

# The Phoenix :

OR, A

# REVIVAL

OF

*Scarce and Valuable Pieces*

From the Remotest Antiquity  
down to the Present Times.

B E I N G

A COLLECTION of Manuscripts and  
Printed Tracts, no where to be found but  
in the Closets of the Curious.

By a Gentleman who has made it his Business to  
search after such Pieces for Twenty Years past.

*All Men receive their Birth from other things,  
But from Himself the PHENIX only springs ;  
From his own Cinders, balm'd in costly Spices,  
A Second PHENIX like the First arises :  
O happy thine own Heir ! What ruins all,  
Adds Strength to thee, restor'd by Funeral.*

Dryden.

LONDON, Printed for J. Morphew near Stationers Hall.  
M. DCC. VII.

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# P R E F A C E

## By the Undertakers.

**T**H E Nature and Extent of this Design being explain'd sufficiently in the Title-Page, it's needless to insist on it here; and the Usefulness of the Work being obvious to every Intelligent Reader, it's equally needless to enlarge upon it.

A Design partly of the same nature, was begun in *Holland* by the Learned and Industrious Mr. *Le Clerc* in 1703. which has met with such Approbation, that it is still continu'd and publish'd there in *French*, in a small Volume in 12°. once in half a year, under the Title of *Bibliothèque Choisie*, i. e. *The Select Library*. But whereas that Author mixes new Books as they come out, with those of an older date, our Design is only to give such as are antient or scarce; not by way of Abridgment as he does (except they be very bulky) but the Pieces themselves: And because many don't understand *French*, we shall from time to time insert such of Mr. *Le Clerc's* Extracts as are Valuable and suite our Design, when we can't meet with the Books. But for those newly publish'd, either abroad or at home, we leave them to the *Works of the Learned*, because we would not interfere with the Proprietors of that useful Book. And tho we shall take all possible care to invade no Man's Property,

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yet we shall be ready, if any such thing happens, to give all reasonable Satisfaction, upon a reference to Indifferent Persons.

A Work of this nature requires Impartiality; and as we mix nothing of our own Judgment in it, no man has reason to be offended that we don't make the Humour of any Party a Rule for our Collection; since in this matter we have no regard to our own Sentiments, which is the surest Test of Impartiality.

The Gentleman who laid the Groundwork of this Design, has look'd over all the late Mr. *Miller's* curious Collection of Pamphlets; and since Dr. *Seaman's* Auction, which was the first, he has attended most that have been in *London*; where he purchas'd such curious Pieces as he thought fit for his purpose: besides what he has had from his particular Friends, and other Persons who were willing to promote this Undertaking. And that nothing may be wanting to make it compleat, such Gentlemen as have any thing Scarce and Curious to impart, and will be pleas'd to send it, directed for the Undertakers of the *Phenix*, to be left at *Fellows's* Coffee-House in *Aldersgate-street*, or give notice where they may be attended, we shall be ready to wait upon them, and hear their Proposals. In the mean time 'tis thought fit, to give this publick notice, That we are already Masters of a Valuable Collection for several Volumes, and shall go with all possible speed upon another, if this meet with a favourable Reception; which we can scarce doubt of, since this is the only method for preserving and making publick such Valuable Pieces, as would otherwise be utterly lost, or at least confin'd to the Closets of the Curious: Whereas they may at one time or other be useful and instructive to Men of all Ranks and Facultys, and by consequence answer the End of the first Publishers or Composers.

The

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# Phoenix I.

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## *A Letter of Resolution* concerning **ORIGEN** and *the chief of his Opinions.*

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*Written to the Learned and most Ingenious*  
*C. L. Esq; and by him publish'd.*

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### To the READER.

**I**N conformity to Custom, which sends few Books into the World, be they never so mean, without some fair bespeaking of the Reader, or giving him an account of the Author or his Work, it was thought convenient that some little thing in that kind shou'd be prefix'd to these few Sheets, and that I shou'd do it, who may reasonably be presum'd to have a greater Knowledge and Interest in this Affair than any other. Know therefore, Reader, that some while ago, upon a certain Occasion, which would be to no purpose here to mention, there was begot in me a Curiosity to know the Opinions of that pious Father of the Church, the learned Origen: and being neither by natural Temper, nor the way of my Studies, nor condition of Life, either so punctually inform'd what was in general Esteem accounted Orthodox, or much aw'd by the word; I suffer'd that Curiosity to grow so great in me, that I was even afflicted till it was satisfy'd.

