

HEATHCOTE RALPH

# A sketch of Lord Bolingbroke's philosophy

London printed for Thomas Payne  
1755

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A  
S K E T C H  
O F  
LORD BOLINGBROKE'S  
P H I L O S O P H Y.

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Βλέπετε μή τις ὑμᾶς ἔται ὁ συλλαγωγῶν διὰ τῆς  
φιλοσοφίας καὶ κενῆς ἀπάτης.

Paul. ad Coloss. ii. 8.

*Philosophers appear often; like Comets, that rise out of our  
System, just cross it, disorder it, and go out of it again.*

Lord Bolingbroke's Works, Vol. V. p. 315.

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## Advertisement.

*THESE Remarks upon Lord Bolingbroke were thrown together, soon after the Publication of his Works in Quarto, to which the References are made. For the Author, being a Man of perfect leisure, and free from those cares, which usually attend Preferment, thought, that this leisure could not be better employed, than in preventing, as far as He could prevent, the dreadful effects, which so pernicious a Collection was likely to have upon the Public. Accordingly he read these Works over, perhaps with more attention than they deserve; made large Extracts from them; and drew out his Plan.*

*But he had not proceeded far, when he knew of some, and heard of others, who were engaged in the very same Undertaking with himself; and whose Names were so much better known to the World than His, that he thought it but a common point of prudence to desist. Many excellent performances have since been published; and he has seen as good an Account given of Lord Bolingbroke, as he could wish or desire.*

*However*



However as these few Sheets were nearly prepared in the form they now appear, and as they treat things differently from what other writers have done, he has resolved at length to venture them abroad. They contain no Regular Confutation, but only some loose and scattered Remarks upon the main branches of Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy; and may serve, if for nothing else, at least for a testimony of Zeal against his Lordship.

In the mean time it is very certain, that such imperfect Publications, Fragments or Minutes, as the Noble Author calls them, require indulgence: they would have required it, at least, in any other age. But it seems to be the fashion of Ours, to write down all we think, and to print all we write; and if so, we can never say, with the Satyrist, more truly, than at present,

—Stulta est clementia, cum tot ubique  
Vatibus occurras, perituræ parcere chartæ.

JUVENAL.

DEAR SIR,

I HAVE sent you at length some *General Remarks* of mine upon Lord *Bolingbroke's* Philosophy, which I have thrown together in a very loose, and indeed, a very careless manner, just as opportunities and health would permit. I am sensible of the indecency in suffering our thoughts, any more than our persons, to appear abroad thus negligently dressed, and, as it were, *en dishabillée*; nor, I own it, can any authorities or examples whatever justify such freedoms. However I expect to be pardoned this once, and, surely, not without some tolerable Plea; for, if the Noble Lord himself either thought it too pedantic, or, as is more likely, found it too laborious to draw out and digest his own Philosophy into something of a Plan, well may I be excused from tying myself up to the preciseness of method, in the very few strictures I shall make upon it.

Indeed, were one ever so disposed to do it, he would soon perceive it difficult be-  
B yond



yond any thing you can imagine. For his Lordship's system is so broken into pieces, the Materials are so unconnected, and the Parts of it scattered about in so dark and confused a manner, that there is nothing to direct and assist him in the formation of any scheme. Painters have told us, that the principal figure of the subject should always appear under the strongest light; that it should have somewhat to make it more remarkable than the rest; and that the figures, which accompany it, should be disposed at proper distances in Groupes. Why should not the same œconomy be incumbent on a writer? and especially, when a system, entirely new, is to be brought forward into sight, and so many old ones to be removed, as it were, behind. But, alas! here is no main figure to be seen; no proportion at all observed in the Design; no kind of order or regularity in the Disposition. In short, his Lordship's are all Groupes; and, to borrow his own language, *Groupes of the most misshapen and imperfect forms, heads without bodies, bodies without heads, and the like.* (<sup>a</sup>)

Though,

(<sup>a</sup>) Lord Bolingbroke's Works, vol. III. p. 133.

Though, you see, I make his Lordship apologise for my want of Order, yet there is another Apology to be made, which lies altogether upon me. You might, probably, expect these *Remarks* from me sooner; and you certainly had reason. But, to tell you the plain truth, I was somewhat afraid of sending them. I was afraid of committing my thoughts too hastily to paper; and I shall ever be afraid upon all such occasions. The alarm, which the bare rumour of this *Right Honorable's* Works had raised, was very great; our fears for Morality and Religion but too well grounded; men grew warm; and this warmth, you know, being of a very catching nature, I thought it not unlikely, that it had infected me in some measure, as, I perceived, it had others to a violent degree. So that you must not be surprised, if I did not care for venturing my judgment with you, before I could safely trust it myself.

But, how prudent or reasonable soever such a precaution might then seem, it was, as I have since found, entirely needless. His Lordship has so far exceeded all our expectations, that it was impossible for me, even when my zeal ran highest in his fa-



vor, to have done him more than justice. He told Lord *Stair*, that he *never did things by halves, qu'il ne faisoit pas les choses à demi*; <sup>(b)</sup> and, in truth, he hath made his words good, as far as we are now concerned with him. He hath, indeed, made thorough Work of it; he hath done all he could; all, I will be bold to say, which great Wit and great Malice could enable him to do.

What hath made his Lordship exert himself with more than ordinary vigor in the Province, he hath now undertaken, is, it seems, the extreme cruel usage, *that violence*, as he calls it, *which the greatest Genii have ever suffered*, in their endeavors to extirpate Morality and Religion. *These*, says he, *have never pushed their arguments, have never put forth but part of their strength, yet their adversaries have triumphed, as if the goodness of their cause had given them the victory: and while those orthodox bullies, the Divines, have employed arms of every kind, fair and foul, without any reserve, they have employed their offensive weapons with much reserve,*

(<sup>b</sup>) See a Letter from the Earl of *Stair* to *James Craggs*, Esq; printed at the end of Lord *Bolingbroke's* Letter to Sir *William Windham*. Octavo Edition.



*serve, and have even blunted their edge, when they used them* (°). I have often thought these weapons uncommonly blunt, but I never knew till now, that they were blunted on purpose. However, if others have *blunted their weapons*, or meanly affected Policy in reserves of any kind, his Lordship hath shewn himself fairly above all such arts. He hath withheld no *part of his strength*, but hath *pushed his arguments* as far as they would go : and for *weapons of all kinds, fair as well as foul*, never man employed them more indiscriminately and more injuriously, than himself. He hath borrowed arguments from all Systems, with which he hath attempted to demolish all Systems. But he hath not been content with demolishing the Systems and Opinions of other men ; he hath likewise endeavored to demolish their very Persons and Characters ; for he seldom confutes the one, without reviling the other. Nay, he hath not spared even those, who have laboured in the same vineyard with himself : (°) which,  
by

(°) Vol. III. p. 273, 534. Vol. IV. p. 163.

(°) For instance, he calls *Collins* an *Atheist* ; and of Lord *Shaftsbury*, and his Followers, who teach a *Moral Sense* to be the sole ground of Moral Obligation, he  
says,

by the way, is a little extraordinary ; for, however these Gentlemen may have differed about Particulars, yet a Communion of General principles hath always been observed to make them very dear to each other. Upon the whole, you may call this Voluminous Collection of his Lordship's a System of Philosophy, if you please ; but you may call it as properly, an invective upon Mankind : for, if his Lordship hath pursued, with a most arbitrary hostile spirit, all sorts of Systems and Opinions, he hath pursued, with the same Spirit, all who have maintained them.

His Lordship, among his invaluable Remains, hath left us a piece upon the *True Use of Retirement* : where, besides other advantages which attend it, he insists upon the fine opportunities it affords us, of *abstracting ourselves from worldly prejudices and passions, and elevating our souls to higher stations.* (°) And, indeed, one would have hoped, that a great Genius, like his Lordship's,

says, that *they bid fair to be Enthusiasts in Ethics, and to make Natural Religion as ridiculous, as some of their brothers have made Revealed, by insisting on the doctrine of an inward light.* Vol. V. p. 86, 331.

(°) Vol. II.



ship's, removed from noise and distraction, and becalmed in the sweets of a Philosophic Retreat, should naturally have been led to something great and noble ; something to adorn mankind, and amend the world. But the truth is, and every body knows it, that, far from leaving his *passions and prejudices* behind, he carried them with him into his Retirement ; where, if they did not operate so visibly, they operated at least as violently, as they had done before. And this the event has shewn beyond Contradiction : for, even in these latter Productions, you may discern the same peevishness and ill-humour, the same inveterate rancor and malignity, which characterised his former : (f) and you will conclude perhaps, as I do, that, when his Lordship could no longer gratify his Spleen upon Politics and Government, he was determined to play it off against Morality and Religion.

Here, instead of separating Truth and Reason from Falshood and Opinion, and enabling us to distinguish the Ore from the Dross, in that promiscuous and enormous mass, which hath almost covered the Globe,  
his

(f) I mean, his *Political Tracts*, which were of a public nature.

his Lordship hath labored to increase our confusion, and to render them still more inseparable than ever. Instead of advancing and ennobling human nature, and confirming our expectations of some glorious State hereafter, he hath treated these expectations as groundless and imaginary, the vain and wicked offspring of pride and presumption; and hath given us withal such unamiable, such degrading Pictures of Man and his Condition, as are enough to make us murmur at existence itself. Instead of atchieving any measures, or suggesting any expedients to correct the principles, and reform the manners of an abandoned licentious people, and thus save a sinking nation a little longer from ruin, he hath done all he could to hasten this ruin, by unloosing the bands of Morality and Religion, and by avowing such doctrines and notions, as would tend to the subversion of any Government whatever. As much as all this may look like Declamation, you will find it exactly true, from the short sketches I am going to lay before you. I call them sketches, and they need be nothing more; for, by having the main lines of his System delineated, you will easily judge of the rest,

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with-



without my being at the pains to fill up the Map.

The professed design of his Lordship's Philosophy is, to detect and overthrow a most impious confederacy or *plot*, as he calls it, which hath been conducted by Atheists and Divines against God and Religion. This Plot, he assures us, is no new thing ; not formed of late by a few ignorant or crack-brained men, but contrived from the beginning, and maintained and supported by the Atheists and Divines of all ages and nations, from the earliest accounts of time down to this hour. Now though Politicians, like his Lordship, have never been at a loss for a Plot, when it could serve the great purposes of State, yet they have generally concerted matters so, that it should carry, at least, a plausible appearance ; and that, if there was in reality no Plot at all, there should notwithstanding seem to be one. But here the appearances are all against it ; for surely, if there was such a Plot, as his Lordship affirms, it could never have been concealed for so many ages, but must have transpired either through the disaffection or mismanagement of somebody or other ; and especially, where such numbers



are said to have caballed. He declares it, however, far from being a joke; but, on the contrary, a very real and melancholy truth: nay, and gives us farther to understand, that it was the sole reason, which could have tempted him, at his time of life, to meddle with *abstract Philosophical reasonings*; for, says he, *though it was full late to begin at forty Years of age, yet I was not afraid of engaging in them, when the cause of God and Religion was so deeply concerned.* (\*)

The solemnity of detecting and laying open Plots, hath been often known to end in a very ridiculous manner, and so you will find it here; for the plain simple fact is nothing more than this. All mankind, in all ages, have seen and acknowledged an irregular or unequal distribution of good and evil in this life: from which the Atheists have argued against the Being of a God, and the Divines have inferred a Future State. This is the Secret; and I will assure you, the whole of it. You would wonder, no doubt, how Atheists and Divines could ever be embarked in any Cause together; and, indeed, well you might: but, you see, the reason of it is, because,

truly,

(\*) Vol. III. p. 183.

truly, they agree in one common Principle. They do agree, we own it, in one common Principle, but then they draw different, and even opposite, conclusions. They meet, as one may say, upon the same spot of ground, but then they take different, and even contrary, routs: so that their meeting, like that of two elastic bodies, is, not to associate and cabal, but to impinge, as it were, and to fly from each other. This is what they do; nay, and with such force and renitency too, as makes it impossible, they should ever meet again. Judge now, with what propriety this can be called a Confederacy or *Plot*.

