will prove a bad Architect. If his Scheme obliges him flatly to contradict the *Scriptures*, he will hardly be able to prove them to be *true* by any Argument that proves them to be *false*.

3. The Author says (p. 8.) that he *affirms* something that many *Christian Writers* have not only *denied*, but thought it *necessary to deny*, which he civilly imputes to their *Love of Systems*, to their *Passions building upon the Ruins of Reason*, to their having *Understandings narrowed by Prejudice*. Now I know not that many *Christian Writers* have ever denied that the *Mosaick Covenant*, consider'd merely as *Mosaick*, contain'd only *Temporal Promises*, in the *express Letter* of it. All sound *Divines* have ever allowed it. But what many *Christian Divines*, indeed all *sound Divines*, ancient and modern, have denied, is what the *Deists* pretend, and Mr. *Warburton* seems to grant, *viz.* that a future State was not taught by *Moses*, or that such Belief obtain'd not under the *Old Testament*. This they have justly thought it *necessary to deny*. If this be (as by the Plan exhibited it *appears* to be) what Mr. *Warburton* AFFIRMS, he is himself very grossly and very dangerously mistaken: nor can he make us Amends by pretending to build a *Demonstration* for the Truth of Revelation upon a *false Principle*, a Principle *demonstrably false*, if the *Scriptures* be true. We have therefore great reason to be very much offended, and very jealous of his Pretences, 'till he explains *whom* he means by the *many Christian Writers*, and what it was (in his Account) that they thought it *necessary to deny*, and he thinks it *proper to affirm*. He might be as fond of a *System* of his own making, as others might be of a *System* recommended by *Scripture* and *Antiquity*. He may also have *Passions*, and a *Mind narrowed by Prejudices*, as well as those *many Christian Writers* (whoever they were) whom he so *candidly* reflects upon. Therefore as he has taken the *Liberty* to throw oblique *Aspersions* upon many, owning his *Notion* to be *new*, himself the *first* that espous'd it, (which shews that his *Reflections* in that particular, extend to *all before him*) he should not think it hard Measure if *Suspensions* are rais'd, in our own Defence, upon a *single Writer*. He has given just Ground for them, neither are we bound by any *Laws of Justice, Charity, or Humanity*, to be silent as long as he shall think it proper to keep back his intended *Demonstration*. If the *Tendency* of his Book be (as it plainly is at *present*) to persuade the World, either that a future State was not taught *at all* under the *Old Testament*, or that *Moses* has *totally omitted* it, or that the *Jewish Religion* did not contain it, or that *Religious Jews* did not believe it, and govern their Lives by it, then there is reason for entering some timely *Caveats* against it, to
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prevent any such pernicious Doctrine's taking root among us; and likewise to hinder the Author; who appears under a *very suspicious* Character, at least, from being received and encouraged as a *Friend*, till he shall give us some better Reasons, than his *Promise* of a Demonstration, to think him one. But whatever his Scheme shall at last appear to be, which at present he has left us to guess at as well as we can, we are not at a loss to judge of the *Nature* and *Tendency* of *This* Volume. We *certainly know* this to be a very bad Book, consisting, among other *strange bold Things that have a bad Aspect on Religion*, of *Satyrs* on the *Advocates for Christianity*, *Panegyrics* on the most notorious *Infidels*, and all the filthy stuff that he could scrape together out of the Sink of *Atheism*, as a *natural* INTRODUCTION to a *Demonstration* of the Truth of *Revelation*. Yet Mr. *W.* thinks it *rude*, nay *unchristian*, nay *horrid* in me to *censure* his Performance, or *suspect* his Designs. Let it be ever *so strange* a Book, we should have a little *Patience* and he will make us ample amends by an extraordinary good one, tho' he did not care to let it come out in bad Company. Besides, Mr. *W.* according to his own Account of himself, has as much Right, as his Friend *Bayle*, to strike out *into the Province of PARADOX*, as an *Exercise for the restless Vigour of his Mind*, because like *him*, he can so prepare *Atheism* as to *extract* out of it such a *Confutation of Infidelity*; that the Party shall never dare to appear any more while his *Demonstration* shall last.

But, to be serious, I appeal to Mr. *W.* himself. Suppose any one had publish'd a *Political* Book, which was thought by able and judicious Men to have a *Tendency* very pernicious to the *Government*, and the Author used the same way of Arguing and the same kind of Language which the *Enemies* have always been observed to use; in this case would Mr. *W.* think it becoming a good Subject to suffer such a Book to take its course unanswer'd, only because he himself, *against* the *plain Tenour* and *whole Air* of his Work, assures us that he will, some time or another, nobody can conceive how, *demonstrate* the King's Title to the *Crown*; and suffer such a Writer to pass *unceasur'd*, only because he assures us that if we will but take his Word for it, and trust him, he is a *true Friend*, tho' he *seems*. by his present way of talking, to be an *Enemy*? or, if any one, without any personal Prejudice to the Author, in the Integrity of his Heart, with an honest Zeal and Concern, should endeavour to obviate the pernicious Effects that the

Book was likely to produce if not taken notice of, and to guard against the bad Designs which the Writer is justly *suspected* to entertain; would Mr. *W.* esteem such an Instance of *Fidelity* to the Government deserving his *Resentment*, or his *Thanks*?

L E T T E R I V.

I N the Letter wherein I first mentioned this Book, I observed, that if an Author writes *like an Infidel* he ought not to be surpriz'd, or to pretend to be angry, if the World strongly suspects his *Faith*. Whatever Mr. *W.*'s *real Sentiments* and *Intentions* may be, I am very much *mistaken* in my Judgment if I have not made it appear, in my last three Letters, that the *Divine Legation* is written exactly in the *Infidel-Way*, and must, in proportion to the Success it meets with, serve the *Infidel Cause*; and I am as much mis-inform'd by others, if I have not made some Converts to my Opinion. The Case, indeed, does already appear plain enough to satisfy any impartial Person; but, there are some things in the *Manner* of his Writing, and some *particular Passages*, that deserve Attention, not only as they may be of use to shew us the Drift of *this Book*, and to make probable the *Meaning* of the Writer, but to help those, who may not have been so observant of their *Arts*, to judge of other Books of the like kind.

I. Mr. *W.* after the manner of *modern Infidels*, deals much in *general Charges* and *Reflections*, which give a Colour for something, and leave room for *injurious Applications*, but give the Injur'd no possibility of defending themselves. To give an Instance of what I mean. He speaks with great Contempt of *certain Bigots*, as well as *certain Advocates*, who have a fondness for *Church Systems*, and give up *Reason to their Passions*. Now, Mr. *W.* does not want to be told in what Latitude this kind of Talk is used by the *Free-thinkers*; that by *Church-Systems*, they understand the *Doctrines* and *Institutions* of *Christianity*, by *Bigots, Christians*; and that by *giving up Reason* they mean, our insisting upon the *Insufficiency*, or *Deficiency*, of *Reason* in Matters of *Religion* without the Assistance of *Revelation*. If, therefore, an Author, of any tolerable Share of Sense and Discretion, uses the *Language* of a Set of Men, it is *natural* to suppose that he uses it in *their Sense*, because it is not to be imagin'd that a *prudent Christian* would give such

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Occasion for being mis-understood, to the prejudice of his own Reputation, of the Characters of all Orthodox Divines, and of the Interest of our Religion. And yet, if I should offer to fix this Meaning upon Mr. *W*. I should soon hear of an *unchristian* and horrid *Imputation*. But, the want of *Charity* and *Horridness* does not consist in putting the most *natural* and *probable Interpretation* upon Writings; but in Writers being so *very wicked*, or so *very imprudent*, as to give so much Ground for *Injury* and *Scandal*.

2. *Ambiguities* of Expression are another Method of writing wherein he agrees with *Infidels*. I shall cite a Specimen or two of this kind. Speaking of the Reception of *Christianity* from the *Pagan World*; (p. 279.) he says, *when the JEWISH Religion appear'd, Men were but TOO MUCH ACCUSTOMED to NEW REVELATIONS, not to acknowledge its SUPERIOR Pretences. And when CHRISTIANITY arose (p. 280.) it was favourably heard; and the SUPERIOR Evidence, with which it was accompanied, disposed Men HABITUATED to PRETENDED Revelations eagerly to receive it.* See how very artfully these Passages are contriv'd for a sly *Insinuation against Revelation*, and a *Salvo* for the *Author*. If I had an Intention to intimate, that the *Heathens* acknowledged the *Divine Inspiration* of the *Jewish* and *Christian Religion*, from their being *TOO MUCH ACCUSTOMED to NEW Revelations*, and *HABITUATED to PRETENDED Revelations*, and not in Consequence of the *Miracles* wrought in Confirmation of either, I could not have thought of more apt Words to do it in; neither could I have invented a fitter *Guard* against Censure, than by slipping into the same Sentence the *superior Pretences* of the former, and the *superior Evidence* of the latter: This, I should have thought would have made my Meaning plain, and my self safe. But I leave the Reader to his own Judgment of Mr. *W*'s Intention.

3. He casts *universal Aspersions* upon the *Priesthood* under the *Cover* of the particular *Occasion* of his *introducing* them. He had been enquiring into the *Original* of the *Mysteries*, whether they arose from the *Priests* who *officiated* in their *Rites*, or whether they were *founded* by the *State*. After several Reasons assign'd for the *latter* Opinion, he gives the following one against the *former*, at p. 180. "Another
" Proof of this Original may be deduc'd from what was
" taught there; which was the *Necessity of a virtuous and*
" *holy Life, to obtain a happy Immortality.* Now this, we
" know, (pray, Reader, mind the Gentleman) could not
" come.

“come from the *Sacerdotal Warehouse.*” The *Terms* are CHANGED as dextrously as an *High German Doctor* plays his *Legerdemain Sleights* upon you. He was speaking of the *HEATHEN Priests*, but he slips insensibly into the *Sacerdotal OFFICE*, which he, like a *well-bred Man*, calls a *Ware-house*, p. 180: And then, when he had placed the *Function, at large*, in the room of the *Heathen Priests*, (to whom alone *Mr. Lock* applied his *Reflections*), and made them *Dealers in Religious Wares*, he cites the most bitter Quotation from his *Reasonableness of Christianity*; and that too without any Reference to the *Page*, that he may give us an Opportunity of paying due Regard to his *Honesty* in the Quotation. The first Day, or two, that I can spare, shall be employed in looking over the Book, for I cannot think but there must be *some Mistake* in transcribing it, for he brings in *Mr. Lock* talking in a *very low Stile*, of the *Tricks of Religions* and the *Holy Tribe*; of their selling good *Pennyworths*; INSTEAD of *Virtue* and a *clean Conscience*, vending *Lustrations* and *Sacrifices* which were *easily* perform’d. And that he might clinch this *rusty Nail* which has been driven by all the *Infidels* that have written in any Language, he *closes* the Quotation, as he *introduc’d* it, with this Observation, “We may be assur’d, that an *Institution* which taught the Necessity of a *strict and holy Life* “must be the *Invention* of, *Legislators*, p. 181.” This Page must needs have afforded much Merriment to many a *young Debauchée*, and more serious Comfort to the *old confirm’d Infidel*; and the next *Parson* that chanc’d to come across either of them had good Luck if he escaped without a *rude Sneer*. To compleat his good Offices to his *Brethren*, of the *holy Tribe*, when he had represented the *Corruptions* of the *Mysteries*, and assign’d some of the *Causes* of them, he could not help bringing in the *little Priest* for his Share of them. p. 167.