## To the Reader.

But having neither Time enough to spare from my own secular Employments, nor Philosophy enough to pierce into those recondite Mysteries, I quickly perceiv'd I could not by my own Industry and Meditation come to the end of my Desires. I therefore wrote unto a Friend of mine, competently well enabled with those Advantages of Leisure and metaphysical Knowledg, conjuring him, by our long Acquaintance and Friendship, to give himself the Trouble of sending me an account of some Queries I there put to him, tending to my Contentment and Satisfaction in this Particular. He, by good hap, having just before finish'd a Treatise, which may one day see the Light to the benefit of the Church, and having nothing new in the Forge, pity'd my Anxiety, and promis'd to do something for the Ease of my Mind, and accordingly shortly after did me the Honour to send me the following Papers. Thou may'st easily imagine I receiv'd so obliging a Present with all due Resentment, and entertain'd the fair Conceptions in it with extraordinary Emotion of Spirit: For really several Things before lay so cross and scurvily in my Soul, that I took no pleasure to look into it, nay I was sensibly pain'd and prick'd when I had the Hardiness so to do: But I quickly felt all those Unevennesses begin to wear away, and every thing to range it self in its right Place and Order, Principles and Conclusions fairly accorded, and a lasting Peace and Calm (for so I boldly presag'd) possess'd me throughout. Having receiv'd so great a Benefit my self, and conjecturing that in this inquisitive Age, the Minds of other Men, as well as mine, might need, and would joyfully receive Relief by the same means which ministr'd to my Tranquillity, and having by Trial aloof off, upon some capable Persons, found that my Conjecture was real, I thought I should be envious if I did not endeavour to obtain leave of my Friend to make his Papers publick. Whereupon, after some time, I resolv'd to give him a Visit at his Hermitage (as he is wont to call the Place of his Retirement) for the effecting of my purpose. Where amongst many learned and pleasant Entertainments, the clear Witness of a benign Nature, an innocent Conscience, and satisfy'd Understanding, I mov'd my Design unto him. He with an amaz'd Look, ask'd me what I meant? I plainly told him that I meant to do what was in me, that others might receive that Ease and Benefit which I my self had felt by his Labour; for others there were in the World, I doubted not, in the same Condition I was then in, when I requested his Assistance; and in exchange for his Question, I ask'd him, why he shou'd be so unwilling to it as his Looks shew'd him to be? To which, after some little Recollection, The Questions discuss'd in those inconsiderable Papers you talk of (reply'd he) are great and bold, and you mistake the World if you imagine they will find an equal Hearing; but are certainly much out in your account, if you think Men will be convinc'd of their Truth by so mean an handling, as mine is. For tho I thought that wou'd be enough to entertain your Curiosity a little till the Fit was over, and to offer some Hints to your more deliberate Meditations;

*Meditations; yet I did not then while I was scribbling of them, much less now in my cooler Thoughts, conceive them convictive to any who were not in a very forward Preparation to the Belief of them already. For neither are the Foundations of my Reasonings laid low enough, nor firmly settled (being I was to follow Origen rather than my own Invention) nor is the Order of my Conceptions upon any of the Opinions such as it ought to be: for I remember very well upon my reading the Papers over after I had finish'd them, I discern'd some things in the entrance of a Question or an Argument, which by the right Laws of Discourse ought to have come behind; and others I saw were cast into the close of it, which wou'd have done better service more forwardly plac'd. To tell you the Truth, I did not scrupulously set my self any method, but took all Thoughts that came, and as they came (if homogeneous to the whole) and there upon the spot fetter'd them in Words, lest they might not have been at hand when I needed them, nor I been able to recal such fugitive Things when their Turn came. My Answers to Objections have the same Carelesness in them, no applying this or that to such or such a Proposition, but a diffuse speaking to the whole; being loth, as it shou'd seem, to lose any good Words that came in my Mind, which must needs render my Answer weak and obscure to strict Logical Readers. Many of my Interpretations of Scripture are rather extravagant or pleasant, than the serious Confirmations of a weighty Cause, and which affect to make the Holy Penmen of Sacred Writ speak Notions where in all likelihood they never meant it. I am also much too short in most of the Points debated: Which Faults, tho they be pardonable in a private Letter to a familiar Friend, will be sottish and ridiculous in a publish'd Piece. Do you then impartially judg whether so short a Discourse, full of so many and such monstrous Defects, pretending the Defence of high and rar'd Mysteries against strong inveterate Prejudices, be not a thing rather to be laugh'd at, than receiv'd as useful to any better Purpose. To this I smilingly reply'd, that he might be as bold as he pleas'd with his own; yet if he wou'd that I shou'd be of his Mind for the present, and acknowledg with him these Faults (as he call'd them) I was content, upon condition that he wou'd take his Papers back, and mend them in all the Particulars he was pleas'd to say they were defective in, and then give me that leave which I then came to beg. This I press'd him to with all earnestness possible, hoping that either he wou'd do it, and so I might receive his second and (as the Proverb says) better Cogitations, whose first pleas'd me so much; or else that he wou'd be forc'd out of Civility to grant my first Request, if he was resolv'd to deny the second. And it fell out according to my Hope; for being obstinately set against all Review, partly because he was now more seriously employ'd, partly because that wou'd look like an Approbation of Origen's Opinions, he at last unwillingly permitted me to do what I wou'd with what I had. Which I here offer to thy candid Acceptance, being confi-*



*dent thou wilt not be offended with any thing in it, if thou be'st of my Humour, to think no Opinion formidable which does Honour to God, renders him most amiable to Men, and a sure Object of our Faith and Hope, which justifies the Ways of his Providence, and reconciles them with his most precious Attributes, Equity and Benignity. Farewel.*

C. L.

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*A Letter of Resolution concerning* ORIGEN  
*and the chief of his Opinions.*

S I R,

**I**F the partial Judgment which your Friendship makes of me, and the heat of your commendable Curiosity would suffer you equally and coolly to consider the Undertaker and his Work; you would, out of Pity to me, and Honour to the great Personage you enquire of, expect no other Letter from me at this time than one of humble Thanks, for releasing me from the Burden your Commands had laid upon me; For verily I much need your Pity and Relief, who am combated with two mighty contrary Passions; the one an infinite Desire to do the Father Right, the other as great a Despair of doing it, from the most certain Consciousness of my own Inability. And tho by my undertaking of it I shall reap this Fruit of having given you an evidence of what Authority your Commands are with me, and how ready I am in the greatest Disadvantages to obey them; yet I shall neither satisfy you nor my self in the Performance, and possibly be injurious to his venerable Name, in adding more Envy to his Opinions thro my unskilful Representation of them. But to be bold with you upon the warrant of our Friendship, I think you are not at present capable of any equitable consideration as to this Particular; and therefore I do resolve to bear the Necessity, as well as I may, hoping it will prove a Benefit to me, and Security for the future: for certainly you will not be very forward to impose a second Task of this nature upon me, who have so ill acquitted my self in the first. And to shew you how little Power I have over my own Inclinations and Actions, where you are pleas'd to direct them, I shall, even contrary to my own Judgment, omit nothing of the Method you have set me, but give you an Account, such as it will be, of all the Particulars you desire to know, and according to the Order they are in in your Letter; tho otherwise, being left free, I should certainly have wav'd the first

of them, and possibly the second, Five Things then you enquire of:

1. What Opinion the Antients had of the Worth, Spirit and Temper of his Person.
2. What they thought of his Doctrine.
3. What his *Dogmata* are.
4. By what Arguments he asserted them.
5. By what his Adversaries endeavour'd to confute them, and how I imagine an *Origenist* would answer to their Objections.

**I**N answer to the first, he pleas'd to receive this Adversifement in the first place, which may serve to arm you against the Entertainment of a too forward Prejudice against him. Those that are skill'd and well-read in the antient Writers of the Church, tell us, that there are very few Records left of him, but such as must be had out of those Writings which were on purpose compos'd to refute his Opinions; or at least out of such as collect and amass together his Opinions without their Confutation, with design to bid Men beware of them and detest them. Wherefore it is not to be wondred at, if the Heat of Disputation, or Zeal for what they were perswaded was the Truth, make them sometimes, in so pardonable a Passion, speak something more harshly and tartly of his Person and Opinions, whom they imagin'd the Adversary and Subverter of it. But to the business: 'Tis laid to his Charge that he was carry'd away with too curious an Endeavour of letting no part of Holy Scriptures, how hard soever, go unexplain'd, which prov'd his Ruin: That he was very temerarious, and in his Interpretations said any thing carelessly what he pleas'd; that he was *κομπώδης καὶ δοκιῶσαι σοφός*, a Searcher of Things unsearchable, *ἐμβιβαστὴς τῶν ἔπιβραβίων*, who fill'd all the World with his Toys and Nugacity, a Fanatick, *ἑδελόσοφος*, a Caviller and Jeerer at the Simplicity of true Believers, one who thro his carnal Mind and Reasonings could not receive the Grace of the Spirit, an Unbeliever, and the greatest of Unbelievers, a pitiful vain-glorious Man, perverted by his great Skill in the Greek Learning. The Unpleasantness of the Argument tires me already, and my Reverence to the Censurers makes me abstain from their Names: But I shall recreate your Mind with his more advantageous Picture, which they drew for him in a direct View of him, without so oblique a Cast upon his Opinions. And here they represent him as one who, both in his Youth and afterwards, willingly and courageously suffer'd many Persecutions and much barbarous Usage for the Name of Christ, and the Holy

Doctrines of Faith, being many times drag'd thro the Streets of the City, reproachfully us'd and revil'd, enduring Tortures unsufferable, envy'd and hated by those in Power for his eximious Piety and Learning, who overthrew and confuted all the Heresies that were in the Church in his time; very well skill'd in the Natures and Properties of Animals and other natural things; who liv'd an Ascetick Life, and thro his excessive Strictness, spare Diet, and Abstinence from Animals, 'tis reported, ἡ δὲ δόξα αὐτῆ περὶ ἁπάντων whom none but the Ignorant and Unskilful can deny to have been the Master of the Churches after the Apostles, so well vers'd in the Holy Scriptures, that he had them all without book; and his Knowledg in them was so great, that even his Adversaries wish'd to have had it, tho with the Envy of his Name; whose continual Study Night and Day was to understand them, and to explain them to others; and innumerable Treatises of that kind he publish'd for the good of all Men, besides a multitude of other Writings, to the number of 6000 Volumes in all; who writ more than other Men can read: and all this Divine Knowledg he had in conjunction with the perfect understanding of the profoundest Mysteries of the best and noblest Sects of Philosophy, before whom *Plotinus* himself was asham'd to continue his Lecture, so much did he revere this holy and learned Father. And to be short, I refer you to the Encomium given him by *Vincentius Lirinensis*. This is a Draught of him from those who otherwise were not apt to favour him. And you in taking a view of it, cannot but clearly discover these two things, the Ingenuity and Integrity of those who were Enemies to his Doctrine, in that they did not, like the Disputers of After-ages, make all Men ignorant and impious who were not of their Mind; and the stupendious worth of *Origen*, which drew such fair Testimonies of his personal Perfections even from them, who thro their Dislike of his Opinions, could not possibly be his profess'd Encomiasts. And if I should add what Intimations I find of the Esteem had of him by such as did not disapprove his *Dogmata*, you would then say that he was little less than an Apostle; but because the witness of Friendship is so apt to be partial, and so less credible, I will wave it, and here make an end of the first Query.

THE second is, What they thought of his Doctrines?