But his Lordship affirms it to be actually so; and that the Divine, however he may conceal or palliate his purpose by fair pretences or fine words, is equally concerned with the Atheist: for, though he may not formally deny the Being of a God, as the Atheist does, yet he joins with the Atheist in *censuring his Works and the Dispensations of his Providence*.<sup>(h)</sup> The truth of the Case I take to be this. His Lordship had met, in Lord Bacon's Essays, with that old trite Apothegm of *Plutarch's*, which affirms

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those,

(<sup>h</sup>) Vol. V. p. 340.



those, who *defame* the Deity, to be equally criminal with those, who *deny* him ; <sup>(1)</sup> and this suggested to him the idea of his *Plot*, which he hath aggrandised, and set forth in a most pompous and terrible manner ; I suppose, to enhance the honour of detecting and destroying it.

Let us submit then to the Charge, for a little time at least ; and with the patience of those, who know they can confute it in a moment, proceed to examine, how his Lordship supports it ; and how he *vindicates that cause of God and religion*, which he has so professedly undertaken to *vindicate*. I say, examine ; for, though you do not want me to treat of any thing at large, yet I cannot avoid, even in this cursory view, dropping a few hints, which will sufficiently, at least to you, who are so capable of pursuing them, shew the absurdity and impiety of his Lordship's whole scheme.

We say then, that there is an irregular and unequal distribution of good and evil in this life ; or, *that there be just men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked, and that there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous,*

(1) Vol. V. p. 482.

ous. (k) From this we conclude, that there is some future state, when these irregularities will be redressed; because it is agreeable to the notions we have of God's *Justice and Goodness*, that Virtue should be rewarded, and that Vice should be punished. His Lordship, whose sole concern is to guard against the conclusion, disallows both the Premises, on which it is grounded, and also the Medium, by which it is deduced. He denies the *irregular distribution of things*, declaring it utterly *groundless and imaginary*; (l) and of God's *Justice and Goodness* he affirms, that we neither have nor can have any notions or ideas at all; (m) that we are not furnished with powers to attain such ideas; and that it is the highest *presumption*, and *impiety* to attempt it, since *Justice and Goodness* in God must needs be very *different*, from *Justice and Goodness* in Man. (n) He declares

(k) Ecclesiastes viii. 14.

(l) Vol. IV. p. 59. Vol. V. 393, &c.

(m) *God's moral Attributes, like his Physical, must be known a posteriori; must be discerned in his works. But it is evident, that they are not, cannot be so discerned.* Vol. V. p. 63.

(n) *The false conceptions and the licentious reasonings about the divine Nature proceed from the Analogical doctrine, which teaches, that the moral Attributes are the same in God, as they are in our ideas; which cannot be conceived, he says, with-*



declares too, that there is no real cause of distinction between the *Physical* and *Moral* Attributes of the Deity: The latter, he says, are *absorbed in his Wisdom*; (°) and his *Wisdom* he resolves into *one Eternal Reason*. (P)

A very extraordinary system, you will say! How finely it opens? Here is the Deity excluded; the foundations of Religion, all overthrown; and we are brought at once to the very point, where *Epicurus* and his followers would have led us long ago. Nor can any one be offended at your ranking his Lordship with *Epicurus*; since the dispute between them is, in truth, little more than

*without manifest presumption and impiety, since, in the supreme Governor of the World, they are something transcendent, and of which we cannot make any true judgment, nor argue with any certainty about them.* Vol. V. p. 541, 359, 360, 311.

(°) *Artificial Theology pretends to connect moral Attributes, such as we conceive them, and such as they are relatively to us, with the Physical Attributes of God. But there is no foundation in Nature for this proceeding. God's moral Attributes are absorbed in his Natural: They are absorbed in his Wisdom, and should only be considered as different modifications of this Physical Attribute.* Vol. V. p. 316, 313, 335.

(P) *Instead of conceiving such distinct Attributes in the supreme Being, we ought perhaps to conceive nothing more than this, that there are various applications of One Eternal Reason,*



than a dispute about terms. *Epicurus* ascribed the Origin of Things to Matter and Motion. His Lordship, with *Anaxagoras*, admits indeed a *vũs*, a simple intelligent Being, an *Eternal Reason*, who created the World; and so far he may seem to differ from *Epicurus*. But then he agrees with him, that this Being has no regard, to what is doing among his Creatures; that their behaviour is a Matter of the utmost indifference to him; that they are left, amidst an infinite variety of changes and chances, to struggle through a miserable existence here; and then *return for ever to the Earth from whence they came.* (¹) Where now is the difference between the Atheist and the Theist? If Man is in no wise an accountable creature, nor hath any existence beyond the

*Reason, which it becomes us little to analyse into Attributes.* Vol. IV: p. 117. *Distinct moral Attributes*, his Lordship wrote it; but, as he speaks expressly against *analysing the Eternal Reason* into any *Attributes* at all, I conclude the word *Moral* to have been an oversight in his Lordship, and have therefore left it out.

(¹) *That we should return to the Earth, from whence we came, to the Dirt under our Feet, to be mingled with the ashes of herds and plants, is common to us, and all the animal kind. We were the same with them before our birth, that is, nothing: We shall be like them too after our death, that is, nothing.* Vol. V: p. 391.

the brutes that perish, what doth it signify to him, more than to them, whether he acknowledges a supreme Being, or not? So that, without declaiming, we may affirm very truly of Lord *Bolingbroke*, what *Cotta* affirmed of *Epicurus*, that, though he hath formally allowed the existence of a God, and perhaps for much the same reasons, as *Epicurus* allowed it, yet he hath, to all rational intents and purposes, effectually denied it. (†) But to return.

He affirms then, that the *irregular and unequal distribution*, mentioned above, is *groundless and imaginary*; and he has inveighed unmercifully against Divines for supposing it real. For this he says, is to *censure the ways and the works* of the Creator, to rail at the established Order of Things, and to charge God as foolishly and as wickedly, in the Oeconomy of the moral World, as *Epicurus* had charged him, in that of the Physical. (‡) Now his Lordship, though extremely bad at Design, is yet a great Master of coloring, and can easily represent

(†) *Epicurus re tollit, oratione relinquit Deos; nimirum, invidiæ detestandæ gratiâ.* Tull. de Nat. Deor. l. 1. §. 44.

(‡) Vol. V. p. 389.



sent things under whatever light he pleases. We have a remarkable specimen of it here; for was any one to depend upon his Lordship's Authority for the Manner, in which Divines have discoursed upon this *unequal Distribution*, he would certainly conclude them to be no better, than very profane talkers and impious blasphemers; whereas, when the Case is fairly represented, and set in its true light, the profaneness and blasphemy will, I doubt, be found to be all on his Lordship's side.

Divines have observed, or if his Lordship will have it so, have complained of and even censured this unequal Distribution. But of whom have they complained? and whom have they censured? Not God surely, or any Ordainment of God's; but only Man, and the abuse of Free-will. The unequal Distribution of good and evil is owing to the Disturbance and Confusion, which has prevailed in the Moral World. But by whom was this Disturbance raised, and this Confusion introduced? Was it not by Man? Yes it was,—and so Divines have always considered it; nay, and his Lordship knew, that they so considered it; for

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he quotes *Clarke*, and he might have quoted a thousand others, as saying, that *the Natural Order of things is so perverted, that Virtue and Goodness cannot obtain their due and proper effects* : perverted by Man, and not ordained by God.

*Should a Man, says his Lordship, talk of the Physical world, like Lucretius and others, he would be ridiculous and impious ; should he talk of the Moral, like Cotta in Tully, he would be heard with attention.* (1) True ; and for this plain reason, that the Physical World is of God's making, but the Moral is of Man's. The World is not now, as it was originally designed by God : we have new-modelled it, as it were ; that is, we have made it much worse by fomenting unnatural desires, by inverting the State of things, and by disordering the whole System so, that it is really no wonder, if *Virtue and Goodness cannot obtain their due and proper effects*. So that if Divines have *railed*, which however is very false, they have *railed* against Man, and not against God. But it was artful enough to represent it under the light of *railing* against God, because this not only served the purpose of exaggeration  
and

(1) Vol. V. p. 484.



and abuse much better, but it likewise enabled his Lordship to work up the Confederacy or *Plot* between Atheists and Divines, which without this Expedient could never have been brought to bear.

As for the unequal and irregular Distribution of things, Divines, and those, who have not been Divines, have always considered it, as a Fact; and a Fact too, confirmed, as his Lordship himself allows, by the Testimony of ages, and the consent of all mankind. And from this Fact, which God has suffered in the Moral World, they have inferred a Future State in the same manner, as they have inferred his Being and Attributes, from Facts in the Physical.

Unwilling however to leave the least pretence for a Future State, his Lordship will venture to dispute this Fact: he will have this *unequal Distribution* to be *groundless* and *imaginary*. And how does he prove it? Why, in truth, not at all; and he writes like a man, who knew he could not prove it. He cavils at the terms *good* and *evil*, *happy* and *unhappy*: affirms that we can no more distinguish *good* men from *evil*, than we can ascertain *happiness* from what is *not* so. *Goodness*, says he, *is a mode*. *It is one*  
D 2 *thing*



thing at one time and place; it is another thing at another time and place. Go to Geneva, go to Rome, go to the North of Germany, come to London; and goodness is different in them all. (u) As to the terms happy and unhappy, he says, that they are more vague, and less easy to be ascertained. That some may be happy, who are deemed very miserable; and that others may be miserable, who are deemed very happy. (w) It is in this forceable manner, that his Lordship reasons against the *unequal Distribution* of things; and it would grieve one to see a person of his great abilities, driven to talk at this rate, if he had not imposed the task upon himself.

At length, he flies to that outrageous Paradox of the Stoicks, as to the grand point, which decides the whole question; and affirms, that *Virtue is absolutely its own reward*. Men have it always in their power to be virtuous; and this Virtue, if it has no reward from without, rewards itself by an inward happiness; a happiness independent on every thing external. (x) And thus he runs on for several Pages together, in all the

Rant

(u) Vol. V. p. 431.

(w) Vol. V. p. 395.

(x) Vol. V. p. 400.

Rant of the Portic. Now as much as I believe, that Man has a Body, which feels by sensation, as well as a Mind, which perceives by Reflection, so surely am I persuaded, that this Philosophy of the Stoicks, which his Lordship has adopted into his new system, is vain and empty. Virtue, I allow it, will always be attended with tranquillity in the Mind; it will add to the Comforts, and diminish from the Miseries of life; but then, I say, it is not sufficient to preserve the Mind happy, while outward grievances oppress the Body. And in this I only say, that the happiness of Man, while he is imprisoned in the Body, depends in some measure upon *things external*: Every one else will say so too; nay, his Lordship himself has said even so: For this noble Lord never advances in one place, what he does not confute in another, as you shall see in the Case before us.