4. At p. 191, He tells a Story, “It was the Custom, “at the Celebration of the *Elusian Mysteries*, to have “what was wanted in those Rites carried on *Asses*. Hence “the Proverb, *Asinus portat Mystera*: Accordingly, the “Poet introduces *Bacchus*, followed by the Buffoon *Xanthius*, bearing a Bundle in like manner, and *riding on an “Ass*. And lest the Meaning of this should be mistaken, “on *Hercules’s* telling *Bacchus* that the Inhabitants of *Ely- “sium* were the Initiated, *Xanthius* puts in and says, *and I “am the Ass carrying Mysteries.*” Our Saviour’s *riding in- to Jerusalem* on an *Ass* has been Matter of much wanton

Sport to the *Infidels*, and his *Religion* has been ridicul'd for its *mysterious Doctrines* and *Rites*: For which Reason a *pious* and *prudent Christian* would not have told this Story in such a Manner, and put the last Words of it, as he did the *little Priest*, in *Italicks*. Indeed the whole Affair of the *Mysteries*, especially when explain'd by the *general Tenour* of the Book, looks too much like an *ill-intended Comparison* between *them* and the *Mysteries* of *Christianity*. INITIATION into the *Mysteries* he expressly compares to *Baptism*, and ascribes the *same Effects* to it, p. 139. *It was the End and Drift of INITIATION to RESTORE the Soul to that State FROM WHENCE it FELL as from its native Seat of Perfection.* As *Baptism* gives a Title to the Happiness of *Heaven*, upon the Condition of a *good Life*, so the *Heathen Elysium* was peopled with such of the *Initiated* as had lived *virtuously*. The *Feast* that accompanied the *Sacrament* of the *Lord's Supper*, in the first Ages, and the *Corruptions* that crept into it (and for which it was discontinued) is introduc'd by way of *Comparison* with the *Corruptions* of the *Elusian Mysteries*; and, with as little *Truth*, as *Decency*, he supposes that the *primitive Christians*, in IMITATION of these *Pagan Rites*, brought a *Custom* into the *Church* of celebrating *Vigils* in the NIGHT, p. 166. In the preceding Page he had taken notice how much the *profound Silence* and *Secrecy* of the *Night* had contributed to the *infamous Corruptions* of the *Pagan Mysteries*, and then supposes, against *plain History*, that the *Reason* why the *Christians* made choice of *that Season* was, in *Imitation* of *them*. This is a manner of Writing very proper for *Infidels*, and as commonly used by them. Thus *Toland*, *Tindal*, *G——n*, *Collins*, and the rest of our modern Authors of that Stamp, were continually throwing *oblique Reflections* upon the *Christian Institutions*, exclaiming against the *Corruptions* amongst *Christians*; and imputing *all Corruptions*, originally, to the *Priest*: Infomuch that, if *Mr. W.* had not put his *Name* to his Book, I should have been apt to suspect that *Mr. G——n*, whose way of writing I have had occasion to make my self acquainted with, was the Author of it. But let *Mr. W.* name me any one of our *celebrated, sober, discreet Advocates* (such as *Stillingsfleet*, *Tillotson*, *Dutton*, *Rogers*, *Jenkyns*, *Conybeare*, *Lestly*, and many others) who have any *suspicious Inuendos* about the *Mysteries* of our Religion; who talks of the *little Priest* introducing *Corruptions* into them; of the *Sacerdotal Warehouse*; that the *Priests* (*Priests in general*) can afford better *Pennyworths* by

by dealing in the *cheap* and *easy* Business of *Oblations*, than by *teaching* People *their Duty*, and requiring a *good Life* as the *Condition* of Happiness in the next Life; of the *Holy Tribe*; the *Tricks of Religion*, and of *Asses carrying Mysteries*.

5. The *many Contradictions* in Mr. *W's* Book, and the Difficulty there is frequently of *fixing* any thing upon him, is another suspicious Mark. This has been the constant Practice of the *Free-Thinkers*, and for a very plain Reason. But none of the above-mentioned Advocates ever wrote in that *inconsistent* Way. They had an honest, Christian End in view, and they were *uniform* in the pursuit of it, expressing themselves always *intelligibly* and *consistently*. And if Mr. *W.* really intended *well* to *Revelation*, why should not *his* Intention be as Evident as *theirs* was, and all the several Parts of his Work at as perfect an Agreement with one another. An Author that has a Design, which it is not proper for him directly to own, has occasion for *counter* Passages where he may shelter himself in an Engagement; and therefore, it is natural to suppose that Mr. *W.* would not have provided so many of these *Sanctuaries* if he had not thought he might stand in need of them. The Gentleman, I am sure, would take it very ill if I should think he had so bad an Understanding as not to know *how* to write consistently, or that he knew so little of our Language, as not to be able to express his Meaning clearly. Why then did Mr. *W.* advance such *contrary* Positions, as he has done? Take a Case that I mention'd in my last. For what purpose was that short Passage dropp'd in *Italicks*, *The Belief of a Providence and a future State were of POPULAR BELIEF even BEFORE any Civil Policy was instituted?* — Just before he enters upon a labour'd Design to shew the direct contrary Position to be true, *viz.* that the Doctrine was *invented* by the *Legislators*? Mr. *W.* in his *Vindication* complains that in my way of understanding his Book I make *the whole Volume a heap of Absurdities and Contradictions*, p. 17. However I may have *misunderstood* the Design of his Book, I am very certain I do not misunderstand the Meaning of his *Vindication*, for I do not pretend to understand it at all. For, whether Mr. *W.* really intended to defend, or to undermine *Revelation*, I do not apprehend how this will alter the State of his *Contradictions*. A Contradiction will be *equally* a Contradiction, and two *different* Propositions will *equally contradict* one another, whatever we suppose the Author's Intention in Writing to be; but such *Inconsistencies* in Mr. *W.* who does not seem
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incapable of Writing *consistently* whenever he pleases, are a very *suspicious* Circumstance.

6. At p. 97, we have the following Passage, which I cannot any way reconcile to the Belief of my Bible. “ *As to the Attributes and Qualities assign’d to their Gods: These always corresponded with the Nature and Genius of the Civil Government. If this was gentle, benign, compassionate, and forgiving; Goodness and Mercy made up the Essence of the Deity: But if severe, inexorable, captious, or unequal, the very Gods were Tyrants; and Expiations, Atonements, Lustrations, and Bloody Sacrifices composed the System of Religious Worship. This holds so UNIVERSALLY throughout Antiquity, that by the Rule here deliver’d a Man might, on being told the Genius of any particular Government, rightly pronounce of the Nature of their Gods.*” Here again I must not venture to guess at Mr. W’s Meaning; but I will venture to say, the *Words*, if they have any Meaning at all, signify thus much, *viz.* that to require any bloody Sacrifices, by way of Atonements, is an Act of Cruelty and Tyranny in the Gods of the *Heathens*, and an Argument that they were of a *severe, inexorable, captious and unequal, i. e. unjust Nature*: If so, it is equally *cruel and tyrannical* in the *true God* to require any such thing. The *absolute Nature of Sacrifices and Atonement, of Cruelty and Tyranny*, will be the same whether we apply the Consideration of them to the *true God*, or to *false Gods*. Whatever is in *its self, in its own Nature, CRUEL, TYRANNICAL and UNJUST*, must always be so. If *Sacrifices and Atonements* being offer’d up to the *Heathen Deities* suppos’d them to be in their Nature *cruel and unjust Tyrants; severe, inexorable, captious, or unequal*; the *Jewish Religion* required *bloody Sacrifices and Atonement*,) and the *Christian Dispensation* requir’d the *Sacrifice of the Son of God himself*, as an *Atonement* for the Sins of Mankind; and consequently the *Jewish and Christian Religion* suppose *GOD ALMIGHTY* to be in his *Nature*, what it is so *blasphemous* to express, that I desire the Reader will cast his Eye back to what was ascrib’d to the *Heathen Deities*. This is a sufficient Reply to part of his *Vindication*. At p. 25. says he, “ The *Letter Writer* should have considered that in this very Book I affirm more than twice, that the *Doctrine of Redemption* is the Foundation, and of the very *Essence of Christianity*. He should have known that all or most of those *Christian Doctrines* mentioned above, are contained in the *Doctrines of Redemption.*” In this *humble*
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Divine Legation of M O S E S, &c. 31

and Gentleman-like Vindication the Author has frequent Relapses into his old *familiar* and *free* Stile. *Naturam expellas, &c.* 'Tis true, I ought to have known a great deal more than I do, but I did not happen to be *ignorant* of that Point; neither is Mr. *W.* ignorant of another, *viz.* that he may believe the Doctrine of *Redemption* to be of *the very Essence* of *Christianity*, and yet *not* believe *Christianity* to be *true*: Nay, for *that very Reason*, because it contains a Doctrine so *contrary* to his Notions concerning *Sacrifices* and *Atonements*, he *must* believe it to be *false*. BEFORE his Vindication it was *possible* to suppose that he *might not* understand *Christianity* in our Sense, and so *might* believe the *general Truth* of it, tho' he held Notions *inconsistent* with its *Essence*; but now, after he has declar'd that we are agreed as to what is the *Essence* of *Christianity*, and in his *Book* has laid down a Position that utterly subverts it, he has but this *Alternative* left him; either to give up his *Notions*, or *Christianity*.