They say his Heresy, tho entertain'd by the most eminent Christians, and such as profess'd a Monastick and Anchoritick Life and Poverty, yet was it πασῶν τῶν παλαιῶν μοχθηροῦσι. That his *Dogmata* concerning Faith and matters of higher

higher Speculation, are the most absurd of any that ever were before or after him, those only Opinions of other Sects excepted, which countenanc'd impure and filthy Practices: That his Doctrine of the Resurrection, beside the Nugacity of it, was indeed mere Unbelief; a deceitful Opinion, not maintain'd by Faith, but Syllogisms and Ratiocinations, subverting the Confession of our Faith, ἐκ ὧν κατὰ φύσιν ὑμῖν συμβαινόντων Madness, and Ignorance, and Blasphemy; a putative Resurrection, and only in Appearance, for he did only in Words confess that Article, but in Deed and in his Mind deny'd and subverted it. His Opinion concerning *Pre-existence*, and the happier State of the Soul before she was thrust down into these inferior parts of the World, they say, is *πρεπιμυδς κὶ τραυικολογία*, without Sense or Understanding, the Conceit of bad Men, Blasphemy and Stolidity: That the Author of it did imitate the Craft and Deceitfulness of the Devil, that old Serpent, who of old deceiv'd *Eve*, and still does the Minds of the Simple: That his Doctrine in general is absurd and pernicious, a Serpentine deadly Poison, which he vomited into the World to his own Destruction, and theirs who adhere to him. His Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, they say, is manifest Blasphemy, and he by it was the Father of *Arianism*, and the Root whence all other like Heresies sprang; so nearly symbolizing not only with *Arius*, but with *Eunomius* and *Manichæus* also, that they who have written against them have with the same Labour answer'd to his Impieties: An Enemy of God and the Church for his most hateful Opinions; and one professes, in the Word and Faith of a Christian, that his *Dogmata* are poisonous and contrary to Scripture. His Opinion concerning the happy Restitution of all Things, and the Liberation of the Punish'd, whether Men or Dæmons, is such, that they cannot tell whether they shou'd be griev'd or laugh at it. What hath been produc'd upon this second Inquiry, I think is sufficient, to let you see what Opinion some pious and learned Persons of the Church had of *Origen's* Doctrines. I cannot here, as in the former Query, oppose to this severer Censure one more favourable in his behalf, because the more antient Authors, I make use of in this whole matter, were profess'd Enemies to his *Dogmata*, and I have heard of no other extant which befriended them. Yet something you may gather from the first Testimony produc'd in this Particular, and add to it, that he hath not wanted such as have apologiz'd for him, and defended the Catholickness of his Doctrine; Men very eminent in the Church for Place and Dignity, and also for their learned Writings, some whereof are still extant, and in great esteem in the World. One of

them is by his Adversaries themselves confess'd to be Catho-  
 lick in the grand Heresy of all, to wit, that of the Holy  
 Trinity: A second was so good a Christian, as to confirm  
 the Truth of his Faith by Martyrdom. That I may not  
 add that some later Writers, but very learned Men, have  
 defended him too: for I know with some Men it will be ex-  
 ception enough against their Authority to say they are Mo-  
 dern; with others against their Reason to say, This Man  
 was a Philosopher, that a Papist, a third a Jesuit, the worst of  
 Papists; for the Holy Father hath found Defenders a-  
 mongst all these sorts of Men. But instead of such Testi-  
 monies of antient Writers, which do as much cry up the  
 Truth and Nobleness of his *Dogmata*, as those others I have  
 produc'd do reprove their Falseness and Contrariety to the  
 Faith of the Gospel: What if I should give you a short Hi-  
 story of their Quarrel against him and his Opinions? May  
 not this possibly somewhat lessen the Credit of their harder  
 Censure? I will be very brief in it, because I know you  
 would rather hear what his Opinions are, than see the Con-  
 tentions among the venerable Fathers of the Christian  
 Church. *Origen*, according to the Philosophicalness of his ex-  
 cellent Spirit, had asserted God to be purely incorporeal and  
 immense, and that it was an impious derogation to his most  
 perfect Essence to be limited by any form whatever, and  
 therefore not by human Shape; however the Scripture does  
 ascribe to him the several Parts of human Bodies. And this  
 he did with some Zeal and Earnestness, because some un-  
 learned Monks of *Egypt* had advanc'd the contrary Opinion,  
 for which they were call'd by him *Anthropomorphites*. Now  
 as it commonly happens, and as we see in the *Roman Church*,  
 that the same Orders constantly transmit the same Opinions  
 to all their Successors; so was it amongst these ignorant  
 Monks, for the same false Conceit was preserv'd and strenu-  
 ously maintain'd amongst them almost two hundred years af-  
 ter. At which time *Epiphanius*, one of that Profession, had  
 imbib'd the Error, or at least was not much averse from  
 it; for tho he was without doubt a very pious Man, yet it  
 is apparent enough that he had not much Learning, and  
 therefore was very obnoxious to that dull Hallucination:  
 for his Piety would make him very much revere the plain  
 Declarations of Scripture which countenance it, and his little  
 Learning could not rescue him from the Fallacy. But as  
 tenaciously as the Monks of his time kept their old *Mump-  
 sinus* which their Predecessors had taught them; so with no  
 less care did other more learned Christians retain the true  
 and more reasonable Doctrine of *Origen*. And it is no won-  
 der