The Purpose and tendency of his Lordship's endeavours being not, as he says, to *humble Man's Pride*, but, in reality, to degrade his Nature, there is nothing which falls oftener under his correction, than the extravagant flights of crackbrained and enthusiastic Men. Their *Meditations*, their  
 extasies,



extasies, their abstractions from Sense and Body, and their Union with God are Topicks, which he dwells upon with pleasure. Hence he ridicules without Mercy the *Platonists* of old, and many, that are now living, who are not called *Platonists*. And if his ridicule had been thus confined, I would have allowed it to be just and extremely well grounded; and for the very reason, which he himself gives. For these ethereal spiritual Beings, as much as they may aspire beyond the class of animality, are subject to the same grievances and afflictions with other Animals; and the *Platonist* or *Metaphysician*, who fancies himself rapt up in pure Intellect, and even abstracted from his Material part, will feel hunger and thirst, and roar out in a fit of the gout or stone. (v) This his Lordship affirms of the frantic *Devotee*. May not the same be affirmed of the most virtuous Man alive? and will not this reasoning of his serve to expose that Philosophy, which declareth *Virtue to be its own reward?*

I should be ashamed to write such trite stuff to you, but only I am sketching out his Lordship's Philosophy. However I will  
not

not dwell upon this point any longer, because his Lordship himself is content to give it up: For, though he was willing to bluster a little for the innocent pleasure of abusing Divines, yet he is forced to own at last, that this *unequal distribution* is indeed real. *He sees*, he says, *not only one, but many good Men unhappy*; <sup>(z)</sup> he allows, that God's Justice and Goodness cannot be collected from his distribution of good and evil; <sup>(a)</sup> and he affirms, that *many of the Phænomena*, in his government of the moral World, *are in several cases repugnant to our ideas of these Attributes*. <sup>(b)</sup> Very well: His Lordship and Divines are now agreed. His Lordship censures and *rails*, as well as they; and if there be any Confederacy or *Plot*, his Lordship is as deeply concerned, as they are. What is the quarrel then? you will say. Why really I cannot tell, unless that his Lordship has not been at the Head of it. And this I am the more inclined to believe, because I have heard, that his Lordship has for-

(z) Vol. V. p. 427, 455.

(a) *God's moral Attributes must be discerned, if they are discerned at all, in the conduct of his Providence. But it is evident, they are not, cannot be so discerned.* Vol. V. p. 63.

(b) Vol. V. p. 368.



formerly been concerned in Plots, and that he quarrelled with his Associates upon this very Article.

His Lordship and Divines agree then in one common principle, which is the *unequal Distribution of good and evil in this life*. This they Both submit to, as to a Fact, which they cannot resist, without resisting at the same time the testimony of their senses. God's Justice and Goodness is now to be vindicated; and this too they Both attempt to vindicate, the Divines by a Future State, his Lordship by——what? why, by the strangest supposition in the world; by supposing, *that Justice and Goodness in God are different from Justice and Goodness in Men.* (°) A strange supposition surely! for it sounds in my ears, and, I imagine, it will sound in yours, as if he had supposed, that God was neither Just nor Good. And now, if I had no more charity for his Lordship, than his Lordship had for Divines, might I not charge him with confederating with the Atheist, and with betraying the

(°) And he censures Dr. *Clarke* for supposing them the *same*, when he might have learned from such instances as these, viz. *good men being unhappy*, &c. that they must needs be *different*. Vol. V. p. 234. and elsewhere.

the very cause, which he has undertaken to vindicate? I am confident I might; and I could support the charge with greater force against him, than he has supported it against the Divines. Nor would it avail his Lordship to remonstrate ever so loudly, that he *ascribes all conceivable perfections to God, Moral as well as Physical; and that he acknowledges whatever God has done to be just and good in itself, though it does not appear conformable to our ideas of justice and goodness*; (<sup>d</sup>) for this is the same as to *acknowledge* an object white, though in the mean time it is evidently black. No: this is the language of adulation, which is usually paid through fear to Tyrants, and which cries them up for meekness and bounty, though sense and experience shew them to be the cruelest oppressors; and, if it be possible to blaspheme the Deity, it is, when such language is offered to him. But I will not pursue his Lordship; but proceed to shew you, what he has advanced in support of this monstrous Paradox.

When his Lordship affirms, that *Justice and Goodness in God are different from Justice and Goodness in Men*, he would not be understood to mean, that God is neither Just nor

(<sup>d</sup>) Vol. V. p. 311, 312.



Good, because he *ascribes all conceivable perfections, Moral as well as Physical, to him*; but only, that we have no adequate ideas of these Attributes in God, nor are furnished with Faculties or Powers to attain them. And for this reason he cannot bear the *presumption* and *impiety* of Divines, when they attempted, as he says they did, *to remove the veil, to contemplate God in his Nature and Essence, to analyse the Divine Nature by making a System of his Moral as well as Physical Attributes, and to reason thus beyond all their ideas.* (°) Now all, that Divines have attempted, is only to consider the attributes of Justice and Goodness distinct from the attributes of Wisdom and Power; the better to accommodate them to human conceptions. For if they are to consider the Divine Nature at all, they must consider it in this manner, because the imperfection of the human understanding will not permit them to consider it in any other. But they have been far from attempting *to remove the veil, or to contemplate God in his Nature and Essence*: they have not attempted to view even the *Attributes* of the Deity in any *direct* or *absolute* light, but only relatively,

(°) Vol. IV. p. 48.

latively, and as they are *reflected* from the Physical and Moral Constitution of the World ; and in this light his Lordship himself allows, that they may be *contemplated*. (<sup>f</sup>)

That Divines have never considered the Attributes of the Deity in any light but this, his Lordship might have learned, as he learned many other things, from *Cudworth*. For the piety of Mr. *Hobbes* was, it seems, offended at this way of *analysing* the attributes of the Deity. He could not bear, any more than his Lordship, to have the Divine Nature *thus decyphered*, as he called it : (<sup>g</sup>) to which *Cudworth* replied, that, *though the attributes of the Deity may be severally considered, yet they are, in truth, nothing else but so many partial and inadequate conceptions of one and the same simple perfect being, taken in, as it were, by peice-meal, by reason of the imperfection of our human un-*

(<sup>f</sup>) *Men are dazzled, whenever they attempt to look beyond the reflected light, wherein it is given us to contemplate the existence, the nature, and attributes of God, relatively to Man : for, says he, we must see them in a reflected, not in a direct light.* Vol. 1V. p. 254. Vol. V. p. 524.

(<sup>g</sup>) *Hobbes's Works in English, Printed in 1750,* p. 692.



*derstandings ; and therefore are they really all but one thing, though they have the appearance of multiplicity to us : as the one simple light of the sun, diversly refracted and reflected from a rorid cloud, bath to us the appearance of the variegated colours of the rainbow. (b)*

But, though his Lordship in some passages allows these attributes to be seen in a reflected light, yet in others he denies, and the tenor of his *first Philosophy* requires him to deny, that they can be seen in any light at all. He affirms, that *Justice and Goodness in God are not the same as in our ideas*, which is to affirm, that they are not at all, relatively to us. For if they be not the same, they may be any thing or nothing, for aught we can determine ; and  
we

(b) *Cudworth's Intellectual System*, p. 642. 4to Edit. So the best Philosophers of Antiquity, whenever they reasoned about Spiritual Substances, such as God or the Soul, made no scruple to use figurative expressions, taken from Sensible Material objects. *Si quid de his, summo Deo aut Mente, assignare conantur, quæ non sermonem tantummodo, sed cogitationem quoque humanam superant, ad similitudines & exempla confugiunt. Sic Plato, cum de τὸ ἀγασθὸν loqui esset animatus, dicere quid sit non ausus est, hoc solum de eo sciens, quod sciri quale sit ab homine non posset : solum vero ei simillimum de visibilibus Solem repperit ; & per ejus similitudinem viam sermoni suo attollens se ad non comprehendenda patefecit.* Macrobius in Somn. Scrip. Lib. I. cap. 2.

we can form no reasonings about them, nor deductions from them. <sup>(i)</sup> Thus God's Moral Government of the World would become precarious and uncertain ; Religion would cease to have any foundation at all ; the knowledge of our State would be limited to the narrow compass of our existence here ; and all, we should have to do, would be *little more*, as the Poet says, *than just to look about us, and to die.* <sup>(k)</sup> The reality of a Providence and a Future State depends upon our knowledge of God's Moral Attributes ; and as it was the purpose of his Lordship's Philosophy to demolish the former, so he has, consistently enough, denied the latter.

He has done little more than deny them, as you shall now see, from what he has insinuated against *Clarke's* Demonstration of these Attributes. *Clarke*, if you remember, proceeds in this manner. *There are different relations of things towards each other. From these relations arises a Fitness or Unfitness of things to one another. This Fitness or Unfitness is antecedent to Will, or to all Arbitrary*  
*or*

<sup>(i)</sup> *Justice and Goodness are something transcendent in God ; and of which we cannot make any true Judgment, nor argue with any certainty about them.* Vol. V. p. 259.

<sup>(k)</sup> *Pope.*



or Positive Appointment whatsoever. It must have been therefore eternally, necessarily, and unchangeably in the Nature and Reason of things. From whence this excellent Divine concludes, and surely with great force, that as an Intelligent Allwise Being must always have understood and comprehended these Fitnesses and Relations, so he must always have acted conformably to them; that is, he must always have acted according to the strictest rules of Goodness, Justice, and Truth, and all other Moral Perfections. <sup>(1)</sup> This is the substance of Clarke's Demonstration, and he called it a Demonstration *a Priori*; which, I own, I have often wondered at, for I suppose, he did not mean to discredit it himself. The very foundation of it is the *relations of things*; and these *relations* must originally be deduced, *a Posteriori*, from the Constitution of the System, which lies expanded without us. He had before called his Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God a Demonstration *a Priori*, though his Eternity and Intelligence were confessedly deduced from an Intelligent Something now existing: and, when these Attributes are once esta-

(1) See the 12th Proposition of the *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*.

established, all the rest grow out of them, as various branches out of one common Trunk ; the Trunk itself growing in the mean time, not downwards from the Clouds, which the term *a Priori* would make one imagine, but upwards from a natural and solid foundation. The Truth is, *Clarke* seems to have been fond of this term ; and I wish he had not, because it has given occasion to some, who could not, or, what is more probable, would not understand him, to ridicule him and his followers, as if *rather than creep up slowly, a posteriori, to general knowledge, they soar at once as far, and as high, as imagination can carry them : from whence they descend again, armed with systems and arguments a priori, which clash with the Phænomena.* <sup>(m)</sup> Which kind of ridicule, though very applicable to *Des Cartes* and the Schoolmen, who gave a loose to imagination, without regarding the standards of either Nature or Grace, and therefore might properly be said to soar *inter nubes*, yet can no more belong to such a Divine as *Clarke*, than it can to such a Philosopher as *Newton*. *Newton* philosophised from the Phænomena in the Physical World ;

(<sup>m</sup>) Vol. III. p. 327.



World : *Clarke* reasoned from the Constitution in the Moral, and aspired no higher, than that conducted him.

But to return to the Demonstration, which his Lordship objects to. *Clarke* founds it, as we have said, in the *relations of things*. Now it is remarkable, that his Lordship does not object to these *relations*, which one would be ready to expect from such a Philosopher, but allows them to exist in Nature, and, consequently, that there are such moral perfections as justice and goodness, which arise from conforming our actions to them. But then he confines the notions or ideas, we have of this justice and goodness, intirely to the system, from whence they are deduced ; and will not allow any general ideas of them to be abstractible from it, by which, as by an *eternal* and *unchangeable* rule, we may reason and judge of the Dispensations of the Deity. Thus he affirms, that *the boasted power in the mind of framing abstract notions is utterly groundless and imaginary ;* (<sup>n</sup>) *that, though it frames ideas of such particular actions or instances of behaviour, as we term just and unjust ; yet it neither does nor can frame any ideas of moral or immoral in general,*  
no,

(<sup>n</sup>) Vol. III. p. 417.

*no, nor any general idea of these particular kinds, just and unjust : (°)* And in his lifetime, if you remember, he called *Clarke* a *presumptuous Dogmatist* for attempting, by this method of abstraction, *to arrive at the knowledge of that rule*, by which God acts as moral Governor of the World. (P)

You see, he takes advantage of the prejudices, which have been raised against the power of abstracting general ideas. Mr. *Locke* had defined *real ideas to be such, as have a conformity with the real being and existence of things, or with their Archetypes.* (q) These Archetypes have been treated as altogether imaginary ; meer creatures of the mind ; and which have no foundation at all in Nature. *Berkeley*, a great and good Man, but with much of the Visionary blended in his Constitution, was, I think, the first, who quarrelled with *Locke* about the doctrine of general abstract ideas. He ascribed the growth of Scepticism, Atheism, Irreligion, and all kinds of Error to this mistaken faculty of the Mind : And Men, he is persuaded, could never have been deluded into

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(•) Vol. III. p. 432.