The last Passage which I shall mention (for neither your Paper, nor your Reader's Patience would allow me room for all the exceptionable ones) is at p. 363. "But the principal Difficulty (with regard to *Tully's* real Sentiments) arises from the several various Characters he sustain'd in Life, and in his Writings, that habituated him to *feign* and *dissemble* his Opinions; in which, tho' he neither acted a *weak*, nor an *unfair* Part, yet certainly a very *impenetrable* one with regard to his own Opinions." In plain *English*, Mr. *W.* justifies *Lying*; and consequently, destroys the Ends of Speech, subverts Society, and makes it impossible for *God* to *reveal* his Will, either *ordinarily*, or *extraordinarily*. For in the first Place, it destroys the *Certainty* of the *Senses*, and of all *Reasoning*; Since, if it be neither *weak*, nor *unfair* in *Man* to *Dissemble* and *Deceive*, it is equally *fair* and *wise* in *God* to do it; and if so, it will be impossible for us to prove that *God* has reveal'd himself. *External Evidence* cannot convince us, because we cannot be sure that *God* has not *deceiv'd* us in those *Appearances* which are to attest the *Divine Authority* of any one's Commission. *Internal Evidence* will avail us little, because he may deceive us in the Exercise of our *intellectual Faculties*, as well as in the Use of our *Senses*. Or, if we *could* be convinced that *God* had made a Revelation, it would be quite useless, because we could never *depend* upon it; and then — we could never know whether *God* intends to execute his Threatnings, or perform his Promises; and

and then—what becomes of that *Belief* of a *future State* of Rewards and Punishments which he and his *great Geniuses* allow to be absolutely necessary to Society? And then—what becomes of our favourite *Demonstration*, the Work of so many Years, so often *view'd* and *review'd*, *laid by*, and *resumed*, and *turn'd on all Sides*? And then—what has this Gentleman been doing all this while, with his labour'd Apparatus, and pompous Parade? There is something strangely whimsical and ridiculous, as well as shocking in his Conduct; and he must excuse me if the *Romantick* Figure which he makes in my Imagination raises a Smile in me, as the *Forgery of the primitive Christians* diverted him. He mounts his manag'd Horse, and prances about, swaggering and boasting of his great Prowess and Feats, at the Head of a numerous Body of ancient and modern *Infidels*, whose vast Abilities and Attainments he extols as highly as he does his own; *disarms*, as he marches, the *profess'd Friends* of Religion, and *disbands* them as ignorant of the Military Art; desires us, by all Means, not to follow any other Leader but him, nor trust to any Fortifications, how safely soever they have hitherto guarded us from all Attacks, but to a *bran new* one, of his own contriving, worth a thousand of them, as any one may see by the *Model* which he has given of it. But, forasmuch as *new Projects* are often dangerous, and *great Pretenders* sometimes promise more than they have Ability, or an Intention to perform; and because of the uncivil Things which he has permitted his *Chiefs* to say of us, and the many Hostilities he has suffered them to commit, he assures us that he will make us Amends at last for some unavoidable Damages, by a total Defeat of *Infidelity*. And that we may be the more inclin'd to *confide* in him, notwithstanding some unpromising Appearances, he tells us *honestly*, that we are not to credit what he, or any of his Great Men say, because it is neither *weak* nor *unfair* to *dissemble* our Opinions and Designs; and, moreover, in effect *owns*, that he has undertaken to do what is *utterly impossible* to be done. If Mr. W. thinks me too ludicrous, let him remember the Story he thought fit to tell, on the *most serious* Occasion, of his two *Law-Solicitors*. One Letter more in Answer to his *Vindication*, shall conclude your Trouble, from,

SIR, Yours, &c.

L E T T E R V.

I. I HAVE already anticipated, in a great measure, the Design of this Letter, having had occasion in the Course of my former Papers to take Notice of several Passages in the *Vindication*; particularly one, concerning the *Redemption*, upon which he seemed to lay very great Stress, with very little Reason for it. Indeed, from one End to the other, it is *such* a Defence as one might have expected from an artful *Enemy*, who thought this the most effectual Method of exposing him. Surely Mr. *W.* tho' he gives himself a very good Character, has not a sincere Friend in whose Judgment and Fidelity he could confide; for if he had submitted to such a one's Perusal either the *Book*, or the *Vindication* of it, he must have been better advised than to publish any thing so wicked as the former, or any thing so weak as the latter. He says, *he has made his Defence once for all*; and, if he has really no better to make, he did very wisely in determining not to *give the Publick a second Trouble*; and, he had been still wiser, in my Opinion, if he had said nothing at all. If he had been wholly silent, the publick might have readily believ'd what he says to be true——
that he can as easily despise my Aspersions, as he can forgive them; and they might have imagined that he has a good deal to say for himself, tho' he might not think an *Anonymous Letter Writer* worth his Notice; but when they see a Person, so dispos'd in his Nature to a contemptuous neglect of *Aspersions*, condescending to give a particular Answer to so dull and obscure a Paper, and a Writer of such *uncommon Abilities* vindicating himself in such a *confused and trifling Manner*, they cannot help *suspecting* that his *Condescension* was the effect of a *Consciousness of Guilt*, and the Weakness of his Arguments a sign of a bad Cause. Whether he thought it his DUTY to vindicate himself, and whether the TEMPER in which it was written be, as he hopes, a proof of that Motive, I shall pass over as a Matter of no concern to the Publick; but whether he has vindicated himself to the Satisfaction of any *reasonable, unprejudiced Person*, as to the main Points, I shall enquire in a very few Words, because a very few indeed will determine it.

II. Having informed us *why* he thought it his Duty to vindicate himself, he proceeds to tell us, (what would otherwise have been as great a Secret as his *Medium*) that it was

out of *Modesty* that he publish'd the first Part of his Work *separately*, so *obscure* a Writer not *presuming* to obtrude a *voluminous* Work upon the Publick 'till he had some *Assurance* of its *Willingness* to receive it. In the first Words of his *Vindication* he observes, that he had *before* offer'd his Thoughts upon a *very important* Subject (the *Alliance*) and *been favourably* receiv'd. Methinks, therefore, so lively and *sanguine* a Writer, after so *much Encouragement* from the Publick, would naturally have had less *Fear* and *Anxiety* about the Success of any future Performances; neither need any one, tho' as *humble* as Mr. *W.* think himself an *obscure* Writer, after having appear'd with so *much Applause* on a very difficult Occasion. I should have thought it a Reason more becoming his Character, if his Concern had been rather for the *Prudence*, and *Consequences* of his Scheme to *Religion*, than for the *Willingness* of the Publick to receive it; unless he be more solicitous about his *own Reputation and Interest*, than the Success of his *Cause*. The *Difference* due to the *Cause* of *God* ought to take Place of any Regards respecting the *Publick*, or *Himself*. A Man, engaged in a Cause of such *vast Importance*, could not be too much concern'd about the *good Effects* of his Undertaking, nor too careful in taking the Advice of learned and wise Men about the Execution of it; especially, as he was sensible that his Scheme was *new*, and look'd upon as a *mere Paradox*. For this Reason the same *Difference*, whether to the *Publick*, or to *Religion*, which hinder'd him from *hastily obtruding* Two Volumes upon us at once, ought to have restrain'd him from publishing the *first*, 'till he had been well assured, by *able* and *sincere Friends* to *Religion*, that it was likely to be *well received*, and to *do Good*: And after such *reasonable Satisfaction* he needed not to have been so very scrupulously modest about publishing them *together*. Besides, the Publick would have been more likely to receive *both together* than the *first separately*. If the *Demonstration* be strong and clear, we might have been the better reconcil'd to his *Premises* for the sake of his *Conclusion*; but such *unpromising* a *Medium*, he might well suppose, would awaken our Fears, and so very bad an *Introduction* incline us to expect as bad a *Beck* to follow it.

III. But this *Confession* of his is a full Answer to his *Complaints* of ill Treatment; and neither he, nor his Friends ought to have been angry with me for answering his own *Intention*. He sent it out, it seems, by way of *Trial*, and to see how the Publick would be likely to receive

ceive the *Demonstration*, by the Reception of his *Introduction* to it. In the Name of *Common Sense*, then, why such a Clamour against me for doing what he *expected* from the Publick? And why such a Charge of *Uncharitableness* for speaking my *real Sentiments*? He wanted to know *what* People would think of *this* Volume, and from *thence* to form a Judgment of the *probable Reception* of the *Second*; and yet he and his Friends were very angry with the Publick for giving their Opinion of *part* of the Work before we had seen the *whole*. We have seen the *Sample*, and dislike it *very greatly*. We think it a Book of most *wicked Tendency*, and the *Scheme* a very *dangerous* and *destructive* one. We apprehend, from his *Medium*, that he *gives up Religion*, in order to *defend Revelation*. He may be assur'd, that the *Publick* is *not willing to receive it*; and therefore, out of *that Deference* which he so often professes for it, he ought to call in the first Part, and burn the *Second*. And yet, notwithstanding he professes so great a Regard for the *Opinion of Mankind*, and knows how offensive both his *Introduction* and his *Scheme* are to them, he declares, *he will not be drawn off* from the pursuit of the latter, and I hear, he intends to *republish* the *former*, which has already given so much Scandal and Uneasiness to good Christians of the soundest Judgment, and greatest Candour.

IV. Now let us hear what he has said for himself, as to the *main Thing*. It is too justly question'd, from his *Introduction*, whether he be a *Friend* to Religion, or an *Enemy*; whether he means to *defend Moses*, or to *betray* him. What then was the proper Buiness of his *Vindication*, but to shew that he had not given *just Grounds of Jealousy*, or that he had given *sufficient Evidence of his Faith*. As to the First, tho' he had blam'd me for giving my Opinion of a *Book* and a *Scheme*, which he professes to have published with that very View, that he might know People's Sentiments upon them, he himself is actually guilty of the very Crime of which he falsely accuses me, and writes a whole Pamphlet against me, before ever he had heard what I had to say. I only meant, in the first Letter, to give the *Alarm*, that inattentive Readers might not unwarily entertain too favourable an Opinion of the Book, and its Author; and it has since appear'd what Occasion there was for such a timely Caution. Accordingly, I declared my *Opinion*, and an Intention very soon to *support* it. If, then Mr. *W.* meant his *Vindication* for an Answer to *my* Objections against him, he should at least have staid 'till I had perform'd

my *Promise*, and given them. If he *reprints* the *Vindication*, I would not have him call it a *Reply to the Letter-Writer* in the *Miscellany*, but *some Arguments taken out of the first Part of the Divine Legation of Moses*, and the *Letter-Writer to Dr. Waterland*, shewing that *Mr. W. and his Friend* — are sincere Christians. In this Light only it ought to be consider'd, and in this Light let us now examine it. — In respect to his *own Faith* he refers, *p. 19.* to two Passages of his Book; in one of which he shews, that the Solutions which the Commentators give to the Objections of *Spinoza* and others; against *Moses* his being the Author of the Pentateuch, are good and valid. But I suppose it will not be thought that the *Divine Legation of Moses* follows from his being the *Writer* of the *Pentateuch*; neither; indeed, does it follow that *Moses* was the Author; only from the Weakness of *Spinoza's* Objections. The other Passage refer'd to, relates to the *Morality* of the *Scriptures*; where he asserts, that the *New-Testament does not contain any regular or compleat System or Digest of Moral Laws.* This Passage is at *p. 83.* of his Book, and a very *suspicious* one I apprehend it to be, as he has there explain'd himself. But granting this Position of his to be no Proof of his *Infidelity*; it can be no Argument of his *Belief* of the *Scriptures*; and; consequently, it cannot *vindicate* him from the *Suspicion* of *Infidelity*, occasion'd by his *Book*. If he will publish any thing that may deserve the Name, and have the proper Effect of a *Vindication*, he must *rationaly* account for the many obnoxious things which I have taken notice of; and shew how it is consistent with Common Sense to suppose that any *Intelligent Writer*, who could advance such *Infidel Notions* as I have produced, and write after such an *Infidel Manner*, can believe the *Scriptures*. He is often telling us what there *will* be in the *Second Volume*. But what is all that to his Purpose? We know already what is in the *First*; and we know that if what he says *there* be true, the *Bible* must be false. After *what Manner* he *will* write in his *future* Performance we cannot tell, neither can we help thinking that the *present* is written as *like* an *Infidel* as possible; and, therefore, before he has reason to complain of hard Usage, let him shew that his *Notions* and his *Manner* of writing in the *Introduction*, and his *Scheme*, are *fairly* consistent with any *RATIONAL DESIGN* of proving the *Truth of Revelation*, or with any *RATIONAL BELIEF* of it.