For if there was much Contention amongst them, and many hard Words given, to the mutual provoking and inflaming one another. It happen'd about this time that *Theophilus* Bishop of *Antioch*, an *Origenist*, and one who had in publick Writings call'd *Epiphanius* an *Heresiarch*, had ordain'd one *Dioscorus*, an *Origenist* too, Bishop of *Hermopolis*, and committed to two of his Brothers the whole management of the Affairs of his own Church: but they being as pious as learned, did much dislike the Temper and Practices of *Theophilus*, who was a proud, revengeful, covetous, crafty and turbulent Man; and out of this disgust left him, and retir'd to their Monasteries again, from whence he had call'd them. He smelling out what it was that displeas'd them, instead of mending his Manners, was resolv'd to be reveng'd of them; and therefore besides his sending several Monkish *Anthropomorphites* into those Parts whereto they had retir'd, to kindle that Controversy afresh, to bring *Dioscorus* and his Brothers into what Danger and Envy he could, as holding the blasphemous Opinion of *Origen* (for so he impiously and against his Conscience call'd it) he also persecuted them by the arm'd force of Soldiers; so that they poor Men were constrain'd to save themselves by flying to *Constantinople*, where *St. Chrysostom* was Bishop. And tho' this holy and wise Prelate would not communicate with them till the whole Cause was heard and judg'd according to Ecclesiastical Form; yet the proud *Theophilus* having nothing in his Eye but Violence and Revenge, was resolv'd to be reveng'd on him too for giving shelter to his Enemies. And therefore, thro' his malicious Craft, he abus'd the simple and unwary Zeal of *Epiphanius*, and instigated him to call a Synod in his See for condemning the Books of *Origen*; signifying to him withal, that tho' he had formerly been of another Mind, yet now he had renounc'd that pernicious Doctrine, and was wholly come over to his Opinion. By this Device he knew he should be even with all his Enemies together, who all admir'd and reverenc'd the Name and Works of that learned Father. And by the same great Craft of his, it is thought he drew in *St. Jerom* also into the same Confederacy: Which he might not difficultly do, he being naturally of a very hot and eager Disposition, and tho' a very learned Man, yet scarce beyond the bounds of Philology. The Synod was call'd, and the Books condemn'd, according to *Theophilus's* Project, who did the same in his own See too, and made *Epiphanius* write to *Chrysostom* to follow their Example. But as it seems this Holy Father was not so forward in the Business, and therefore the restless Spirit of *Theophilus* instigated *Epiphanius* to go to *Constantinople*, carrying

rying the Decree of the Synod with him, to have it subscrib'd there. But *St. Chrysoſtom* refus'd to ſubſcribe, judging it very hard and unequal, and not according to the manner of Eccleſiaſtical Cenfures, that a Perſon of ſo great Learning and Piety, who had been ſo ſerviceable to the Church, who liv'd two hundred Years before, whoſe Books no Council had condemn'd, ſhould now be condemn'd by a ſmall pack'd Synod of his profefs'd Enemies. But *Epiphanius* was reſolv'd to go thro' with his Work, being abetted in it not only by the falſe and implacable *Theophilus*, but alſo by the Empreſs herſelf, and ſome potent Men in the Court, and ſeveral licentious Priests, who had a pique againſt *Chryſoſtom* for his free reproving of their Faults; and therefore in the moſt invidious manner he could, before all the People, he recited the Decree, expreſſly naming ſome of the *Origeniſts*, to wit, thoſe whom the wrathful *Theophilus* ſo cauſeleſſly perſecuted, with oblique Reflections alſo upon *Chryſoſtom* as the Patron of them. And this fervent Zeal of his for the Truth, as he conceiv'd, was the more eaſily boil'd up to this irregular height becauſe of ſome Diſciples of *Arius*, who ſince the Condemnation of their Maſter and his Doctrin, not daring to avow his Hereſy under that Title, craftily and moſt falſly endeavour'd to propagate it under the unmeet Cover of the plauſible name of *Origen*. If I was concern'd in the Opinions of *Origen* more than barely to give you an hiſtorical Account of them, or took ſo great an Intereſt in his Quarrel, as to be an Adverſary to his Adverſaries, I could mention to you, that *Chryſoſtom* gently ſnubbing *Epiphanius* by *Seraphion* for this pragmatical Deſign of his (as ſome would call it) and meddling ſo much where he had ſo little to do, and kindly bidding him beware leſt from the Stir and Commotion he had put the People in any danger ſhould redound to himſelf; the good Man forthwith upon this advertiſement haſted from *Conſtantinople* to his own See, but died by the way. I could alſo tell you what beſel *Cyrinus* Biſhop of *Chalcedon*, a bitter Enemy of *Chryſoſtom's*, when the pack'd Biſhops were there who were to compoſe another Synod againſt that pious Father. There are not wanting who draw ſuch Accidents into Argument againſt their unrighteous Proceedings againſt two ſuch excellent Perſons, and think they were the Rebukes of Providence: But ſuch Events are of too lubricous a conſideration to be taken notice of by any but an Adverſary and an Orator; but I am neither in this Work you have impos'd on me. Only this you may plainly gather from what I have now related, that the great Heat and Bitterneſs againſt the Opinions of *Origen* had ſuch beginnings as no Man now would dare to own, viz. the

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satisfying the Revenge of an impious Dissembler, and the discountenancing a Doctrine which almost all the Christian World believes for true. But the eager Contention against this one Opinion would necessarily discover many others which were like to be suspected likewise; for *Origen's* rais'd Genius could not but light on such Conclusions as were of an higher and more remote Speculation, which to Heads unus'd to such Theories, would first appear strange, and then false; because we are very unwilling that any thing should be true which we never heard of before, and which we do not now understand. Many of which Conclusions fagotted together by some malicious or quarrelsome Reader of his Works, would make such a show to his Disadvantage in the Judgment of the Simple and Unlearned, that without any scruple they would be set against him as a Man of most monstrous Conceits.