(P) Patriot King, p. 94. 8vo. Edit.

(q) Locke's Works Vol. I. p. 173. 4th. Edit.



a false opinion of the existence of Matter, if they had not fancied themselves invested with a power of abstracting Substance from the Qualities, under which it is perceived. (¹) In short, the good Bishop wanted, by getting rid of Abstraction, to sublime us all into Spirit, and to raise Men up to Gods : How would he have been shocked to see this noble Lord endeavouring, upon his own favorite principle, to banish all Spirit from the World, to derive the thoughts and imaginations of Men from meer Matter and Motion, and to sink us to a level with the beasts that perish ! for, if his Lordship says true, *the boasted power of framing abstract notions will be found to be so far from shewing the great force and extent of the human Intellect, and from raising Man up to Divinity, that it will shew, how weak and confined this Intellect is, and sink him down into that animality, above which he affects so vainly to rise.* (²)

But to proceed. He affirms then, as *Hobbes* had affirmed before him, that there are no such things, as *Universals*, in rerum Naturâ ; that a general universal idea is inconsistent with the real existence of things ; and that,

(¹) Principles of Human Knowledge, Printed in 1710.

(²) Vol. III. p. 417.

that, though *some Philosophers have fancied, they could abstract such ideas, yet they deserve no more credit, than a Man in a delirium.* (¹)

The impossibility of abstracting such general ideas he illustrates by instances, drawn from objects of sense, as in *Tableity, Cuppeity, and Globeity*; under which terms, as he thinks, Men have vainly attempted to abstract general ideas, which, as Archetypes, might stand for the general Nature of Tables, Cups, and Globes, and yet be undetermined to any particular species of them: In the same manner as, under the notion of *triangularity*, they would *abstract from every triangular figure the idea of a triangle, which is all, and none, of these at once*; all which he declares to be utterly impossible. It is equally impossible, he says, to *abstract any general nature of justice, distinct from particular actions*, by which, as by an Original test or standard, we may try and compare *particular natures*; (²) much less can we apply this test to the ways and works of the Creator, who, as he created the *relations*, which constitute a Triangle, created the *relations* too, which constitute justice.

F 2

Upon

(¹) Vol. V. p. 15, 19, 26. Hobbes's Works p. 10.

(²) Vol. V. p. 20, 27.



Upon this foundation he espouses the opinion of *Des Cartes*, that *there are no Truths or Relations of things independent on God*; that they may be immutable and eternal, because God willed and ordered, that they should be so; but that they cannot be in any sense independent on God, by whose energy the universal Nature, and all the Truths and Relations arising from it, were first created, or began to exist. These Relations, if any such there were, could not begin to exist in any proper sense, till those systems of Nature, to which they belong, were called into actuality; that is, these relations did not exist, as so many Archetypes or Ideal Standards for God to consult, as it were, when he created the system of Nature; but he created the system, and they began to exist. *The Essences or Relations of things are dependent on God doubly, as he called these Essences into Existence, and as he created Beings capable of perceiving them.* There has been a distinction, he says, between Existences, that depend on the Will of God, and Essences, that do not depend on it; but the distinction, he thinks, is not very clear. Now it seems to me, that nothing can be clearer. His Lordship however will have it to be obscure, and proposes to re-

move

move the obscurity by removing the distinction, and by *understanding Essences to be nothing more, than manners of being determined by the power, that gives the being, and manners of conceiving, determined by the power, that forms the conceptions*: that is, by making both the one and the other dependent upon God, and so taking for granted the very point, that should be proved. He concludes with *Des Cartes*, and, let Metaphysical Divines say what they please, as he thinks, with good reason, that *God is the Author of the Essence, as well as Existence of all, that he created.* (\*)

Thus his Lordship reasons; and thus he attempts to destroy our notions of God's Moral perfections, by shewing the general ideas of those relations, on which they are grounded, to be fantastic and imaginary. All this he has mixed with a great deal of ridicule about *incorporeal Substances, eternal Essences, independent Natures*; and he charges *Plato* and *Cudworth* with supposing certain essential forms or moulds, wherein different things were cast to constitute different natures; patterns or archetypes, according to  
which

(\*) Vol. V. p. 4, 7, II.



*which every thing is what it is.* (\*) His Lordship is every where so much above the pedantry of referring to what he cites, that it is impossible to say, whether his charges be well grounded, or not. I will spend no time in transcribing from *Plato*, as you may soon inform yourself by consulting his *Parmenides*, how far he is guilty of the charge, which is here brought against him. In the mean time I will venture to affirm of *Cudworth*, that however a greatness of conception might sometimes tempt him to use such strong Metaphorical terms, yet he never meant any thing more, by this manner of expression, than to illustrate a very important question; and which, I trust, may yet be defended upon *Cudworth's* own principles, though his Lordship has done his utmost to discredit and explode it.

The question, I mean, is this: That there are certain eternal Truths, which must determine the Deity; certain eternal Relations, to which he would conform; certain eternal Rules, according to which he would act, in the Creation and Constitution of the System of Nature. Nor let me here be stopped by a Disputant, for a Reasoner  
would

(\*) Vol. V. p. 12, 20.

would not stop me, to be asked insultingly, how these Relations can be eternal, when the very System, from which they result, was created in time? (⁷) which is just as if you should ask, how three and two could make five fifty Years ago, when you have not perceived them much above forty? We know, that these Relations could not be perceived, till the System was created, and till intelligent beings were created to perceive them; but then we know, that the Deity foresaw and comprehended them from all eternity, and that is enough to support the propriety of the expression. Hence we may speak in *Plato's* language, and without speaking unintelligibly, that both the System, and the Relations resulting from it, existed in the divine Mind from all eternity.

Their eternity being settled, the next point is, whether, or no, these Relations can in any sense be considered as a Rule, by which the Deity must be determined in the Creation of the Universe? We humbly conceive, they may: His Lordship flatly denies it, affirms such a notion to be nothing

(⁷) *These Truths could not begin to exist in any proper sense, till those Systems of Nature, from which they result, were called into actuality.* Vol. V. p. 7.



thing less than blasphemy, and, as I mentioned above, called *Clarke* an *impious Dogmatist* for presuming, in this manner, to give Laws to the Deity, and to *limit him by any other Rule, than that, which Infinite Wisdom prescribes to Infinite Power*: as if he, who created all systems, by which the various natures and more various relations of things are constituted, could not have created them in what manner he pleased, and according to Rules inconceivable by us. <sup>(2)</sup>

Now I am ready to own with his Lordship, that God, as Creator of all Systems, is not confined to this or that particular mode of creating any, and that he can create them and their relations in manners infinitely various; but this I conceive (and what is well worth observing, I cannot help conceiving it, if I think at all about it) that there must be nevertheless some certain Rule or Proportion, to which even infinite Wisdom itself must conform, in the Creation and Constitution of all these various Systems.

His Lordship indeed would tell me, that, when I talk in this manner, *I deserve no more credit than a man in a delirium*, that

(2) Vol. III. p. 52, 53.

my conceptions, as clear as I think them, are purely fantastick, and that I may as well pretend to conceive, under the notion of triangularity, a general idea of a triangle, abstracted from every particular triangle, as to conceive a Rule of action to the Deity, abstracted from the relations, which are constituted by the System. But it is very plain to me, that this instance of the triangle, which his Lordship is so fond of, has utterly misled him; nay, and what is still worse, at the most unfortunate conjuncture, even while he was laying the foundation of his System. I no more believe than his Lordship, that the Understanding has a power of conceiving such an Archetypal Triangle: I hold, that no such general idea can possibly be attained; and I say too, that the *Doctōrs of Abstraction* held the very same, though his Lordship has charged them with holding the contrary. (\*)

*When a Geometrician, says Cudworth, considers a Triangle, being about to demonstrate, that it hath three angles equal to two Right angles, though he will certainly have the Phantasmatical picture (or sensible idea) of*

(\*) Vol. V. p. 26.



*some Triangle in his Mind, because every express picture of a Triangle must of necessity be either Obtuse-angular, or Rectangular, or Acute-angular, yet he will also have a Noematic Perception (or Intellectual Idea) of it too; because that, which in his mind is the subject of the Proposition, is the Ratio of a Triangle, undetermined to any of these Species. The subject of this Theorem is not any Individual Triangle, or Particular Species of Triangle, as sense takes cognizance of it, but it is the General and Immutable Notion or Idea of a Triangle, comprehended in the Mind, as the Exemplar of all its various Species; <sup>(b)</sup> and which, I affirm against his Lordship, is representative of them all, though in the mean time determined to no one particular.*

You see, that his Lordship has borrowed his Allusion, and you see, that he has borrowed it on purpose to misrepresent it: for, place it but in its true and proper light, and it leads to a Conclusion just opposite to that, which his Lordship draws from it. It shews, that Abstraction, in the sense we understand it, is not only a possible, but an actual way of arriving at knowledge.

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(<sup>b</sup>) Cudworth *Of Eternal and Immutable Morality*, p. 143, 228.

It shews too, what *Cudworth* intended it to shew, that as the Mind, by contemplating the various species of Triangles, can abstract that *Ratio* or General idea, which is applicable to them all, so in like manner, by contemplating the various natures and relations of things, as they appear in the System, it can abstract that *Rule* or General idea, by which they were all originally formed.

Besides this instance of *triangularity*, with which his Lordship would ridicule the doctrine of General Ideas or Universal Notions, he has produced others, such as *tableness*, *cuppeity*, and *globeity*: intimating, and even affirming, that you may as well contend for an Eternal Storehouse of Archetypal Tables, Cups, and Globes, according to which models all others have since been made, as contend for certain *Eternal Relations*, by which, as by a Rule, all the various relations, which have since arisen from the system, were at first determined and adjusted. But his Lordship's imagery has here again misled him. He evidently confounds the things, that are made, with the Rule or Proportion, by which they are made; and ridicules us for maintaining the former to



be Eternal, while it is only the latter, which we maintain to be so.

Give me leave to illustrate in my turn, and by the same allusion, which his Lordship makes use of; because, I think, it will prove, as it did before, just the contrary, to what his Lordship intended. I will suppose then an Intelligent and Ingenious Artificer resolving with himself to construct a Machine, Instrument, or Utenfil of any kind, intirely New. Here are now, 'tis allowed, no Archetypes, no Exemplars, no Original Models to influence or determine him. He is quite arbitrary, at liberty to range and invent as he pleases. The Machine at length is formed, and formed entirely out of his own imagination. But yet if it be formed *according to Art*, or in a perfect manner, it must be formed according to certain Rules and Proportions, which existed previous to its formation, and were wholly independent on it. So let the same Artificer frame, if his Lordship pleases, a Species of Cups or Tables, perfectly new: though they never existed before, and though there are no models to limit or confine him, yet if he does not proceed according to certain proportions and Standards,

ards, which have their foundation in Nature, the judicious observer will think meanly of his skill.

Now to apply this, with all possible deference, to the Deity. God, I will say with his Lordship, was *the Author of this and every other system*; he formed *the various natures and more various relations* of them all; and if any Metaphysical Philosopher should affirm, that he was constrained by certain Archetypes or Original Exemplars, independent on him, in the production of this or that system, I will join with his Lordship in exploding the absurdity. But though God had no Archetypes, which could determine him to particular modes, and though he could have ordained these Systems as well as the relations, which are constituted by them, in manners infinitely various, yet there must still have been some Rule, Proportion, or Rectitude, to which, as I have said above, even Infinite Wisdom must conform in the production of all these Systems; and what must this Rule be, but the *Eternal relations of things*?