V. Mr. *W.* has offered an *Argument* (for if he does not mean it for an *Argument*, what Business has it in his *Vindication*?)

Divine Legation of MOSES; &c. 37

gation?) which I shall mention only because I find it has great weight with many People, and is often urg'd by them in his Favour. He says, *he has lived inoffensively, spent his Time in his PARISH Church, in the Service of his Neighbours, in his Study, and in the Offices of filial Piety.* His Friends sum up his Character in fewer Words, *He is a mighty good sort of a Man.* It may be so, and I am very glad to hear it. But let him be ever so good a sort of a Man, This is but a bad sort of an Argument in Proof of his Faith, because it proves nothing at all, unless it be, that he has nothing else to offer; for when a Man catches at a Twig, it is a sign he is in great danger of sinking. I shall put it into a *Syllogistical* Form, that the Inconclusiveness of it may be the more apparent.

Whosoever is a good sort of a Man, must be a sincere Christian.

Mr. *W.* is a good sort of a Man.

Ergo, Mr. *W.* is a sincere Christian.

I shall make bold to deny the *Major*, or *First* Proposition, and then the Argumentation must be ended, since it is impossible to find out a *Medium* by which it may be proved, there being so many other Causes, besides a sense of Duty arising from a Divine Command in *Scripture*, into which this good sort of Behaviour may be resolv'd. If Mr. *W.* had suffer'd greatly in his temporal Interest, or denied himself any Advantages, or Pleasures, for the *Interest* of *Christianity*, this would be some Proof of his Faith, but all that he has pleaded in his own Behalf may easily be supposed of a Man that does not believe one tittle of Religion, and has been practiced by *known Infidels*. Mr. *Collins* was, in that respect, a good sort of a Man, and neighbourly, liv'd soberly and inoffensively, and went constantly to Church; and yet Mr. *W.* would not offer these Things as a Proof of his Belief in JESUS CHRIST:

But it is farther pleaded by his Friends, that he has in some Places spoken as strongly in favour of Religion, as he has in others against it. Be it so. It is natural enough to suppose that a *Clergyman*, if he really intended to write against Religion, would take Care to guard against publick Censure by some *Salvo's*, but it is not so natural to imagine that a sincere Friend, in his Senses, should ever personate an Enemy so much to the Life as Mr. *W.* has done. In short, we have, in this Case, no reasonable way of judging but by such plain Passages, and such a tendency in his Writings, as are inconsistent with the Belief of Christianity, and with an

Inten-

Intention to serve it. I wish, tho' I do not see how it can possibly be done, that Mr. *W.* may be able to clear his Character; but I am the more inclin'd to despair of it, by reason of his *deliberate Justification of Lying*, and his *palpable Prevarication* in the *Affair of the English Clergy*. The Passage about *Tully* is so notorious, *especially as manag'd in the VINDICATION*, that I must here resume the Consideration of it, and accordingly treat it in a manner something different from what I did in my last; and I believe upon the whole it will appear, that it can scarce be parallel'd in the Writings of any Author but that of his dear Friend and good Ally —, whom he imitated towards the End of his Book, as he had already praised him in his Introduction. Mr. *W.* tells us, the Character of *Tully* was *impenetrable*. He means to all but such *Geniuses* as himself, who were in the *Secret* with him, and perfectly understood his *Esoteric Doctrine*. But whence arose this Impenetrability? Why, from his acting always under a *personated* Character. To the *Philosophers* he talk'd as a Philosopher; to the *Senators* as a Senator; to the *Superstitious* as a Man far gone in *Superstition*; and with his intimate Friends he laugh'd at them all in their Turns. Now, what does Mr. *W.* say of the *monstrous Character*, which he has fix'd upon this *illustrious Roman*. He tells us he acted neither a WEAK nor an UNFAIR Part. A Position which the most abandon'd *Jesuit* would not have utter'd without the Distinctions and Limitations peculiar to his Order. A Position subversive of all Sacred and Civil *Correspondence*; which quite takes away all *Confidence* among Men, and blots out of the *Religion of Nature* this momentous Article, *viz.* that the *Divine Veracity* is a *moral Perfection* imitable, and to be imitated, by Men. A Position which seems attended with this *fatal* Consequence, that it will not easily admit of any *satisfactory* Retraction, for whoever maintains it renders himself incapable for the future of giving *Fide dignum Testimonium*, and may be deem'd *Homo non Legalis* in the Law. Whatever he says to cover, conceal, and deceive, even while he is declaring against such Practices, may all with him be neither a WEAK nor an UNFAIR Part. This would follow from the very *Nature* of his Assertion, had Mr. *W.* never publish'd what he calls a *Vindication* of himself. But when we come to look into that *Vindication*, we find his *Behaviour* like his *Doctrine*, all over *shuffling* and *collusive*. He first tells us, that he declar'd his Disagreement with his Friend — upon this Head. Look into the Place, and there

there is nothing of it to be found. Why this is true, but then, if it be not in the *Book*, it may be in the *Concents*. No, not even there. All we meet with is, that ———'s Scheme of *Lying*, even in *Religion*, for *publick Utility*, is, — what? Not *unlawful*, but *useless*, but what had *no Place*, and for which there was *no Occasion* under the *Jewish* and *Christian* Oeconomies. But had *Moses* had as much Occasion for *Lying* as *Tully*, the *Vindicator* has given no Reason, why he might not have enjoy'd the Benefit of the same *Indulgence*. 'Tis the more wonderful that *Mr. W.* should be so open and unreserv'd upon this Particular, when he had the Fate of ——— before his Eyes. It was at first debated for some time, whether the Doctor were an Infidel or not. His maintaining this very Opinion, when it was throughly known and fully canvass'd, contributed greatly to settle that Dispute, and *Mr. W.* has lived to see the Doctor's Infidelity no longer doubted of, but, (as a Thing taken for granted) made a *Medium*, from whence to infer the Infidelity of others. His most satisfactory Vindication would be a strong and clear Proof of *Revelation*, which all the learned Men that I know think it absolutely impossible to bring from *his Medium*. But since *that* cannot be expected, the next best thing that he can do will be to take publick Shame to himself for having so much offended the *Christian Church*, and to make what Satisfaction he can by his future Conduct. God knows my Heart, I do not want to prove *Mr. W.* an *Unbeliever*. It would be a very great Pleasure to be able, upon good Grounds, to think him a *Christian*; and if I could see any room to *hope* for Success in his *projected Defence*, I should most heartily *wish* it him. But *Christian Charity* does not oblige us to *believe* without *Evidence*, and common Prudence requires us to guard against *treacherous Friends*. He is *justly suspected*; and it is every way right to treat him as a suspicious Person, 'till he can clear his *Character* and *Designs*. I am not of *his Opinion* that such Persons are to be *courted* and *allur'd* as if we were afraid of them. If they be *real Friends*, they'll find out Methods of shewing it. If they be *Enemies*, the sooner we know it the better. Our Cause, God be thanked, is so good, it will stand, as it has done, against all Opposition; and if it were so weak as to be in danger of being overturned by *Mr. W.* or ———, our Religion is not worth keeping; ——— formerly threatned us in the like Manner. If so great a Genius be provoked, the Attack upon our Faith will be more formidably renew'd.

————— *Erunt etiam altera Bella,
Atque iterum ad Trojam magnus mittetur Achilles:
Another Collins should again misquote,
Another Toland should again Blaspheme.*

If he pleases he may proceed. ———

————— *Verbis Messiam illude Superbis.
Go mock Messiah with thy haughty Threats.
But I will venture to foretell his Fate,
————— *Fragili quærens illidere Dentem
Offendet Solida.**

But what is this *Goliath*, who thus defies the Armies of the Living God? Is his *Pen* as much above the common Size, as was the ancient Giant's *Staff*? Or, does he expect that *Christianity*, like the *Walls of Jerico*, should tumble at the sound of some *Musical Instrument*? He will not find it so easy to destroy the *Authority* of the *Sacred Writings*, as he did to expose a Project about a *new Edition* of them. Then, indeed, he *conquer'd*, for then he *fought*, as *Swift* said of *Lord Orrery*, *clad in all the Armour of the Gods*. But we shall be obliged to him for throwing off the *Mask*, and writing in *Character*. An *Enemy in Disguise* may do more *Mischief* than an *open one*; and, therefore, as it is consistent with *Christian Charity* to *suspect* where there are *reasonable Grounds* for a *Suspicion*, it will always be agreeable to *Christian Policy* to oblige a suspected Person to *clear himself*, or to treat him as a *Criminal*. Mr. *W.* would think this *Method* right in any *Civil* or *Political Case*; and *Religion* being of more *Importance* than any thing else, there is the more *Reason* for *Caution*. The *Maxims* that now prevail are as inconsistent with *Wisdom* and their *Rules of Conduct* in every other *Case*, as with the *Directions* of *Scripture* and the *Practice* of the *first Christians*; and, whatever Men may *pretend*, their *Tenderness* is but a softer Term for *Worldly Interest*, or want of *Christian Zeal*.——The *Sum* of his *Defence* for his *Friend* consists of these two *Articles*.