**Y**our third Query is, What his *Dogmata* are?

By which Question I presume you do not mean all the Doctrines that are in his Writings, which cannot be found in the common compendious Creed of the Christian Church, nor amongst the Articles of particular Churches, nor yet in the usual Systems of Theology; for it would be as hard to tell you what his Opinion is in all those Questions he propounds and discusses in his Books, as it is unworthy in him who hath heap'd up several of them together as his Opinions, when yet he professes of them that he does not propound them as the Sentiments of his own Mind, but only as noble and illustrious Arguments of our Contemplation, very well worthy to be farther enquir'd of: but your meaning, I suppose, is of the most material of them, and which most offend our otherways taught Ears. Those of this sort may be reduc'd to these Six.

1. His Doctrine concerning the Holy Trinity, among the Hypostases whereof, they say, he puts an Inequality.

2. That the Souls of Men do pre-exist.

3. That thro their Fault and Negligence they appear here Inhabitants of the Earth cloth'd with Terrestrial Bodies.

4. That the Mystery of the Resurrection is this, that we shall be cloth'd with heavenly or æthereal Bodies.

5. That after long periods of time the Damn'd shall be deliver'd from their Torments, and try their Fortunes again in such Regions of the World as their Nature fits them for.

6. That the Earth, after her Conflagration, shall become habitable again, and be the mansion of Men and other Animals; and this in eternal Vicissitudes,

These



These are the chief Matters wherein *Origen* is conceiv'd to have mightily transgress'd; and of which *Jerom* says, *Cum hac rejeceritis & quasi censoriâ virgulâ separaveritis a fide Ecclesia, tuto legam cætera: nec venena jam timebo, cum antidotum præbitero.*

**H**OW he asserts these, and upon what Grounds and Reasons, is your fourth Query, which in order comes now to be answer'd.

Concerning the First of them, whether *Origen* ever us'd the very Term *Inequality* or *Inequal* in his Speculations of that mysterious and blessed Essence, I cannot say. Sure I am, I never met with it in his Writings; and, what is a better Argument that he us'd it not, none of those object it to him who have made Collections of his Errors and dangerous Speeches. And therefore if the thing it self be laid to his Charge, it must be infer'd from such Passages as these they take notice of, and have excerpted out of his Writings, *Pater non videtur a Filio, Pater non comprehenditur a Filio, Filius, qui est imago invisibilis Patris, comparatus Patri non est Veritas, &c.* But if he did hold a kind of Inequality amongst the blessed Hypostases of the most Sacred Trinity, a Man would probably guess from what he finds in his Writings that his Grounds were these.

1. The Difference of their Essential Characters and *Idiomata*, which is such as might easily induce him to think that the Divine Hypostases, which substantially were those *Idiomata* or Properties, did also differ one from another according as the Perfections differ'd signify'd by those Essential Properties. They are these, Original Goodness, or first Plenitude of Life and Being, All-comprehensive Wisdom or Reason, and Demiurgical Love; which tho they all be truly and properly universal Natures, yet there is manifestly in the two latter and derivative Hypostases a verging towards Particularity, if compar'd with the first Primitive Fountain of the Deity; and this drawing towards Particularity is greater in the Third than in the Second. For all things are in the First in such an indistinct manner, and in such Exuberances flow from him, that our Minds cannot particularly set out this and that: but emptying himself into the Second, we then find them, according to his Name and Nature, limited and bounded and divided into their respective Reasons and Ideas, but without destroying his Essential Unity, for he is them all; from whom they being further carry'd down to the Third, are by his Almighty and never-failing Power distinctly brought forth into visible Life and Existence, exactly accord-

ing to those eternal Reasons and Ideas which shone into him from the Second, and faithfully govern'd the Operations of his Power. And if we descend from this higher Metaphysical Speculation, and take a view of these three Excellencies, not as they are Substances in the Deity, but as Dispositions and Qualities in created Beings; we cannot but pronounce that there is such plain difference in their Notions, that if they were from their accidental Nature exalted into Substantial life, they would there also still retain their difference.

2. There seems such a Necessity of Nature, that all Effects and Productions whatever, whether voluntary or emanative, should decline something from the supereminent Excellency of the Cause and Producer, that it is scarce possible to keep our Minds from thinking but that the Rule holds also in the Divine Emanations; especially when the very Names of *Father* and *Son*, and the Modes of Derivation, *being begot by the Father*, and *proceeding from both*, do so fairly countenance the Truth of it.

3. Tho' the Divine Hypostases be acknowledg'd Three in respect of their proper Essences, (for so, for more plainness, I shall crave leave to speak) and those three different, or *aliius atque alius*; and not only so, in regard of three different Names, or a threefold Order (as the Church hath rightly determin'd, against *Sabellius*, I take it:) yet if we abstract from them in our Minds their Names and Order, and barely contemplate those Essences, we can find nothing in them (according to the Hypothesis of the Equalists) why one should be call'd the *Father* or *Son* rather than another: which must needs have seem'd very harsh to *Origen's* contemplative Spirit, if not derogatory to him who is simply First in that ever-blessed *Triad*.

4. The strict *Equalists* could not give him any reason why the Deity was not rather multiply'd into an Infinity of Hypostases, than have its Progressions stop'd at Three. Nay, it seems necessary by their Hypothesis, that the Multiplication should be Infinite. For the first Original Good communicating of himself to his first Productions, according to the emanative fertility of his own exuberant Fulness, if they did as fully receive his Life and Power, as he their Author was himself possess'd of it, the Third would be as able, and by the necessity of equal plenitude, would be as much constrain'd (as I may so speak with reverence) to produce Three more, and so on perpetually. And for them to say that the Number was limited to Three by explicit Will and Counsel, is to hazard the necessary Existence, and consequently the Divinity of the two latter Hypostases, and to induce such an Indifferency in-

to the first and earliest Operations of the Author of all things, as is inconsistent with infinitely-full Goodness. Wherefore *Origen* was forc'd to conclude that the Number was limited in a *Triad* by their unequal Declension from the First, in such a measure and proportion that those Three did perfectly comprehend and make up together in their Essential *Idiomata*, whatever Perfection goes to the constituting the entire  $\theta\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omicron\nu$ , or Divine Essence.