The idea of these Eternal relations, which his Lordship declares fantastic, has at least this characteristic of reality, that it obtrudes  
itself



itself on us, whether we will, or no. For to what purpose is it to reply, that these Relations are confined to the System, from whence they arise; and that God created the Relations, when he created the System? This is only to remove the idea one step farther off: For if we suppose, and it is nothing but supposition, that God created the Relations, when he created the System, yet we cannot help conceiving at the same time, that he created them by some other Relations, those by others, and so in æternum. (°) Thus the idea of these Relations will ever return, and force itself upon the Mind, in spite of all efforts to keep it at a distance; and thus, by his Lordship's leave, we arrive, and without any presumption or impiety, at the knowledge of that Rule, by which

(°) To say with his Lordship, that these *other* relations are not *our* relations, or that God created the relations in this system by a Rule, which we know nothing of, is to say, that God did, and yet that he did not, create them by a Rule. For if we can apprehend the relations themselves, we may likewise apprehend the Rule, by which they were created. In short, the Rule and the Relations must be one and the same: unless we can suppose the Ratio of a Triangle in this System, to be created by the Ratio of a Circle in some other; or, that what is injustice and cruelty in Man, may yet be justice and goodness in God.

which the Deity acts, and therefore at the knowledge of those moral perfections, which are constituted by it.

His Lordship, it is plain, was pressed with these difficulties. He found them insurmountable: And therefore, in order to evade, what could not be answered, he rebukes us for reasoning of the Divine Nature upon Human Ideas, and for supposing intelligence in God to be the same, as intelligence in Man. But how ridiculous is this? and how must a Philosopher be distressed, when he is forced to recur to such foolish evasions? As if, when Men think and speak at all about the Deity and his perfections, they must not think and speak after the manner of Men: As if too Intelligence must not always be Intelligence, however it may differ in Manner or Degree. Just so his Lordship, seeing some Phænomena in the moral World, which contradict our notions of justice and goodness, and yet unwilling to admit a future State, affirms, without any proof at all, <sup>(d)</sup> that *justice*  
and

(d) I say, *without any proof at all*: for though his Lordship might urge *some Phænomena in the Moral World*, such as the misery of good Men &c. which are  
repugnant



*and goodness in God are different from justice and goodness in Man.* But is not this to silence by authority, when he cannot convince by reason? Yes, it is; and a Papist, by only the same licence, which his Lordship here uses, might easily maintain His *Transubstantiation*. The Bread and Wine, he might say, appear to you to be Bread and Wine; but they are, in truth, real Flesh and Blood. Goodness and Justice, says his Lordship, appear to you under such and such

*repugnant to our ideas of justice and goodness*, yet these Phænomena are not sufficient to establish this Position, that *Justice and Goodness in God are different from Justice and Goodness in Man*; because the Justice and Goodness of God, according to our ideas of them, may as easily be collected and ascertained, *a posteriori*, from the Constitution of the moral World, as his Wisdom and Power from the Constitution of the Physical. These Phænomena therefore are only Particular exceptions to a General rule, according to his Lordship's way of considering them: but they are not even such; for, as I have observed above, they do not result from the System, as it was ordained originally by God, but only as it has been disordered and inverted by a creature, whom he was pleased to endue with a freedom of acting. — Those who would see the Moral Attributes of the Deity collected and established, *a posteriori*, from the System, I refer to the 2d of four Letters, exhibiting a *View of Lord Bolingbroke's Philosophy*: where they will find this question treated in a very masterly and able manner.

such modes ; but they are notwithstanding different in God. Thus they both argue, very hypothetically, in defence of their respective Systems ; and if the Papist, to enforce his arguments the better, works them well up with the high-sounding and awful Epithets of *adorable, transcendent, incomprehensible*, his Lordship, I can assure you, is never a whit behind him. (\*) Strange revolution of things ! Here's an old, exploded Church-Argument, which was formerly employed to support Nonsense and Mystery against Sense and Reason, newly vamped up and entered into the service of Atheism.

And now I have disclosed to you that prodigious *Thought*, from which this *first Philosophy*

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(\*) Thus his Lordship, Vol. III. p. 247. Vol. V. p. 311, 312. *ascribes all conceivable (it should be, inconceivable) perfections to God, adores his Majesty, and blesses his goodness, though transcendent.* But we may affirm of his Lordship, what *Le Clerc* affirmed of *Bayle* upon the same occasion, that *these words, in his Mouth, have neither sense nor meaning ; Ce sont des paroles, qui n' ont point de sens, dans sa bouche.* *Bibl. Choix.* Tom. XII. p. 267. In like manner *Epicurus*, after he had excluded a Providence, wrote a Book, *de Sanctitate.* Upon which *Tully* makes *Cotta* say, *ludimur ab homine, non tam faceto, quam ad scribendi licentiam libero : quæ enim potest esse Sanctitas, si Dii humana non curant ?* *de Natur. Deor. L. i. §. 44.*



*loſophy* of his Lordſhip's originally ſprung. He told his friend *Swift*, if you remember, that he had *ſtarted a Thought*, which would render all our *Metaphyſical Theology* both ridiculous and abominable. (f) The *Thought*, as you have ſeen, is, that God's Rule of acting is different from Man's, and, conſequently, that Juſtice and Goodneſs in God are different from Juſtice and Goodneſs in Man. This *Thought* was to render all our *Metaphyſical Theology* both ridiculous and abominable; that is, it was to prove our ideas of God's moral perfections to be fantaſtic and vain, and ſo to render all the Concluſions, which have been deduced from them concerning a Providence and a future State, precarious and doubtful. The ſame effort of Mind, which produced this *Thought*, enabled his Lordſhip likewise to diſcover that *Plot*, of which you have heard above: But his Lordſhip's *Thoughts*, as well as his *Plots*, come all to nothing. We are able to acquire very clear and very real ideas of God's goodneſs and juſtice; and therefore the Concluſions, which have been deduced from them, are neither more *ridiculous* nor *abominable*, but as ſolid and unſhaken, as if this *Thought* had never been *ſtarted*. I

(f) Pope's Works Vol. IX. Let. 48.

I presume it appears from what has been said, that his Lordship's Hypothesis concerning the moral Attributes of the Deity, which yet he calls a *Vindication of the ways of God to Man*, cannot stand the test of an abstract examination ; but when it is considered in the concrete, and applied to the purposes, for which it was invented, the absurdity, you will see, will be still more striking ; it will then be found to *shock all common sense*.

His Lordship, if you remember, had submitted to the unequal distribution of good and evil in this life as to a Fact, which could not be controverted any longer ; and had owned in consequence, that the World abounded with innocent and good Men, who, without any fault of theirs, were nevertheless oppressed with unhappiness and misery. Such, it is imagined then, would, if they had no prospect of future retribution, be apt to sink under the weight of despair, and to murmur within themselves about the cause of their Creation, or, why they were created only to be miserable : And they would finally be tempted to think hardly of the justice and goodness of the Being, who created them.



Now to one of these, we will suppose his Lordship to arrive with his *first Philosophy*, a professed vindicator of God's goodness and justice. How he would address such an object, you have heard already. He would call his murmurings impiety and blasphemy; he would charge him with presumption for supposing Justice and Goodness in God to be the same with, or even to bear any Analogy to, Justice and Goodness in Man; he would assure him, upon his Word and Honour, that God's Rule of acting was very different from Man's; and that therefore, notwithstanding all his murmurings and complaints, he might be dealt withal very justly and mercifully according to God's Rule, though very unjustly and cruelly according to Man's. (s) Should this Innocent

(s) The Comfort, which this Philosophy provides for such afflicted Innocents, is exactly of a piece with the Sense and Reason of it. *Hope* and *Resignation* to the will of the Supreme Being are frequently prescribed by his Lordship in the solemnest and devoutest terms. But *Hope*, as well as *Faith*, must imply a Substance in Reversion, or else it has no foundation at all: and to talk of *Hope*, as a support under Afflictions in *this* life, is ridiculous in a Philosopher, who denies *another*. So also *Resignation* to the will of a Being, whom we know to be Just and Good, is, without doubt, a great relief to a Creature in distress; but *Resignation* to a Being

cent not happen to be deeply versed in *abstract Philosophical reasonings*, like his Lordship, he might at first be frightened, silenced, and confounded: But, if he was a Man of tolerable good sense, he would soon recover himself, and reply, as he might with Truth and Reason of his side, that, though he was not permitted to determine, what

Being in the case of sufferings inflicted, where we cannot discern him either Just or Good, is no relief at all. It is, in truth, no longer *Resignation*, but Submission: a Submission, which is paid to Tyrants and Oppressors, and which only proceeds from a want of power to resist them.

And here again we perceive a remarkable conformity between his Lordship and Mr. *Hobbes*. *Hobbes* was led by these same principles, which his Lordship hath transcribed into his *first Philosophy*, to found all Obedience and Resignation to God, upon Man's inability to resist him. *The Right*, says he, *whereby God reigneth over Men*, is to be derived, not from his creating them, as if he required Obedience as of Gratitude for his benefits, but from his irresistible power. It is from this Power, that the kingdom over Men, and the Right of afflicting them at his pleasure, belongeth naturally to God Almighty; not as Creator and gracious, but as Omnipotent. And though Punishment or Affliction be due for Sin only, yet the Right of afflicting is not always derived from Mens Sin, but from God's Power. Hence he concludes, and well he may, that the only reason, why Men are subject to God, is, because they are not Omnipotent, or have not power sufficient to resist him. *Hobbes's Works* p. 256. and *De Cive* c. XV. §. 7.



what Justice and Goodness were in God, or even to reason about God's Moral Nature at all, yet he was very sure, that such a Being, as the Supreme must needs be, would never create Men only to be miserable; and, that such a dispensation of Things could no more be just and good according to God's Rule, than it could be just and good according to Man's.

His Lordship was aware, that all this fine reasoning might be overturned at once by such a reply: And therefore he flies, as you will now see, to another Hypothesis, as chimerical and fantastic, as any of his former. He affirms then, *'tis arbitrary to suppose, that Man was created to be happy; that God might have other ends in making Man, than that of making an happy creature; that numberless Worlds, and Systems of Worlds, compose this amazing Whole, the Universe, whereof this, we inhabit, is only a Part; and consequently, that the Divine Attributes are exercised in such innumerable Relations unknown to us, that we, who see them in one Relation alone, cannot apply them with any propriety or certainty.* (<sup>h</sup>)

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(<sup>h</sup>) Vol. V. p. 326, 329, 63.

When Divines infer a future State from the unequal distribution of good and evil, they fall under his Lordship's censure for *assuming the justice and goodness of God's dispensations, in this System, to be capable of no other Vindication, than that, which supposes another* ; ( <sup>i</sup> ) and yet, you see, his Lordship has recourse to another System for the Vindication of these Attributes, as well as Divines, so that his Lordship has *supposed*, as well as they. But the difference is, that Divines have *supposed* nothing more, than a plain natural consequence, which follows from a Fact ; whereas his Lordship's *supposition* is altogether irrational and absurd ; and, in the first place, neither true in itself, nor, secondly, if it was, sufficient to answer the purposes, for which his Lordship invented it, of vindicating the justice and goodness of God.