1. He says, *It is necessary to believe of the Scriptures IN GENERAL that they are divinely inspir'd*, and that he only denies, *that they are of ABSOLUTE and UNIVERSAL Inspiration*; in which *Opinion* he says, *Tillotson* and *Grotius* agree with him.

2. That the *Arguments* he hath used for the *Truth* of *Christianity* against *Tindal* have never yet been answer'd by them, nor ever can.

His Saying that the Scriptures are *in General* inspired, but that they are not of *Universal* Inspiration, is only *seeming* to grant something, while he really grants nothing at all; as has been shewn in a former *Miscellany*, to which I have already referred him for a full Answer to this Point. And as to *Tillotson* and *Grotius*, they are both falsely charged. They admitted Inspiration of *Direction*, or *Superintendency*, in every Part, tho' not of *Suggestion*, and neither of them allowed, what the Dr. does, that the Scripture contains any thing that is *false*, which destroys the *Authority* of the Whole. But, it seems, he has unanswerably proved the *Truth* of Christianity against *Tindal*. How? Why, he has shewn that Dr. *Tindal* brought two very *weak Objections* against Christianity. To which I reply that Mr. *W.* has observed in his Book, that some *Advocates* for Christianity have brought *weak Arguments* to prove the Truth of it; but he will not take it well if I should thence infer that he dislikes the *Cause*, as much as he does the *Pleadings*; and yet, *vice versa*, the Case is quite the same: For, as Christianity may be *false*, tho' *Tindal's* Objections do not prove it to be false, so it may be true, tho' some of its Advocates may have brought inconclusive Arguments for the Proof of it. Mr. *W.* is so full of Compliments upon the Dr's *Sincerity*, he justly brings his own in question, with every one who has read the other's *artful* and *ambiguous Manner* of Writing. But in his Encomiums upon his Friend's *refin'd Morality*, he has not done Justice to one Virtue, of which he has, in his Book, expressed the highest Opinion: I mean, his *Gratitude*; a flagrant Instance of which I will tell him. He published an *Eighteen-penny Pamphlet*, wherein were several Things that gave Offence, particularly an Attempt to shew that Mr. *Lesley's* Four Marks, in his *Short Method with the Deists*, would not hold. I had then only look'd into his Piece, but not read it; but being well acquainted with him, and having a good Opinion of him, and a real Respect and Kindness for him, I went with a sincere, friendly Concern to acquaint him with what I heard; and, by way of Requital for that Instance of my Regard, he took an Opportunity, under his Hand, to reproach me for my Impertinence, and to ridicule the Concern I shew'd for him. What he said of me in that Letter, was afterwards *published*. He thought himself very arch upon my Countenance, but I had the good Luck to turn the Laugh of the Publick upon his.

Mr. *W.* like his *generous, genteel Friend*, puts me in mind of my *Circumstances*, and with *Charity* equal to his *Generosity* and *Good-Breeding*, suggests, that I wrote from *Spleen*, for *Want* of better *Preferment*, and in hopes of recommending my self to publick Favour by my Letter upon him; then, concludes with a *Collect*, praying, that it may answer my Expectations. I find, I must be contented (and so I thank God, I am) to bear the Disgrace of being thought to write for *Hire*, while I am, with the same Men, a standing Jest for having receiv'd no *Wages*. But I thought Mr. *W.* had been more of a *Man*, than to descend to such *mean* Behaviour. ——— And now, I have finished a Course of Letters, that, perhaps, may have been as tedious to the Reader, as the Writing of them has been disagreeable to my self. And whatever Mr. *W.* may think, nothing could have induc'd me to undertake such an Employment but a full Conviction of the very great Importance of the Subject. If he should think this an Occasion *extraordinary* enough to make it *his Duty* to *re-vindicate* himself, I only desire him to answer to the *main Points*, and not to take notice of any *little Slips*, or *Inaccuracies*, that may have escap'd me. Not, that I have *willingly* misrepresented him in the most minute Circumstance, but such a Variety of Thoughts as continually employ and embarrass my Mind, may possibly have occasioned some little Mistakes, notwithstanding all the Care that I have taken to prevent any.

I am, Yours, &c.

L E T T E R VI.

WHEN Mr. *W.*'s Second Vindication came out, by way of *Postscript* to a *Visitation Sermon*, I was upon a *Journey*, and stay'd so little Time in a Place, I had no leisure to examine it. I have now got a vacant Morning, and take the Opportunity to send you a few Remarks upon it: Mr. *W.* had suffer'd so much in the Opinion of the World for making so slight a Defence as his First was, I did imagine he would have been silent for the future, or have spoken more fully and satisfactorily

Mr. *W.* like his *generous, genteel Friend*, puts me in mind of my *Circumstances*, and with *Charity* equal to his *Generosity* and *Good-Breeding*, suggests, that I wrote from *Spleen*, for *Want* of better *Preferment*, and in hopes of recommending my self to publick Favour by my Letter upon him; then, concludes with a *Collect*, praying, that it may answer my Expectations. I find, I must be contented (and so I thank God, I am) to bear the Disgrace of being thought to write for *Hire*, while I am, with the same Men, a standing Jest for having receiv'd no *Wages*. But I thought Mr. *W.* had been more of a *Man*, than to descend to such *mean* Behaviour. ——— And now, I have finished a Course of Letters, that, perhaps, may have been as tedious to the Reader, as the Writing of them has been disagreeable to my self. And whatever Mr. *W.* may think, nothing could have induc'd me to undertake such an Employment but a full Conviction of the very great Importance of the Subject. If he should think this an Occasion *extraordinary* enough to make it *his Duty* to *re-vindicate* himself, I only desire him to answer to the *main Points*, and not to take notice of any *little Slips*, or *Inaccuracies*, that may have escap'd me. Not, that I have *willingly* misrepresented him in the most minute Circumstance, but such a Variety of Thoughts as continually employ and embarrass my Mind, may possibly have occasioned some little Mistakes, notwithstanding all the Care that I have taken to prevent any.

I am, Yours, &c.

L E T T E R VI.

WHEN Mr. *W.*'s Second Vindication came out, by way of *Postscript* to a *Visitation Sermon*, I was upon a *Journey*, and stay'd so little Time in a Place, I had no leisure to examine it. I have now got a vacant Morning, and take the Opportunity to send you a few Remarks upon it: Mr. *W.* had suffer'd so much in the Opinion of the World for making so slight a Defence as his First was, I did imagine he would have been silent for the future, or have spoken more fully and satisfactorily

rily to the several Objections which were publickly and privately made to him. But he seems, by his Conduct, determin'd to let all Mankind see that he has nothing to say for himself, and yet that he has a very strong Inclination to say something. That a Person under such unhappy Circumstances should act inconsistently is naturally to be expected, and accordingly Mr. *W.* assigns a Reason for not answering all the enormous heap of Calumnies and Nonsense in the *Miscellany*, which is hardly to be reconciled with his Conduct in taking any Notice of them at all. He says, "If any candid Man of Reputation and Character apprehends any thing to be amiss in my Book, and will publish his Objections, in the Love of Truth and Spirit of Charity, and set his Name to his Writings, he shall not wait long for an Answer; but as to those nameless Libellers, I must beg to be excused, how desirous soever they appear, in their last Letter, of an Answer from me." Mr. *W.* is very much mistaken, if he imagines that I am desirous of a Controversy with him. I thought it my Duty to give my Opinion of his Design, and of his Performance; those who have read my Letters must judge of my Reasons; if Mr. *W.* had thought it worth while to satisfy my Objections, I would have done him the Justice publickly to have acknowledg'd my Conviction; but since he has nothing more material to offer, or does not care to offer it, I cannot yet have the Pleasure to alter my first Sentiments. As I carried no Prejudices with me, when I read his Book, besides strong Prepossessions in his Favour from the Character which a worthy Friend of his and mine had given of him, so I have no other Biass upon me at present, than a sincere Inclination to see the Scandal removed, the mischievous Effects of his Book prevented, and my Regard for him restor'd. But 'till I see another kind of a Vindication than those which he has publish'd, I must be contented to entertain a very bad Opinion of his Book, and a very great distrust of his Intentions; and his telling me, that I have a surprizing Assurance, and am most impudent; that I am a Calumniator and a Libeller; that I talk nothing but Nonsense, and use Bear-Garden Language; that I know nothing of the true Spirit of Religion; with such-like meek and genteel Compliments; they signify nothing towards mortifying me, and, I presume, they will signify as little towards the Conviction of the Publick. He commended himself in his first Vindication for the Spirit, meaning the

Temper and Civility, with which it was written ; and if he receives any Commendations for his *Manner* of Writing in his *Postscript*, he must go on in his old way, and bestow them upon *himself* ; tho' he will do it with the worse Grace, after a Sermon upon *Charity*, which, as he observes, *vaunteth not it self*. But to come to his *Reasons* for not answering my *Calumnies* and *Nonsense*, viz. because I did not set *my Name* to them. I shall not concern my self to enquire whether this be a *good Plea* for Silence in his Case, but only observe, that if it be, it was *as good* a one for neglecting *all the enormous heap*, &c. as any part of it ; and that his *selecting* only two Particulars, looks as if he thought something more plausible might be said of *them* than of the *rest*. Indeed, at the *beginning* of the *Postscript*, he has given a quite *different Reason*, for this Conduct, from what he has suggested at the *Conclusion* ; and a Reason as contrary to what he *knows* to be the Truth, as it is inconsistent with the other. He says, *as far he can learn*, the two Things which he has taken notice of, are the *only* ones upon which *some People pretend to be serious*. If Mr. *W.* has any pertinent Meaning, he must mean, that those who pretended to take Offence at his Book, were not *really* and *seriously* offended at any Parts of it, besides those relating to the *Defenders of Christianity*, and the *Character of Cicero* ; but I am very certain that he has been assur'd of the contrary by Persons of the most unquestionable Veracity ; and it looks like Infatuation in him, to give such a flagrant Instance of *Insincerity*, while he was vindicating himself from the Charge of having acted an insincere Part in respect to the first of his two Particulars, and justified Insincerity in the latter. However, without troubling my self any farther about the real Motives of his Conduct in answering only to those two Particulars when there were so many more which had given great Offence to the Publick ; I shall cite the two Passages, and leave all Persons of Common Sense to judge of their Meaning. The First relates to the *Defenders of Christianity*, and is as follows, “ For who in this long Controversy between us and the Deists hath not applied to certain Advocates of Revelation what was formerly said of *Arnobius* and *Lactantius*, that they undertook the Defence of *Christianity* before they understood it. A Misfortune which the more careful Study of the *internal Evidence* would probably have prevented. Notwithstanding these superior Advantages, it hath so happened, that the *internal* Evidence