5. Since God is an Essence infinitely perfect, and since all the Perfections worthy of the Divine Nature, as Goodness, Wisdom, Power, &c. are neither of the same Nature, nor of the same Worth and Excellency; if every Hypostasis be essentially all those Perfections, they are three Gods; if one be one of them, another be another, they are not essentially equal.

6. He was encourag'd to think these his Reasons good, and his Conclusion true, from the fair Confirmations of it in Holy Scripture: *ex. gr. My Father is greater than I. I live by the Father. The Son can do nothing of himself. I can of my self do nothing. The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of my self. And of the Holy Ghost it is said, that he proceeded from the Father, and is sent into the World by him. That he is the Spirit of the Son. That he shall not speak of himself. He shall receive of mine.* All which places, that I may name no more, do most naturally imply some kind of inequality; and after the Reasons given, may pass for an evident Testimony of the Truth of *Origen's* Doctrine; which some Men say is necessary to be establish'd and believ'd, lest otherwise we be as sacrilegious to the Honour and Majesty of the *Father of all things*, as the antient Hereticks were impudently injurious to the other two blessed and ever-to-be-ador'd Hypostases. And if the temerarious and confounded Conclusions of the meddling School-men be receiv'd with a like temerity, they think there will be as much need to multiply Councils in this latter Age of the Church, to assert the Honour due to *God the Father*, as there was of old to restore the *Son* and *Holy Ghost* to their deserv'd Dignity of Nature in the Beliefs of Christians, from whence the saucy Ignorance and Impiety of some bold Men had detruded them. Thus, Sir, you have some of those Reasons upon which *Origen* founded his Doctrine of Inequality. Which Hypothesis of his he hath so warily and judiciously form'd, that it hath been said by some, that neither the subtiler Attacks nor more rude and boisterous Shocks of his Adversaries have been able hitherto to shake or disorder it, much less utterly to destroy the Reasonableness and Concinnity of it. And what some have too hastily fancied, and as clamorously pronounc'd, *viz.* that it made the

Two latter Hypostases Creatures, and render'd some main parts of the Oeconomy of Christianity less reasonable and decorous, and was not consistent with many places of Scripture; have been like ill-planted Ordnance, which made a great noise and rattle indeed, but never touch'd the Fort their murtherous Load aim'd at.

It is not my business here to give you a perfect Explication of the Trinity after the *Origenian* way; but by that little hath been now said, with what I may have possibly some time or other more largely discours'd unto you, your piercing Judgment cannot but plainly see and be satisfy'd, that there is nothing in that blessed *Triad* he describes which can be call'd *Creature*. Is not every one of them essentially, immutably and independently on any Will endow'd with such perfection, and in such a degree as is truly and properly Divine? Are not the Two latter unspeakably-closely united with the First? and by their so near approach to him, who is the purest Spirit possible, are not they necessarily susceptible of what he Essentially is in a degree infinitely beyond the Comprehension of a Man; as likewise for the same Reason of what one another are? Are they not also by the Divine Excellency of their Natures, the true and adequate Causes of all Creatures? How needless then and unskilful is their Fear, that they are not by his Hypothesis truly and properly God? And therefore the highest Parts they bear in the most wise and gracious Oeconomy of the Gospel, of being ador'd, worship'd, invocated, obey'd, trusted in, and the like, do rightfully belong unto them, not only by a Temporary Constitution of the Father, but by the Essential and Eternal Dignity of their Nature. And the Nature of every Hypostasis, and their incomprehensible-near Union one with another consider'd, they will necessarily have but one Will, and consequently be of equal Power; and the greatest Honour and Service any Creature can possibly perform, being manifestly due to the two latter Hypostases, they are all truly of equal Glory. Those places of Scripture which (I suppose) they mean, *There are Three that bear witness in Heaven, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which three ἑν εἰσι; I and the Father ἑν ἑσμεν; I am in the Father, and the Father in me,* and the like, are so solely congruous to his Hypothesis, that those Phrases of ἑν εἰσι and ἑν ἑσμεν are very improper, if every Hypostasis was perfectly like and equal to the rest, and each of them Essentially endow'd with all those Perfections which intirely constitute the Deity or ἡ Θεῶν. And lest any Man should yet be suspicious of *Origen's* Mind, beside what he hath more than once in that very Book of his which most offends, *That the Son is coeternal with the Father, and inseparably united with him, and that*

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*the Holy Spirit is not a Creature*; I dare wager my Credit and your Friendship, than which there are very few things more valuable to me, that in his excellent Treatise against *Celsus*, he twenty times joins together these words Θεός λόγος, and in several of them adds ὄντως or ἀληθῶς Θεός. For that impious Epicurean gave him very frequent occasion so to do by his foolish Cavilling and Jeering at our Blessed Saviour, whose Glory, as of the only begotten Son of God, his foul and impure Eyes could not discern through the Veil of his Humiliation and Crucifixion. But I am to beg your pardon, Sir, for my heedlessness in answering Objections out of place; for by your Method that is not to be done till the fifth Query. But my Pen, I know not how, grew warm, and was got so far before I perceiv'd it was out of the way. If you please therefore to transfer some few of these last Lines to their proper place in the fifth Query, I shall take care hereafter not to preoccupate the Order you have set me. This is all I shall now say of his First Dogma.