I. That Gravity connects the Physical System of the World, and, consequently, that the Bodies, which compose it, were not created for themselves alone, but mutually to depend on, and be subservient to one another, is founded upon Experiment, and confirmed by Demonstration : But that there  
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(<sup>i</sup>) Vol. V. p. 64.



are any moral Connections between us and other Systems, cannot be supported by any analogical reasoning from hence, because there are no Phænomena, on which such reasoning can be justly grounded. I do not say, you will observe, that there are no other Systems of moral Beings, with which our System may be physically connected, as a Part; but I say, that there are no Moral connections, that his Lordship knows of, between us and other Systems, and, therefore, that our moral System is, of itself, as much a Whole, as if no other System actually existed. It is not true then, what his Lordship affirms, that *the Divine Attributes are exercised in such innumerable relations unknown to us, that we, who see them in one relation alone, cannot apply them with any propriety or certainty*: for though they may be, and probably are, *exercised in innumerable relations unknown to us, yet we see them in every relation, which can concern us as Moral agents, and therefore, may apply them with as much propriety and certainty, as if we saw them in all.*

2. But admit his Lordship's imaginary connection between us and other Systems to be real, and that beings are created to be  
 miserable

miserable in this System, for the sake of subserving the happiness of some other; how will this answer his Lordship's purpose of vindicating the justice and goodness of God? Surely, not at all: it leaves his justice and goodness exactly where it found them, and is, moreover, a manifest impeachment of his Wisdom; for it implies, that God could not create one System of beings to be happy, without creating at the same time another to be miserable. His Lordship indeed has said, that *'tis arbitrary to suppose, that God created Man to be happy*: he might as well have said, that *God created Man to be miserable*. And, in effect, he has said it, and thus has fallen into the blasphemy and impiety, which he charged upon St. *Austin*; (<sup>k</sup>) with this difference only, that St. *Austin*, as he says, supposed this misery Eternal, whereas his Lordship, in his mercy, makes it but Temporal.

I have now drawn out, and laid before you, some of the great outlines of this fa-

(<sup>k</sup>) St. *Austin* broached Doctrines very unworthy of the Supreme All-perfect Being. Is it necessary to quote any other, than this, that God created numbers of Men for no purpose but to damn them? But let us say, blasphemat: and let us not impute such cruel injustice to the All-perfect Being. Vol. III. p. 336.



mous *First Philosophy*. The unequal distribution of good and evil was, if you remember, the point we set out with, and the foundation we laid for a Future State. <sup>(1)</sup> This his Lordship cavilled at, but durst not deny, because it is a Fact: and though an able writer, like his Lordship, might easily dress up an Hypothesis in such a manner, as to deceive undiscerning readers, yet Facts are stubborn things, and will not be so managed. But, as a Future State would not unavoidably follow from this Fact, unless God were a just and good being, his Lordship then endeavored to shew, that God is neither just nor good, that is, according to our ideas of justice and goodness: which last clause was added merely to screen the blasphemy and impiety of the Position; for, in reality, it amounts to exactly the same, as if he had affirmed, that God was neither just nor good at all. His Lord-

(1) This was done merely to observe some little method with his Lordship, or else the unequal distribution of things is by no means the *sole* foundation of a Future State. We are able, from our knowledge of God's Moral Attributes, to ascertain and establish his Moral Government of the World: and from hence we collect, that he will *punish the wicked* in a life to come, whereas the unequal distribution of things only proves, that he will *reward the good*.

Lordship seemed at length to have thought so himself: he grew distrustful, and did not care to rest his cause even here: and therefore, after a tedious attempt to prove, that Justice and Goodness in God are *different* from Justice and Goodness in Man, he affirms, that a Future State would not follow from this unequal distribution, even though they were the *same*; because God was not obliged to make Man a happy Creature, but might, consistently with both these Attributes, suffer him to be undeservedly miserable. And if, lastly, you enquire into the grounds of this strange supposition, his Lordship flies to other Systems to furnish himself with Reasons; which, you will say, was very wisely done, for most certainly there are none to be collected from this. Thus, you have seen, to what miserable shifts this unhappy Philosopher was driven: how, to avoid the horrors of a Future State, he retreated from one Hypothesis into another, till at last he was forced to quit this System of Beings, and to *soar as far, and as high, as imagination could carry him*; from whence he descended again, armed with new Systems and argu-



*ments a Priori, which clashed with the Phenomena.* (<sup>m</sup>)

The great design of his Lordship, in these Philosophical lucubrations, was to *vindicate the cause of God and Religion*. It was this cause, as he tells us, which moved him to *engage in abstract philosophical reasonings*, when life was far advanced; (<sup>n</sup>) and, in short, he hardly wished to live for any other purpose. How he vindicated the *cause of God*, you have heard already: and how he vindicates *that of Religion*, by this time, I suppose, you may have but little curiosity to hear. For you have seen the very foundations of it utterly subverted, the great functions of it treated as fantastic and imaginary, and the whole of it reduced to the simple naked existence of *One Eternal Reason*. (<sup>o</sup>) I will not descend therefore into any detail about it, for fear of tiring you as well as myself, but only spend a word or two, just to let you see, what his Lordship

(<sup>m</sup>) Vol. III. p. 327.

(<sup>n</sup>) Vol. III. p. 183.

(<sup>o</sup>) His Lordship affirms this single Article to be sufficient. *A First Cause of all things*, says he, *is the God of Natural Theology: and as the whole system of the Universe bears testimony to this great truth, so the whole system of Natural Religion rests upon it, and requires no broader foundation.* Vol. V. p. 316.

ship means, when he talks of Religion ; or else you may reasonably suspect, that he has no meaning at all.

His Lordship allows then, that there is really such a thing, as *a Law of Nature or Natural Religion* ; that this Law is *collected by human Reason from the essential differences of things in our System* ; that *a knowledge of these essential differences leads to a knowledge of the Morality of actions* ; that *the practice of Morality therefore is imposed and enjoined by the constitution of the System, as by a Law* ; and that, *when it is thus imposed and enjoined, the Will of Man must be determined as effectually, and obliged as strongly to it, as it can be determined and obliged by the most powerful principle of human Nature.* <sup>(P)</sup> This, though repeated, as his Lordship's way is, in several parts of his Works, <sup>(Q)</sup> and treated in a confused and inaccurate manner, is however the Sum of all he comprises under *Natural Religion*.

*Hobbes*, you know, has been called an Atheist for asserting all actions to be in themselves indifferent, till the Civil Magistrate had made a difference between them, by commanding some, and by forbidding

<sup>(P)</sup> Vol. IV. p. 282—289.

<sup>(Q)</sup> Vol. V. p. 46, &c. 196:



ding others. His Lordship himself blames him upon this very account, *because this, says he, is to put the Supreme Being out of the Case entirely, and to ascribe no legislative power, or no exercise of it to him*: whereas his Lordship not only contends for the essential differences of things, and a Law of Nature arising from these differences, but declares likewise this Law to be a *Law in a strict and proper sense, a positive Law of God, enacted as truly by the Divine Will, and promulgated as truly by the Divine Authority, in his Works, as it would have been in his Word, if he had spoke to his Creatures.* (¹) But as wide as this difference may seem between his Lordship and *Hobbes*, it is, to all the real purposes for which it was made, in truth, nothing at all. *Hobbes* made all actions *indifferent*, and left no certain Rule for Man to conform to: his Lordship allows the *differences*, and insists upon the Rule. It is true, he does so; but then, by excluding God's Moral Government of the world, and supposing Man accountable to none but himself, he *puts the Supreme Being, and all legislative power* belonging to him, as entirely out of the Case, as *Hobbes* had

(¹) Vol. V. p. 86, 87. Vol. IV. p. 285, 6.

had done before him: and thus, though he does not make the Rule indifferent, he makes it in a manner indifferent, whether we conform ourselves to it, or not.

But his Lordship insists upon *the differences of things*, and upon the *Rule* arising from them: which *Rule* he affirms to be *imposed and enjoined by the constitution of the System, as by a Law*, and is, he says, sufficient, or nothing is, to *oblige and determine the will* of an Intelligent and Rational creature, like Man. *Imposed and enjoined, as by a Law?* Surely this can not be said in any proper sense; for what is a Law without its sanctions? <sup>(s)</sup> The *differences*, it is true, con-

(s) His Lordship felt the absurdity of this, and therefore says, that *this Law of Nature has its sanctions in the Theistical System, exclusive of Moral Government: because it assumes, that the General happiness or misery of mankind depends upon the observation of this Law.* But this was only said for form's sake, and is, in his Sense, no Sanction at all; for, you see, he makes this *happiness or misery General, and regarding men only as collective bodies or members of Society, and not as Individuals.* Vol. IV. p. 287, 8. *National Virtue and National Vice*, says he, *have always produced National happiness and National misery, and are, by consequence, the great sanctions of the Law of Nature.* Vol. V. p. 472. And thus though he talks elsewhere of *all men sinning against the order of Nature more or less, and of their suffering more or less by the uni-*  
form



continue what they were, even though God's Moral Government be excluded: but then they can be considered only as Natural, and not as Moral, *differences*. As such however, they would be sufficient to *oblige and determine the will of Man*, if Man was made up of nothing but *Intelligence and Reason*. But, alas! there are other Ingredients in his Composition, such as Instinct, Appetite, and Passion, which are generally too hard for Reason, and which would make him deflect perpetually from this *Rule of Right*, without some stronger principle, founded in the Will of a Superior, to controul and restrain their force. When therefore his Lordship affirms, that *the differences of things*, considered merely as such, *must determine the Will of Man as effectually, and oblige it as strongly, as the most powerful principle of human Nature*, he affirms what is shocking to both Reason and Experience.

But the surest way of arriving at Truth in this and all other questions is to deduce it from the constitution of the System

*form or general course of it*, yet nothing hinders in his System, but that the *Sin* may lie at one door, and the *Sufferings* at another. Vol. V. p. 209.

stem before us. Contemplate, then, the frame and nature of Man, his situation and condition, in short, life and manners: and, now, tell me, if the *practice of Morality*, as secured as his Lordship thinks it, would not be rendered equally precarious and uncertain, either by supposing all actions naturally indifferent, or by supposing Man at liberty to consider them as such. In both cases he is free to create a *Rule* to himself; and, in the creation of this *Rule*, to follow, as Reason, if Reason prevails, or, if Reason does not prevail, which would generally happen, as Caprice, Opinion, or Fashion lead the way. From which I conclude, that the foundations of Morality, with regard to practice, are as effectually overturned by his Lordship, who denies God's Moral Government of the World, as they were by *Hobbes*, who denied the differences of actions; and that all, his Lordship says, about a *Law of Nature*, a *positive Law of God*, enacted by *Divine Will*, and promulgated by *Divine Authority*, is no better than jargon upon his Lordship's principles.

Upon the whole then you see, that the difference here between his Lordship and *Hobbes* is not a whit more real, than it was



between his Lordship and *Epicurus* above. For though his Lordship confesses the existence of *One Eternal Reason* against *Epicurus*, as well as the *differences of actions* against *Hobbes*, yet he hath, as effectually and virtually denied them, as they have: *that is*, Religion and Morality suffer exactly the same from his Lordship, who confesses, as they suffered from *Epicurus* and *Hobbes*, who denied them. In the mean time, though I am inclined to believe, that his Lordship might differ, in real sentiment, from *Epicurus*, yet I am not so sure, that he differed from *Hobbes*. I will not affirm, but I suspect very strongly, that his Lordship was not so perfectly convinced of this natural *difference of actions*, as he would seem to be; but that he considered them in much the same *indifferent* arbitrary light, as *Hobbes* himself had considered them. My Suspicions are grounded upon the two following Reasons.

In the first place, his Lordship, you know, has absolutely declared against General Notions; and in regard to Morality, which is the point we are now upon, he has delivered himself, if you remember, in these very terms: That though men *frame*  
*ideas*

*ideas or notions of such particular actions or instances of behaviour, as they term just or unjust, yet they neither do nor can frame any ideas of Moral or Immoral in general; no, nor any general idea of these particular kinds, just and unjust.* (†) Now if this be really so, it should seem, as if there was no standard of Moral perfection, subsisting in Nature; no general Rule or Test, by which the Morality of actions could be determined; and, consequently, no absolute Fitness or Unfitness of things. Might not *Goodness* then, as his Lordship says, be considered as a *Mode*; one thing at one time and place, another thing at another time and place; one thing at Geneva, another thing at Rome; one thing in the North of Germany, another thing at London? (‡) and might not all other perfections and imperfections in Morality be thus considered?