Divine Legation of MOSES, &c. 45

“ Evidence hath been hitherto used as an *Introduction* only to
 “ the *external*; and while by this latter Men have actually
 “ proved their Religion Divine, they have gone no farther
 “ with the former than to shew it worthy indeed of such an
 “ Original. But from the State in which the *internal* Evi-
 “ dence, at present, lies, a late Writer [Dr. *Conybeare*, re-
 “ ferr’d to in the Margin] hath drawn a quite contrary
 “ Conclusion.” Throughout this whole Paragraph Mr.
W. is comparing the *external* and *internal* Evidence of
Christianity, and endeavouring to prove the Force of the
 latter superior to that of the former: But complains, that,
 notwithstanding these superior Advantages, the *internal*
 Evidence has been so much undervalued as to be reckon’d
 by Dr. *Conybeare*, no Evidence at all, but only an *Intro-*
duction to the *external*. About the middle of the Paragraph
 he charges certain late *Advocates* for *Christianity* with an
 Ignorance of their Cause. Every Word *before*, and every
 Word *after* relates to his Parallel between *internal* and *ex-*
ternal Evidence. What an ungenerous Evasion, then, is
 it in him to say, that his Charge of *Ignorance* does not re-
 late to those who have used the *external* to the Neglect of the
internal Evidence; and particularly to Dr. *Conybeare* whom
 he mentions, but to something quite different; to the *So-*
cinians, of whom he had not mention’d one Syllable! If the
 Charge respects some Defect in Judgment touching the *com-*
parative Value of the two Evidences, it must fall heavy upon
 all who have gone upon the *external* Proof without insisting
 upon the other as a *direct* Proof of the Truth of *Christianity*.
 And who are those?—Why all the *English Clergy* who have
 stood against the late Attacks of Infidels; particularly, Dr.
Conybeare, whom, while he complains of this Conduct, he
 mentions as a remarkable Instance of it. The Remark upon
 this excellent Writer is brought to inforce his Complaint
 concerning the *Neglect* of the *internal* Evidence. And were
 his Position true, that this is the *most cogent* Argument for
Christianity, it would be an Aggravation of our Crime in
 omitting it, that we omitted it, not only as being *less sa-*
tisfactory than *external*, but no *direct* Proof, *of itself*. And
 yet Mr. *W.* would persuade the unwary Readers of his Se-
 cond Defence that Dr. *Conybeare* is mention’d on an Ac-
 count quite different from the Matter of his Charge. After
 so many surprizing Things in this Gentleman’s Performan-
 ces I little expected that ever he could surprize me again.
 But this is wonderful even in Mr. *W.* Is not the whole Pa-
 ragraph

paragraph closely connected? Is not Dr. *Conybeare's* Assertion here cited as a strong Amplification of the Charge? If such unnatural and forc'd Interpretations be admitted, there is at once an End of Speech and Writings, it being utterly impossible to ascertain any one's Meaning. At this Rate I will undertake to reconcile the greatest Contradictions; to make, after the Example of the Bishop of *Meaux*, the *Protestant* and the *Popish* Faith the same. But, it seems, the *Passage* and the *Reference* are in two different Paragraphs, and in two different Pages. If Mr. *W.* had all his Life-time been a Practitioner in the Law, and instructed in all the little *Quirks* of it, he cou'd not have used a poorer Cavil. Two Sentences may be, as they plainly are here, Part of the same *Passage*; and one of them may be at the Bottom of one Page, and the other at the Top of the following one, without destroying the Connection. It would be an Affront to the Reader's Understanding to detain him any longer in so plain a Case. I shall now come to the *Passage* relating to *Cicero*, upon which I observ'd, that Mr. *W.* justifies *Lying*. The *Passage* is too long to be inserted, but I will give a fair Representation of it.

We will first examine *Tully's* Conduct, as represented by Mr. *W.* by the common Definition of a *Lye*. The Essence of a *Lye*, that wherein its *Immorality* consists, is, *the uttering what we believe to be FALSE with an Intention to deceive*. If therefore Mr. *W.* represents *Tully* as uttering what he believed to be *false* with an Intention to *deceive*, he was guilty of *Lying*. If two Assertions *contradict* one another, one of them must be *false*; and whoever defends *both* Sides of a *Contradiction* must utter, what he believes to be *false*. Such was the Practice of *Tully*, according to Mr. *W.* At one Time, the ancient *Romans* are extolled as the wisest of Men in the Establishment of Religion; at another Time, their Folly is censured in the same Article. Before the *Senate*, the *Catilinarian Conspiracy* was a deep laid Design and formidable for its *Numbers*, but the *People* are made to believe, it was only a wild Frolick of a few *Desperadoes*. Now, all *Augury* is *decried*; again, much is said in favour of its *Truth*. Mr. *W.* expressly styles this Disagreement, *Self-Confutation, Inconsistency, Contradiction*. Here, then, is uttering what he believed to be *false*.

But (which is necessary to the Notion of a *Lye*) was it utter'd with an *Intention to deceive*? Nothing can be a plainer Acknowledgement of this, or a more notorious Instance of

Divine Legation of MOSES, &c. 47.

a crafty, sly, deceitful Conduct than Mr. *W*'s Remarks upon his inconsistent Behaviour: He laugh'd at the Opinions of the *State* when he was among the Philosophers; he laugh'd at the Doctrines of the *Philosophers* when he was *cajoling* an Assembly; and he laugh'd heartily at both when withdrawn with his particular Friends in private. What was it that *Tully* laugh'd at in *private* with his *select Friends*? Undoubtedly at the Weakness of the *Senate* and the *Philosophers* who, in their Turns, had been *cajol'd* and *imposed upon*. And, indeed, unless you suppose him *so* to have *personated* Characters as to *deceive* the *Senate* and the *Philosophers*, as to his own real Sentiments, there is nothing for him to *laugh* at, with any Sense, among his Friends. Therefore to say of *Tully*, in this View, that he acted neither a *weak*, nor *unfair* Part, is a plain Justification of *Lying*.

Mr. *W*'s Vindication of himself is as inconsistent as he represents *Tully* to have been. Sometimes there was no Lye; and, then, if there were one, it was innocent. His *Philosophical* Writings are in the Nature of a *Play*, and so there is nothing more than what is common in *Fables*, and all is free from any Intention to *deceive*. But is this all that is asserted? That in those Pieces which are drawn up by way of *Dialogue*, one of the *Disputants* urges what the *Writer* thinks to be false? Is not *Tully himself*, and not one of the *Disputants*, represented as contradicting *Tully*? The *Philosopher* confuting the *Statesman*? The *Statesman* confuting the *Philosopher*? *Tully* laughing at different Opinions at different Times in different Companies? Does all this imply no more than that he, like the *Disputants* in our Universities, sometimes maintain'd the wrong side of the Question merely for Argument Sake? Is not the *Philosopher* describ'd as *shifting* his Tenets, the better to serve his Interest? Now maintaining one Set of Opinions to ingratiate himself with one Company, and immediately disavowing those very Opinions, and laughing at them for the sake of *cajoling*, that is, *whedding* and *couzening* an Assembly, by making them *believe* that he held Opinions *different* from his *real* ones? Does Mr. *W*. hope to draw us off from the Question, and evade the Charge, by reminding us that *some* (for he refers to others that are not so) of this Author's Writings are in the way of *Dialogue*? What is that to his Purpose? We are not criticising on his Manner of Writing, but considering Mr. *W*'s Representation of his *Moral* Character. This, I say, is that of a Man uttering what was FALSE with an

Intention to DECEIVE. This is the Character of a *Liar*. And this Character Mr. *W.* justifies.

But we are farther told, that *Tully*, by his political Lies, sav'd the Republick. What is this brought in for? Is it to vindicate such Politicks, and to support his Moral Character? If not, why is it mentioned at all? But will Mr. *W.* seriously justify *Fraud* and *Falsehood* when it happens to be thought good *State Policy*? Surely a Preacher of the *Gospel* does not want to be told (whatever *Statesmen* may think) that it is damnable to do Evil that Good may come.

But, lastly, *Tully* as an *Orator*, might Lye for the Good of his *Client*. To what Straits is Mr. *W.* driven? Here, instead of clearing himself, he has afforded fresh Matter of Complaint. *It is the natural Right*, we are told, *of every Member of Society, whether accusing, or accused, to speak freely for himself. Self Defence is Lawful.* Granted. But then it must be by *lawful Means*. The *Means* must be Good as well as the *End*, in order to preserve the Morality of the Action. Will Mr. *W.* stand by this Position——that a Man's Life, or Fortune may be defended by *unlawful Means*, even in a good Cause? What then shall we say of a *bad* one; a Cause that a Man himself *believes* to be a bad one? What! To Lye and Dissemble, to advance false Principles for the sake of serving a Turn (as *Tully* is represented) to prevent the Course of Justice, to elude the Laws, to invade another's just Property, to screen a Criminal! I demand of Mr. *W.* Will any *End* sanctify such *Immoral Means*? Yet all this is implied in patronizing a Cause that one knows to be a bad one. I challenge him to shew that an Advocate can honestly engage on the *wrong* side, knowing it to be so, any further than this — to take care that the Faults of the guilty Party be not aggravated beyond Truth, nor the Penalty made heavy beyond Measure. This is agreeable to common Justice and Equity; and so far the Patronage is innocent. But no Advocate can, consistently with the Laws of Morality, deliver any Opinion, as to Matter of *Law*, or *Fact*, contrary to his real Sentiments, with an Intention to *deceive* his Hearers, and acquit the Guilty; and to suppose that any Civil Constitution should give a Man leave to be instrumental in breaking its Laws, in detaining or encroaching upon the just Rights of its Members, or in protecting the Violators of its Injunctions, this is to represent the *Civil Magistrate* as acting the part both of a *Fool* and a *Knave*; and introducing
such

Such loose Notions of Morality as would breed infinite Disorder in Society, and are very unbecoming a Writer who is perpetually accusing others of not understanding *true Religion*.

Mr. W. says in his last Vindication—*I said, it was not a Weak Part*, and what has that to do with *Morality*? In the Estimation of God and his *Holy Word*, all *Immorality* is *Folly*. But in the Passage, as it stands in the Book, *unfair* was added to *weak*, tho' he has since cut the Passage short, and dropt the last, the most exceptionable Word; so that if his Observation were just, he has no claim to the Benefit of it, since he said it was also, *fair*.

As to his Observation, that *unfair* relates, not to his *Morals*, but to his *Good-breeding*, I can only reply, that he seems to be under such Confusion, between the Consciousness of Guilt and a Resolution not to acknowledge it, that sometimes he hardly knows what he says.

M. B. Where I speak of *Atheists* and *Atheism*; I mean such as relate to *Religion*, for as to any other Notion of a *God*, he is nothing to us. This I observe, lest Mr. W. should should use the same Evasion about a *God*, which he has used about a *Providence*.

A P P E N D I X.

MR. W. having in the *Divine Legation of Moses, &c.* asserted that the *Ancient Lawgivers* and *Philosophers* believ'd a *Providence* and a *future State of Rewards and Punishments*, I endeavour'd, in a late Letter in the *Miscellany*, to shew that it is *morally impossible* that this Fact, so injurious to Religion, should be true. I had before, as the Reader must have observ'd, charg'd him with having asserted it; and, tho' he afterwards took Notice of some Part of my Remarks in a very angry Manner, he did not then complain of any Injury as to *this* particular. He has since thought fit to call me a *most impudent Liar*.

September 20th, a Bill of *Indictment* was exhibited against me in the *St. James's Evening Post* under four distinct Articles, with such proper *Decorations* as are not unusual in Compositions of that kind. It was some time before I heard any thing of the Matter, my Friends, I suppose, not being

being forward to be Messengers of such ill News, and I concerning my self but little with *News Papers*. After I was inform'd of it, I sent an *Advertisement* to the *St. James's* and *General Evening, &c.* signifying my Intention of taking publick Notice of it. My *Advertisement* went too late for a Place that Night, but it is not unlikely that Mr. *W.* might hear of it, for before I could give in my Answer to the first Bill, there came out a second in the *General Evening* of *October* the 11th, signed by the Author of the *Divine Legation, &c.* where, he shifted one of the Propositions with as much Dexterity as either of the two *Solicitors* (of whom he told such an unlucky story, with a more unlucky Application of it to the first *Christians*;) could have manag'd such an Affair. As it now stands, the first and third Articles of Accusation are in these Words.—It is asserted, in the *Miscellany*.

‘ That the Author of the *Divine Legation* of *Moses* is of Opinion, that every one of the ancient *Lawgivers* disbeliev'd a *Providence*.’

‘ That he is of Opinion that every one of the ancient *Philosophers* disbeliev'd a *Providence*.’

Any one would imagine, unless he had seen my Letter in the *Miscellany*, that I had drawn out the *Propositions* in Form, and that he had only transcrib'd them from me; but they are in the most proper Sense his own Propositions, extracted from my Letter by the help of such *Sophistry* as any ingenious Man, much more a Man of true *Christian Simplicity* and *Sincerity*, would scorn to use. The whole Charge rests upon the *Ambiguity* of the Word *Providence*, which is the Subject of all the Propositions; and the whole Guilt will appear to be in his using the Word, in the *Propositions*, in a Sense quite different from that in which I have us'd it in the *Letter*; and by that *unfair* and *mean* Artifice making me seem to assert what never was in my *Thoughts*, and is not to be gathered from my *Affertion*. When I wrote my Letter, tho' I had not his Book by me, I well remember'd, that Mr. *W.* there owns several of the *Philosophers* to have believ'd a *Providence*; some in one Sense; and some in another; but all of them in a *restrained* and *limited* Sense, none of them in that *general* Sense, to which the Subject of my Letter, the Nature of my *Argument*, and my express *Definition* of the sort of *Providence* which I meant, necessarily *determines* my Sense. If he had been disposed to do *Justice*, he should have express'd, in the *Propositions*, MY Meaning in the Use of the Word *Providence*;

Providence; but as he was minded to raise a Clamour, and be very abusive, it could be done no other way than by the Assistance of *Ambiguity*; and to do the Gentleman Justice, he has shown his Skill in the Management of a Cause that stood in great need of it. As I do not pretend to such kind of Talents, and have not been used to such kind of Subtilties, it is happy for me that, at present, I have no manner of occasion for them. An *honest* and *plain* State of the Cause will answer my Purpose much better.

From the whole Design of that Letter in the *Miscellany* it might appear to any Reader of common Apprehension and Attention that by a *Providence* I mean the same that he understands by it in his *Book*; such a Providence as is a *Rewarder of good Men and the Punisher of ill ones, in a Future State*; such a Providence as is necessary to support *Civil Society*. But I do not stand in need of any one's Candour for this reasonable Construction, since I have there particularly *defined* my Notion. I shall transcribe my own Sense, from my *Letter*, and compare it with his, as we find it in the *Divine Legation, &c.* At Col. 2. and Paragraph 2. I open the Argument thus; 'It is obvious to any common ' Apprehension that it is as necessary to the Support of Society ' that the governing Part of Mankind should believe a *Future State* (by a *Future State*, I mean a *Future State of Rewards and Punishments*) as that the People should believe them. 'The same Passions which breed Disorder ' and Confusion in Society, unless they are restrained by the ' Sanctions of *Religion, by an all-seeing Eye that observes all ' their Actions and will reward or punish them, &c.*' From hence it is undeniably evident, that I cannot possibly mean any *other Providence* than what is inseparably connected with a *Future State of Rewards and Punishments*; the Belief of which I assert to be absolutely necessary to the Support of *Society*. This angry Gentleman has given us the very same Notion, and is equally positive and strong in asserting the Belief of such a Providence to be necessary to the Support of Society. The Opinion of the ancient *Lawgivers and Philosophers* concerning this Providence, is both the *Occasion* and the *Subject* of my Letter: and, therefore, any *other* Notions of a *Providence* than what is so inseparably connected with a *Future State of Rewards and Punishments*, as necessary the Support of Society, if he has ascribed so such to the ancient *Lawgivers and Philosophers*, they will all be no more to the present Matter in Dispute, than his *abusive Language* and

ill Manners are pertinent to it. I shall now cite his Notion of this Matter from p. 21, 22, of the *Divine Legation, &c.*

‘By what hath been said it appears that this Service (to Society) is performed by Religion, solely, as it teaches a Providence, the Rewarder of good Men, and the Punisher of ill ones: So that though it were possible, as I think it is not, that there could be any such thing as Religion not founded on the Doctrine of a Providence, yet it is evident, such a Religion could be of no Service to Society. Whatever therefore is necessary for the Support of this Doctrine is immediately necessary to the Well-being of Society.’

Then follow these Words, ‘that the Doctrine of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments is absolutely and indispensably necessary to the Support of the general Doctrine of a Providence, I shall now shew.’ The Reader sees that we are perfectly agreed in our Notion of the general Doctrine of a Providence; that it is such a one as is inseparably connected with a Future State of Rewards and Punishments. If this were not already sufficiently plain, it would be made so by a marginal Note to this Passage; where, in Confirmation of his Opinion concerning the Necessity of the Belief of such a State to the Support of a general Providence, he cites a Text in St. Paul, which relates to a Future State; ‘he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.’ I shall presume that this Matter is pretty well settled. We are next to enquire what Mr. W. has said of the Opinion of the ancient Lawgivers and Philosophers, as to this Notion of a Providence; and I dare be confident that I have not injured him so much as he has injured them in his Account of them. I do frankly confess that I have asserted one thing rashly, which I do here recant. I have unwarily asserted, that such a Thing is his Opinion, which is more than I ought to have said of any one that has dealt so much in the *double Doctrine*. I will not venture any farther than to shew what he has advanced in his Book; and since he has been so liberal as to make me a very advantageous Offer, if I can prove any one of the Propositions, I will not be behind-hand in Generosity, but oblige him with the Proof of a great deal more, than he has required, in another *Miscellany*.

The Providence which is the Subject of our present Debate being such a one as is a Rewarder of good Men, and the Punisher of ill ones in a Future State, we are now to examine what Mr. W. has advanced in the *Divine Legation, &c.*

etc. as to the Opinion of the *ancient Philosophers* and *Law-givers* about it. The Proposition concerning the Opinion of the *Philosophers*, as to a *Future State of Rewards and Punishments*, published in the *St. James's Evening*, is given up in the *General Evening*, and another substituted in its room. But, as it is, in reality, but one Proposition with that concerning a *Providence*, I must make it the Foundation of my Letter.

This Proposition, as he foresaw, when he drop'd it, is easily proved. In the Contents of the Third Book he tells us, that *Sect. 2.*

‘ Begins with shewing that none of the ancient Philosophers believ'd the Doctrine of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, though, on Account of its confessed Necessity to the Support of Religion, and consequently of Civil Society, all the Theistical Philosophers taught, and preach'd it up to the People.’

This is his own Account of himself. And, again, at p. 306. he says,

‘ It is a Future State of Rewards and Punishments in general that I undertake to prove, none of the ancient Philosophers believ'd.’

Now, if none of the ancient Philosophers believed a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, it is impossible that any of them should believe a *Providence*, the *Rewarder of good Men*, and the *Punisher of ill in such a State*; the Belief of such a *Providence* being inseparably connected with the Belief of such a *State*: So that if none of the ancient *Philosophers* believ'd the one, none of them could possibly believe the other.

Such a *Future State* he owns to be *absolutely and indispensably necessary to the Support of the GENERAL Doctrine of a PROVIDENCE*. How then, by his own Confession, could he assert that they *disbeliev'd* the *former* without asserting that they *disbeliev'd* the *latter* also?

But this is, likewise, evident from the first *general Principle*, which, he says, p. 368. ‘ led the Philosophers to conclude against a *Future State of Rewards and Punishments*, viz. that *God could neither be angry, nor hurt any one*, which *Tully* assures us was held *universally*.’ Then he cites a Passage from *Tully*, upon which he makes this Observation ‘ here we see *Tully* owns the Consequence of this general Principle, that it quite overthrew the Notion of *Divine Punishments*; and it will appear presently, that he was not singular in his Conclusions, but spoke the very Sense of his *Greek Masters*,’ Although therefore *Tully*

says,

says, that this general Principle was held by some that believ'd a Providence, yet he could not mean such a Providence as we are disputing about; such a one as is a Rewarder of good Men, and Punisher of ill ones; because, if they maintain'd that God could not be angry nor hurt any one, Mr. W. has brought Tully and all his Greek Masters to vouch for me, that the same Principle destroy'd all Notion of Divine Punishment; and consequently, if it appears from this Philosophical Principle, that they could not believe a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, the same Argument proves equally that they could not believe a Providence, the Rewarder of good Men, and Punisher of ill ones. He himself has introduced Lactantius, p. 371. giving us the Argument in Form, in order to answer it.

If God hath no Affections of Fondness or Hatred, Love or Anger; he cannot reward or punish.

But he hath no Affections, &c.

Therefore, &c.