In the next place, it is remarkable, that his Lordship makes one of the great Sanctions of Morality, and that too the only sanction, which his Philosophy allows it, to be the Power and Authority of the Civil Magistrate. He calls *Civil Magistrates, the*

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Vice-

(†) Vol. III. p. 432.

(‡) Vol. V. p. 431.



*Vicegerents of Providence ; (w) ordained for the punishment of Individuals. Individuals, he says, are the objects of human justice ; Societies of Men, of Divine justice. Individuals are deterred from Immorality by various punishments, which human justice inflicts ; but, when the immorality of Individuals becomes that of a whole Society, then the judgments of God follow. (x)* Here it is evident, that his Lordship, as well as *Hobbes*, supposes the practice of Morality to have no security, but what it derives from the Power of the Magistrate. But, you will say, though the care of Morality be committed to the Magistrate, it doth not follow, that the Magistrate can determine what Morality is, or fix those relations and fitnesses of things, by which it is determined. Why no, it doth not strictly and logically follow ; but this I think, and I will leave you to consider on it, that when the Civil Magistrate is once agreed upon to be the sole Protector or Guardian of Morality, (y) he will presently

(w) *Hobbes* calls them *God's Lieutenants* all through his Works.

(x) Vol. V. p. 494, 472, 481, 495.

(y) I say, *sole Protector or Guardian* ; for his Lordship allows neither a Providence, nor a Future State, nor even a Moral Sense.

sently become the Interpreter of it too : Reason and Private Judgment will gradually be subjected to the power and authority of this Leviathan ; and there will be as many *Moralities* in the world, as there may happen to be Civil Magistrates. So that, in short, his Lordship and *Hobbes*, however they may differ in Words, or, it may be, in Theory, come exactly to the same in Practice ; and if *Hobbes* would make all actions indifferent by Nature, his Lordship would make them so by Will.

You may have observed, in the course of these remarks, that I have frequently placed *Hobbes* and his Lordship together : and my view in this was to let you see, how great the likeness is between these two Philosophers. His Lordship indeed expressly disowns being *a disciple of Hobbes's* ; but for my part, I discern very plainly, that the main principles of his System are taken from this Philosopher ; and I am far from thinking him the Original, he has affected to be thought. His Lordship, being a man of Genius, has thrown some things into new lights ; disguised others so, that they can hardly be known again. He has added, transposed, altered, omitted, with all  
that



that kind of artifice, which writers generally use, when they steal from one another. But the principles in both Systems are evidently the same ; and the tendency of them both to destroy Morality and Religion.

The greatest difference between them, which I am able to discover, is, that *Hobbes* always affected to pay a regard to Religion, whereas his Lordship pays none, and even professes to pay none. He every where represents it, as an Imposture from the beginning ; declares it to be pernicious to Civil Society, and destructive of all Peace ; and thinks, it would be better wholly to abolish it. *There seem to be but two ways*, he says, *to keep up a sense of it in the minds of Men : to strike the senses frequently by public and solemn acts of religious worship, and to heat the brain by notions of an inward operation of the Spirit. One of these leads to Superstition ; the other to Enthusiam. Superstition is folly ; Enthusiam is madness. It is good to be on our guard against Both.* (2)

Thus his Lordship vindicates the cause of Religion, in the manner he vindicated the cause of God : that is, by banishing both God and Religion entirely from the World, and  
by

(2) Vol. IV. p. 310, 311.

by substituting as dark, as folorn, and uncomfortable a System of Naturalism, as ever possessed the brain of the most befotted Atheist. Such a system, his Lordship must easily have seen, could never belong to Man, if he had not entertained different notions of human Nature from almost all, who ever thought about it. But different notions he did entertain; and these notions misled him. He supposed Man to *hold a very low rank in the Intellectual System; lower, than his Pride has suffered him to imagine.* (\*) *Man, says he, is not so properly a Being superior to the whole animal kind, as a superior species of the same kind.* (b) Mr. Pope left a *partition* between *Sense* and *Intellect*, which, it is true, he called a *thin* one: (c) but his Lordship has taken it entirely away; makes *Intellect* in Man and  
Sense

(\*) Vol. III. p. 328.

(b) Vol. V. p. 375. — *The boasted power of framing abstract notions, that is, of aspiring to Thought distinct from Sense, will be found to be so far from shewing the great force and extent of human Intellect, and from raising Man up to Divinity, that it will shew, on the contrary, how weak and how confined this Intellect is, and sink him down into that animality, above which he affects so vainly to rise.* Vol. III. p. 417.

(c) Essay on Man. B. I. 226.



Sense in Beast, to be just the same; and that Man is no otherwise superior to Beast, than as one Beast is superior to another.

It was upon this foundation, that his Lordship philosophised: and hence, resolved to *humble Man's Pride*, and to restrain him to *that animality, above which he affects so vainly to rise*, his Lordship rebukes us everlastingly for *soaring too high*, for endeavouring to leap the bounds of humanity; which, according to him, we always do, whenever we consider ourselves as improveable creatures, and make any Extraordinary attempts to cultivate our faculties. He declares all such attempts to be *vain Curiosity and bold Presumption, which render us dogmatical in the midst of Ignorance, and often sceptical in the midst of Knowledge*: for, says he, *the human Intellect is rather a rank than a fertile soil, and is apt to shoot up Tares and Weeds with too much culture.* (d) Nay, he is persuaded, that Men grow not only more foolish by such cultivation, but likewise more vitious; since it is notorious, that *more innocence has prevailed in ignorant Nations,*

(d) *Let your Satire chastise and humble that pride, which is the fruitful parent of their vain curiosity, and bold presumption, &c. Vol. III. p. 312. 409.*

*Nations, than among those, who have been improved in learning and civility. (°)*

This *Pride* in Man, which has exalted him thus above the Brute Creation, is so offensive to his Lordship, that he is even angry at our manner of conducting the necessary offices of Humanity, to which we are directed by Reason and Instinct, because he supposes it to have begun from hence. *A great deal of dull pains*, he says, *has been taken to enquire into the nature of Shame, and to discover the motives of that Modesty, with which almost all Mankind, even the most savage, conceal the parts, and remove out of sight to perform the act, of generation. But these same parts*, he observes, *are destined likewise to uses, that are offensive to our Senses; and they shew, by the necessity they are of to our being in one destination, and to the propagation of our Species in another, a certain mortifying identity of Nature with the*

(°) Vol. V. p. 294. — It would be endless to transcribe all those passages, where his Lordship decries learning and the arts of Culture. And indeed a System of Naturalism; to be consistent with itself, must necessarily suppose all Cultivation and Improvement of the Mind to be not only impertinent, but even pernicious; as tending to disturb that groveling order of Things, which such a System requires.



vilest of the animal kind. From whence he concludes, that *the latent principle of this Shame or Modesty is nothing more than a vanity inherent in our Nature, derived from an opinion of excellence and dignity; which makes us fond of shewing, wherever we can shew it, how superior we are to other animals, and of hiding, wherever we can hide it, how much we participate of the same nature.* (f) So that, according to this polite and all-accomplished Philosopher, Man, to be truly humble, and to deport himself suitably to his proper rank of Being, should strip himself naked; turn out abroad among his fellow-animals, the Brutes; and follow the impulses of Nature as promiscuously, and with as little regard to time and place, as they do. You may have known Men to affect humility by seeking low company; but you never knew any thing so humble as this.

I have often wondered, from whence his Lordship's friend *Swift* took his image of human Nature, as it is pictured under the character of *Gulliver's Yahoos*. Indeed I have since thought, that he might possibly have been vouchsafed an insight into  
his

(f) Vol. V. p. 173, 174.

his Lordship's *First Philosophy* ; if this Philosophy was then in being. But perhaps, instead of supposing *Swift* to have borrowed from his Lordship, or his Lordship to have borrowed from *Swift*, we shall do better to suppose them Both Originals : Both to have derived their notions from one common principle ; from a certain rancour or malignity of temper, which, inflamed by ambition, and confirmed by disappointment, tempts Men to think and speak of their fellow-creatures all manner of evil. His Lordship indeed says, that *though the World hath used him as scurvily as most people, yet he never could find in his heart to be thoroughly angry with it.* (s) How *scurvily the World hath used his Lordship*, I do not presume to determine ; but that his Lordship was *thoroughly angry with it*, I am perfectly convinced from the proofs, he hath left of it. For it is to this *thorough anger*, I ascribe that dreadful system of Philosophy, of which you have seen an imperfect sketch above ; and which, under a pretext of humbling Man's pride, tends to degrade and vilify his Nature.

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(s) Pope's Works, Vol. IX. Lett. 14.



Before I conclude this account of his Lordship, I think myself bound in honour to declare, that though his main scheme be full of horror and detestation, yet there are many great and noble Truths delivered occasionally by him, and in that great and noble manner, which is peculiar to him. It would be extremely hard indeed, if in so Voluminous a Collection there should happen after all to be nothing that is true. His Lordship would certainly have then been the most unlucky Philosopher upon record: for, though I am quite of *Tully's* opinion, that there is no kind of nonsense, but has been taught and maintained by some Philosopher or other, yet surely there have been none, in whom one might not have found something that is good, some *faint glimmerings*, as *Plutarch* calls them, of *Truth and Reason*. <sup>(h)</sup>

But the greatest, and most important, and the most obvious Truth of all, to be learned from his Lordship, is of a Practical and Moral nature; and that is, to be strict and instant in the Government of our passions. No advantages from Nature, or situations

(h) Ἀμυδρὰς ἐμφάσεις τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ διαβάσεις. de II. et Osir. §. 9.

situations in Life, will avail us any thing, without great discipline and management of our own. *Cælum, non animum, mutant, qui trans mare currunt.* Hor. His Lordship is a memorable instance of this. He passed through various scenes in *Public* life: his passions were always predominant, and he confesses himself no Philosopher in any of them; <sup>(i)</sup> and if it is possible to discern the tree by its fruit, or the fountain by its stream, <sup>(k)</sup> his passions were equally predominant, and he was as little a Philosopher in *Private*.

Let us then govern our passions; I do not say, suppress, for that would be Unnatural, but only regulate and direct them, each to its proper object:

— *Sic, quodcumque minabitur Eurus  
Fluctibus Hesperijs, Venusinæ  
Plectentur sylvæ, te sospite.* — Hor.  
I am &c.

## P O S T-

<sup>(i)</sup> See his *Letter to Sir William Windham*, Vol. I. and his peice upon *The state of Parties at the Accession of King George the First*, Vol. III.

<sup>(k)</sup> See his *Philosophical Works* throughout, Vol. III. IV. V.



# POSTSCRIPT.

**T**HOUGH I have made no mention of Revelation, in what I have written above, yet you must not imagine, that his Lordship has not mentioned it. For what can you suppose this large Collection to consist of? The Principles of the *first Philosophy*, even allowing all that licence of repetition, which his Lordship indulges, would be comprised within the limits of a very few Sheets. But his Lordship is *Voluminous, and Voluminous only to destroy Volumes.* (1) He has *destroyed* Natural Religion, as you have seen, already, and, in that, has virtually *destroyed* Revealed: unless, as some think, a Superstructure may continue suspended, a real Castle in the air, after the foundation is entirely removed. But he has done more than virtually *destroyed*, he has *destroyed* it directly; *that is*, by a long series of open and barefaced argumentation against it. And as all human literature has been successfully employed in its Defence, so he has likewise *destroyed* all human literature. This, you will say, is *destroying Volumes* with a vengeance.

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(1) Pope's Works, Vol. IX. Lett. 73.