At p. 377, he does, indeed, own that the Pythagoreans and Platonists did hold a particular Providence, extending its self to each Individual; a Providence which could not, according to ancient Notions, possibly be administer'd without the Affections of Love and Anger. If this be any Difficulty, he has accounted for it, and then says, p. 379. 'On the whole then it appears, that the Principle of God's not being angry, which subverted the Doctrine of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, did not affect a particular Providence HERE (upon the Pythagorean and Platonic System) and that the Gratia, which some of them left the Deity, was no Passion or Affection like the *Iræ*, which they took away; but only a simple Benevolence, which in the Construction of the Universe was directed to the best, but did not interfere to prevent Disorders in particular Systems. A Benevolence, too, that went not from the Will, but the Essence of the Supreme Being; or, as he calls it, p. 376. *An Efflux from its Essence.*' But such an involuntary EMANATION, or EFFLUX, cannot possibly be a Providence, the Rewarder of good Men, and Punisher of ill ones; because it does not respect us as moral and accountable Beings, upon which the Notion of Rewards and Punishments depends.

The second Principle, grounded on their Notion of the Soul of Man, holds equally against such a Providence as we are concern'd for, as it does against a Future State of Rewards and Punishments. For tho' it asserted a Future State,

yet it was such a one as could not be a *moral Designation*; a
State of Rewards and Punishments; and if so, this Argu-
 ment, drawn from the *Nature of the Soul*, as maintained by
 the *Philosophers*, shews that they could not, upon their Prin-
 ciples, believe a *Providence*, the *Rewarder of good Men*, and
Punisher of ill ones. In short, tho' Mr. W. has distinguish'd
 between these two Questions, and made two of them for his
 own Conveniency, they are *inseparable* from one another.
 They are one Question. If the *Philosophers* disbelieved a
Future State of Rewards and Punishments, they disbelieved a
Providence, the *Rewarder of good Men*, and *Punisher of ill*
ones; such a *Providence* as is necessary to support *Religion*
 and *civil Society*. And, therefore, in this View let us see
 what Mr. W. has advanced concerning the Opinion of the
ancient Lawgivers. And here we shall find that as his Pro-
 position concerning a *Future State of Rewards and Punish-*
ments is in reality but one with that concerning a *Providence*,
 the *Rewarder of good Men*, and *Punisher of ill ones*; (which
 is rightly calls the *Sanctions of Religion*) so the Question
 concerning the Opinion of the *ancient Philosophers* and *Law-*
givers, as to those Points, is in Effect but one likewise. For,
 tho' all the *Philosophers* were not *Lawgivers*, yet, from the
 Commencement of *Philosophy*, all the *Lawgivers* were *Phi-*
losophers, and consequently disbelieved such a *State* and such
 a *Providence* as include *Rewards and Punishments*. At least
 all that were of any Note (which is all that concerns my
 Argument, or his Reputation) were *Philosophers*, and of the
Pythagorean Sect. If the Reader will not believe this upon
 the Testimony of such an *impudent Lyar*, I will bring Mr. W.
 for a Witness. At p. 111, he says, 'by *Hopes and Fears*
 (the Belief of a *Future State of Rewards and Punishments*, and
Providence, in its full Extent) 'the wise *Lawgivers* kept
 up in the People the Awe and Reverence of Religion. On
 this Practice was founded the Precept of the celebrated
Crotylas, the Pythagorean. Which Sect, as we shall shew
 hereafter, gave its self more particularly to *Legislation*:
 and from whence proceeded the most famous Founders of
civil Policy.' And at p. 123, he speaks still more strongly.
Pythagoras and his Sect had engross'd all the Fame in the
 Art of *Legislation*. The Character of this Sect we say,
 and shall prove hereafter, was so great for *Lawgiving* that
 other-ages thought that nothing could be done to the pur-
 pose, in that way, that had not a *Pythagorean* for its Au-

In the last Place we must see what he has said, as to these Points, of the *Lawgivers* and *Founders* of *civil Policy* who were *antecedent* to the Times of *Philosophy*.

It has appeared, I think, in the plainest manner, that I was perfectly right as to the *Philosophers* and all the *Lawgivers* and *Founders of Civil Policy*, who were of any Note at all for *Legation*; and that this is all that is of any Consequence to *me*, or *him*. However, it is as certain that his Assertion was still more general. At p. 314. he tells us that “the first who went out of *Greece* to learn the *Egyptian* Wisdom were the *Legislators*; that they went thither to learn the Art of *Lawgiving*; that these were *Orpheus*, *Rhadamanthus*, *Minos*, *Lycarn*, *Triptolemus* and others; that this Intercourse of the *Lawgivers* with *Egypt* was continued down to the Time of the *Naturalists*, or *Sophists*. That *Zoroaster*, *Inachus*, *Orpheus*, *Melampus*, *Trophenius*, *Minos*, *Cinyras*, *Erethicus*, who were all *Kings* and *Legislators*, brought the *Mysteries* (invented for the use of *Society*, by means of the *double Doctrine*; from *Egypt*, 177.” — And what did all these *Legislators*, or *Lawgivers*, who travel’d for *Egyptian* Wisdom, bring with them from *Egypt*? They all brought the *double Doctrine*, the great Art of *Government*. The *double Doctrine* consisted in teaching one sort of Truths to the *Publick*, and privately holding another; the first, call’d the *Exoteric*; the latter, the *Esoteric*. “The *Mysteries* (which were of *Egyptian* Extraction) were invented by the *Legislator*, to affirm and establish the general *Doctrine* of a *Providence* by inculcating the Belief of a *Future State* of *Rewards* and *Punishments*; and they gain’d their End by (thus) clearing up the *Righteous Government* of the *Gods*, p. 181, 2. At p. 312, he says, that the *Egyptians*, (the Original of Learning and Wisdom) had a twofold *Philosophy*; the one, *hidden* and *sacred*; the other, *open* and *vulgar*; that the Care of the *People* being their chief Concern, as well what they *divulged*, as what they conceal’d was for the Sake of *Society*; that, accordingly, they were the first who taught *Intercourse with the Gods*, a *Future State of Rewards and Punishments*, and Introduction into *Mysteries*, instituted to support that Belief: And at p. 313. that the *Magi of Persia*, the *Druids of Gaul*, and the *Brachmans of India*, the genuine Offspring of the *Egyptian* Priests, with the same View, had all their *external Doctrines*, for the Sake of the State. For the Establishment of the general *Doctrine* of a *Pro-*

“vidence and a Future State,” he says, p. 133. that the *Mysteries* were invented. The *Exoteric*, or *External Doctrine*, propagated among the *People*, was the *General Doctrine* of a *Providence*, and a *Future State* of *Rewards* and *Punishments*. What were the *Esoteric*, or *hidden Doctrines*, which they conceal’d from the *People*, at p. 145. he does not pretend precisely to know; but in the next p. 146. he pretends to know, with certainty, as much as will answer my Purpose, viz. that they were not the *General Doctrines* of a *PROVIDENCE* and a *FUTURE STATE*: which, as far as I am capable of understanding any thing, is asserting, that, tho’ for the Good of *Society* they propagated the Belief of those Truths among the *People*, they did not, themselves, believe them. Such then was the *double Doctrine*, such the *End* and *Use* of it. This Doctrine, invented by the *Egyptians*, for the Purposes of *Government* and *Society*, the *Lawgivers* BEFORE, as well as AFTER the Commencement of *Philosophy*, brought from *Egypt*. The *Philosophers* also, who studied the Arts of *Legislation*, practic’d the *double Doctrine*, i. e. taught the Belief of a *General Providence*, and a *Future State* of *Rewards* and *Punishments*, while the rest denied them openly. Says he, p. 319. “Those Sects which join’d *Legislation* with *Philosophy*, as the *Pythagoreans*, the *Platonists*, *Peripatetics* and *Stoics*, always professed the Belief of a *Future State*; while those who simply philosophised, publickly professed the contrary. And where those of the *Legislating* Class were more or less in the Practice of that Art, so were they more, or less in the Profession of a *Future State*. As on the one hand, the *Pythagoric* and *Platonic*, on the other the *Peripatetic* and *Stoic*; nay, in one and the same Sect, as in the *Peripatetic* and *Stoic*; where a Follower of it studied *Legislation* he professed this Belief, where he confin’d himself to private *Morals*, or abstracted *Speculations*, he denied it. So among the *Stoics*, *ZENO* was a great Propagator of it, while *Epicetus* absolutely rejected it. And *Seneca*, who was but a *Mongrel*, seems willing to expose the whole *Mystery*. For in those Parts of his Writings where he strictly philosophises, he denies a *Future State*; and in those Parts where he affects the *Politician*, he maintains it.” It has been proved before that the Belief of a *Future State* of *Rewards* and *Punishments* are so inseparably connected that he who believes, or denies the former, must believe, or deny the latter. And, tho’ he here mentions only a *Future State*, he must also include a *General*

Providence; and in other Places does expressly join them together. In Consequence of which Practice, of the *double Doctrine*, he asserts, p. 307. *that they all thought it allowable to say one thing and think another*: Speaking of *Pythagoras*, in particular, he observes, that nothing pleased him more than that of the *double Doctrine*, and the Division of his Auditors into *Exoteric* and *Esoteric* Classes: he, more professedly than any other, avowing those Principles on which the Distinction was founded, such as, *that it is for the Benefit of Mankind that they should be often deceived*. p. 311.

Variety of other Places might be cited concerning the *Nature* and *End* of the *double Doctrine*, and the *Legislators* being in the Practice of it; which shews, that they could not believe a *General Providence* and a *Future State* of *Rewards* and *Punishments*. And his taking so much Pains to prove that all the *Legislators* of any Note for *Wisdom*, say, that all of them, except some few *Enthusiastical* and *superstitious Heroes* and *first Founders of Empires*, and that all the *Philosophers*, except *Socrates*, disbelieved those Truths, this is what I cannot reconcile with any friendly Design towards *Revelation*, because it subverts *Religion* in *General*, and fully contradicts the *Scriptures*: So that either Mr. W. must be mistaken in his Account of the Opinion of the *Laws-givers* and *Philosophers*, or *St. Paul* must be mistaken. If none of the *Ancients* of the most improv'd *Wisdom*, *Knowledge*, and *Morality* believ'd them, it must be because there are no such Truths in being, or because Mankind were not capable of knowing any thing of them, either from *Reason*, *Tradition*, or *Revelation*, and consequently that they were excusable in their *Infidelity*: whereas *St. Paul*, in his *Epistle to the Romans*, condemns them for not believing them. I do not take upon me to pronounce an absolute Sentence on Mr. W. but this I do say, that if I were in his Sentiments, I could not possibly believe either *Revelation*, or *Natural Religion*. It may not, possibly, appear to him in the same Light, and I hope in God, it does not, but in my Apprehension it is a very evident Case.

F I N I