I will not detain you a moment upon the subject of Revelation ; his Lordship being, least of all, an Original here. He is, in truth, notwithstanding all his Genius, a mere common-placer, whenever he meddles with it ; for he has advanced no one thing against it, but what has been advanced by others before him. He has indeed advanced every thing, which others have advanced ; and in this I take the great merit of his Lordship's Labours to consist. Infidelity is here digested into a kind of Code or Pandect, where you may see at one view all, that has ever been urged against Revealed Religion, collected out of a vast number of various and jarring writers, from *Celsus* down to Mr. *Chubb* : for even the poor endeavors of this honest man have not been below his Lordship's Notice.

It is, I remember, the Observation of an Ancient, that, *if a man will resist the most evident truths, it will not be an easy matter to find arguments to persuade him : which however, says he, must not be imputed to any strength in him, or to any weakness in his teacher, but only to a certain numbness of Understanding, which keeps men insensible to*



the clearest conviction. (m) Whether it be this kind of *numbness*, or what it is, that withholds so many among us from submitting to the Gospel, is impossible to determine : but it is very certain, that the evidences of it have been all laid before them again and again, and that answers have been given to their most plausible objections. Upon which account I am tempted to believe, that those good men, who have written against his Lordship in behalf of Revelation, have done it, rather to obviate the influence of his Authority, than to controul the strength of his Arguments.

In the mean time his Lordship, I am firmly persuaded, would not have concerned himself thus with Revelation, but for the opportunities it gave him, and the pleasure it afforded him, of loading the Clergy with unmerciful abuse. The Antipathy, he bore to this Order of men, is not to be conceived : it suffered him to make no distinction at all : but those among them, who have been the sincerest advocates for Truth  
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(m) \*Αν τις ἐνίστηται πρὸς τὰ ἄγρια ἐκφαίνῃ, πρὸς τούτοις ἐράδιον ἐστὶν εὐρεῖν λόγον, δι' ᾧ μεταπέσει τις αὐτον. τῆτο δ' ἔτε παρὰ τὴν ἐκείνη γίνεται δύναμις, ἔτε πέρα τὴν τῷ διδάσκοντι ἀδείαν. ἀλλ' ὅταν ἀπαχθεὶς ἀπολιθωθῇ, &c. Arrian. Epiet. p. 95.

and Liberty, have received as little quarter from his Lordship, as those, who have been the most in confederacy against them. Speaking of the late Dr. Clarke, he calls him *a sophist, and one, who sought nothing more, than to maintain the honor of the Gown.* He describes him as a Man of *magisterial pride and overbearing insolence*; as a *boaster, a bully, who looks fierce, and talks big*; in short, as an *intolerant persecuting Divine.* (<sup>n</sup>) Would not one imagine from this portrait, that Clarke had been some political Churchman; some crafty designing Priest, who would have been as ready to defend Mahomet, as he was to defend Jesus, if it had equally served his own ambitious views? that he was likewise a furious Inquisitor into other mens opinions, and the Tyrant and Oppressor of all, who did not think exactly with himself?

Speaking of the *Protestant Clergy* in general, he represents them as *still keeping up the trade of mysteries*; charges them with *aspiring to Extraordinary Spiritual powers*; and thinks, they would not be sorry to revive the *Superstitions of Popery.* (<sup>o</sup>) His Lord-

(<sup>n</sup>) Vol. V. p. 395, 314, 43, 293, 252.

(<sup>o</sup>) Vol. V. 449. Vol. III. p. 342, 337, 465.



ship would observe, that in proportion as the Church has abounded with Mystical doctrines and Supernatural Powers, so a Spirit of Domination has prevailed among her Clergy. The Observation, I believe, is just, and will be found to hold good in all ages of the Church: but if he would insinuate from hence, that the present Protestant Clergy want to *revive the superstitions of Popery*, or affect any scheme whatever of Hierarchical Power, sure never any thing was more unluckily observed. For it notorious, that the present Clergy have not only labored to remove all *mysteries* from the Church, and to confine them to the Scriptures, where they ought to be confined, but have likewise renounced those extraordinary powers, by which some of them have aspired to be *above* the rest of mankind. I am not speaking here of a few, whose disaffection to the Church might prompt them to spoil her, or make them glad to see her spoiled, of any of her privileges; but I am speaking of those, who are her known friends and well-wishers, and whose warm attachment to her interests has been long and highly applauded.

The

The present Bishop of *London*, in a very valuable Collection of *Sermons* lately published, delivers himself thus in relation to *Mysteries*. *Mysteries*, says he, *have been represented by Objectors, as Things inconceivable, and altogether irreconcilable to human Reason. But such Mysteries there are none in the Gospel of Christ. If Men, learned or unlearned, have run themselves into contradictions, by endeavoring to explain the mysteries of God, farther than he has explained them, be that to themselves: let not the Gospel be charged with their Errors and Mistakes.—All the secret purposes of Providence are, in the Sense of Scripture, Mysteries; as likewise all knowledge, which God has not revealed. Of such Mysteries are there many: but then they concern not us to enquire after; if they did, God would reveal them to us.* (P) Where this worthy Prelate is so far from *keeping up the trade of Mysteries*, as Lord Bolingbroke expresses it, that he declares *there are no such things*, in the Sense Infidels have objected to them: and as to *Mysteries in the other Sense*, which are as common to Natural, as they are to Revealed Religion, far from introducing them into the Church, and applying them to the purposes of Clerical Power, he

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condemns the vanity and presumption of Men, for meddling with them at all. <sup>(<sup>1</sup>)</sup>

The learned Dr. *Stebbing*, in an useful little Tract upon the Subject of Popery, had occasion to speak of that Power and Authority, which the Clergy derive from Christ, as *ordinary Ministers* of his Word: and, in regard to such, he declares, that *they are indeed separated to their Ministerial Function by Authority from Christ, who hath appointed divers Orders of Men in his Church: but they cannot declare what is the Law of Salvation, BY HIS AUTHORITY; for, they have not the SEAL of it, as the Apostles had. They may publish or preach the Law of Salvation, as Christ and his Apostles left it. But in this they stand in the Rank of INSTRUCTORS, not of AUTHORISED MESSENGERS. When Christ or his Apostles said, THIS DO, AND THOU SHALT LIVE; there were no more questions to be asked. Their Word was sufficient. But when an ordinary Minister of the Church tells me, THIS IS THE LAW OF SAL-*

<sup>(1)</sup> Nothing, says he, has proved more fatal to Religion, than the vain attempts of men to dive into the unrevealed mysteries of God, and to account for, upon the principles of human Reason, the things which proceed from the hidden wisdom of God. P. 136.

*SALVATION, he must be able to shew me that Law in his Bible, or I neither will nor ought to believe him. (¹)*

Such are the principles of our present Rulers, and of those, whose Authority is great among the Clergy: yet our enemies continue to insult us for *still keeping up the trade of Mysteries*, and for aspiring to *Powers, which were peculiar to the apostles*; (²) and, if their insinuations may be credited, the Priests are at work again, Church-Schemes are secretly forming against the liberties of the People, and a new reign of Craft and Superstition is coming on. But it is very certain, that all such insinuations are groundless and malicious. The Principles, on which a Spiritual Tyranny can be erected, must proceed from Ignorance; (³) as the Motives, to erect it, must proceed

(¹) *Instructions of a Parish Minister to his Parishioners, on the Subject of Popery. Part II. p. 20.*

(²) Lord Bolingbroke derides the ordinary Ministers of Christ, as if they pretended to be his Messengers, his Embassadors, his Plenipotentiaries. Vol. V. p. 488.

(³) *Ignorance*, I mean, of the Nature of Just and Lawful Government; for *This* the Clergy, if they are good Subjects as well as good Christians, will always contend



ceed from Immorality. But neither the one nor the other are Characteristicks of the Clergy of this age: far indeed otherwise; and even Mr. *Hume* himself, whom you will not easily suppose to be prejudiced in their favour, has yet the justice to acknowledge them *both Learned and Moral.* (<sup>u</sup>)

Upon the whole I take all this unlimited abuse of the Clergy, as well in his Lordship, as in meaner writers, to be nothing more at the bottom, than the tumultuous workings of Spleen or Faction. Splenetic and Factious Men must have some object to vent themselves upon; and if they had not a Church and its Clergy, they would of  
neces-

contend for, as the surest means of keeping out a Tyranny. For, were a dissolution of our Church-Establishment to commence, which some, I doubt, are foolish as well as wicked enough to wish, Things would then be with the Religionists in *England*, as they were formerly with the Philosophers in *Greece*. *Unaqueque Secta*, says *Lactantius*, *omnes alias evertit, ut se suaque confirmet.* Lib. III. c. 4. Every sect would strive to be uppermost, and to establish its own authority and power, upon the ruin of all the rest: which strife, after much tumult and confusion, would end in a confessed Tyranny; and a Tyranny of the worst kind, as being established by Conquest.

(<sup>u</sup>) *History of Great Britain.* Vol. I. p. 264.

neceſſity be driven to a State and its Miniſters. We ſhould then hear them clamoring for Liberty, as they now do for Truth: though they have as much of Both, as any People in the World; and, God knows, a great deal more, than they make a good uſe of. If ever Slavery and Error oppreſs theſe Realms again, it will not, I'll venture to ſay, be owing to the policy of a Clergy; for no Policy can prevail againſt Truth and Liberty, while Truth and Liberty are enjoyed, as they ſhould be. (w) But when Men abuſe theſe invaluable bleſſings; when, under the notion of Truth, they riot forth into all the vanities of wild imagination, (x) and, under the pretext of liberty, become ſo licentious, as to inſult the very Ordinances as well as Perſons of their Governors; — theſe, I ſay, muſt unavoidably, by a natural chain of conſequences, work the ruin of a Nation. No Government, how well ſoever conſtituted, can ſupport

(w) *That LIBERTY may prevail, and that LICENTIOUSNESS may be reſtrained, are Wiſhes, which ſhould always be joined together; ſays the eminently learned Mr. Fortin in his excellent Remarks upon Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory. Pref. p. XL.*

(x) Such *Vanities*, for inſtance, as thoſe of the *Methodiſts*, the *Hutchinſonians*, and the *Moravians*.



port itself long against such evils as these: its strength and vigour will gradually be consumed: and, instead of remaining the firm Guardian of Truth and Liberty, it must finally give way to the *fearful overflowings* of Ignorance and Oppression.

May the Inhabitants of *Great Britain* distinguish Liberty from Licentiousness! May they distinguish Truth from Enthusiastic, and all other Madness! May they embrace the true interest of their Country, while they have it in their power to support it! May they feel the Blessings they enjoy, before they feel them lost! These are My Wishes: I know, they are Yours. And it is for this, and for nothing more than this, that I am so much

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—— One cannot speak with patience of this,  
and all such writers, whose constant practice it is,  
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where Reasons are required; to bear down Fact and  
Experience with mere Hypothesis and System; and,  
upon the whole, instead of adorning, to deface the na-  
tural beauty of Truth, with what has only the appear-  
ance of it.—I look upon such men as a real misfortune  
to the public, as doing incredible mischief among the  
undiscerning multitude, who admire them for being  
Scholars, as men reverence most what they least un-  
derstand; and are apt therefore to consider every  
thing which they advance, as the genuine dictates of  
sound reason and pure religion, though in the mean  
time perhaps it bears no resemblance to either. *Curf.*  
*Animadv.* page II.

CUR-



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sieged, the true way of defending it is, not to en-  
large the compass of its fortifications, and make more  
help necessary to its defence, than it can readily  
furnish; but, like skilful engineers, to demolish its  
weak outworks, that serve only for shelter and lodg-  
ment to the enemy, whence to batter it the more  
effectually, and draw it within the compass of its  
firm and natural entrenchments, which will be found  
in the end impregnable. *Defence of a Letter to Dr.*  
*Waterland, page 3.*

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