His Second is, *That the Souls of Men do præexist.*

Before I say any thing of this, I am to put you in mind of two Things which concern both this and his other Opinions which follow. The First is, that I so interpret your Commands to me to write you an Account of these Matters, not as if you expected from me a strict and accurate Discourse of them from their first and lowest Principles, and those Principles philosophically prov'd and confirm'd, and then orderly advanc'd to the very Conclusions asserted by the Father: but only such general Touches at those Principles, *Physical* or *Metaphysical*, in the lax and diffuse way of a *Letter*, as may put you upon a more close and methodical Consideration of them; or re-mind you of consulting such Treatises where they are purposely and exactly handled. And therefore you will find many things concerning the Nature of the Soul and her Operations, her Union with Matter, with many other incident Speculations, not prov'd by me, but supposed, because they are fully and excellently discuss'd in the Writings of that learned Gentleman Mr. *More* of Cambridge: whom since I have here nam'd, I think I should be highly ungrateful, if I did not acknowledg the infinite Obligation I have to you for giving me the first Notice I had of so worthy an Author; whose lately-publish'd Book of the *Immortality of the Soul*, I unluckily not having by me at the present, the Account I shall send you of those things you enquire of, which with all helps and advantages would have been imperfect, is for that reason like to be only not contemptible. The Second Thing I am to mind you of, is out of the *Holy Father*, in the beginning

of his Book *Περὶ ἀρχῶν* where setting down an immutable Canon of necessary Truths, which the Blessed Apostles and Founders of the Christian Faith had plainly taught, and the Church receiv'd; and the contrary to which cannot be admitted, but with the lopping off an Essential part of our Religion; he then instances in many worthy Objects of Contemplation, concerning which there is no determinate Declaration in the divinely-inspir'd Writings of Holy Scripture: but the Truth in such things, he says, was purposely conceal'd by the Holy Spirit, to excite the Study and Industry of the Lovers of Truth, and to reward their honest Labour and pious Disquisition, with the finding so rich a Jewel, and so precious a Treasure. Of this last kind, he says, is this present Question concerning the Soul, *Whether she be traduc'd, or upon occasion then first created by God, or præexist*; as also several other of his *Dogmata*, which are behind. And to do him right, he propounds all such disputable Matters doubtfully, and discusses them variously, and explicitly tells his Reader that he only exhibits to him several Phantasms, that he may use his Judgment about them, and take which he thinks is truest. Which singular Modesty and Fairness in this learned Father, may seem to every candid and ingenuous Man, Apology enough for him where he is conceiv'd to err, and more than enough where he offers, beside such probable Reasons, as he does in behalf of those Opinions which the World will needs father on him. For the Reasonableness of this Opinion which is now before us, I find these things in him.

1. That the Nature of the Soul is such as makes her capable of existing eternally backward, as well as forward: For her spiritual Essence, as such, makes it impossible that she should either through Age or Violence be dissolv'd, part from part, as it happens in Bodies, where there is no *Vinculum* passing through the very Substance of them to tie and retain one part to another; and therefore either through the stiller insinuation of other Bodies near them, they insensibly melt away and decay, or by the ruder dashes of such as knock against them, are broken all to pieces: Whereas the Soul, as a Spirit, by the advantage of that formal Power and Property of hers, whereby she is distinguish'd from Matter, cannot only penetrate her self and other Substances to the preserving her own Continuity; but also by her gradual Derivation of part from part, is in her whole Substance ultimately connected to her indivisible Head and Centre, as *Plotinus* speaks. Which Centre, being in its very Substance intellectual, does plainly shew who is the Father of it, to wit, the Essential Mind and Wisdom of God, whose univocal Productions (as I may so speak) are according

According to their measure and capacity what their Parent is in the most perfect and most infinite degree conceivable; Life it self, or eternal Life: and therefore whatever other parts of the Substance of the Soul necessarily proceed and flow from this, can no more be cut off from it, than Indivisible can be divided; nor no more perish, than Life it self can die. We have then here an Essence capable of eternal Existence: and since the Powers and Operations of Life are not such things as can at pleasure be put on and off, like loose-hanging Adjuncts, but are intrinsically made up into the essential Contexture of the Substance they are in; so vital and active a Substance as the Soul is, is as capable of acting according to her Nature, and consequently of feeling and enjoying the pleasure of her Life and Actions from eternal Ages, as she is of bare Existence throughout that long Period of Duration. So that nothing now is wanting to her actual Existence, but his good pleasure, from whom she and all things else proceed. I appeal therefore to your own candid Breast, and that noble Benignity of Mind which is in you, what Reason or Cause can you think of, worthy of God, which will manifestly assure us that she did not actually exist of old? If you pitch upon the *Platonick* way, and assign the production of all things to that exuberant Fulness of life in the Deity, which, through the blessed Necessity and Constraint of his most communicative Nature, emptied it self into all Possibilities of Being, as into so many capable Receptacles, you must then pronounce her Existence in a sense necessary, and after a sort coeternal with God. But if such Expressions seem too bold, and the Heats of an Enthusiastick Fancy, take that more sober Hypothesis, which is built upon the more conceivable Attributes of God, his infinite Goodness and Benignity, arm'd with equal Power, and directed by no less Wisdom, beside which nothing can be thought on to fit one for Action; and then ask your self, whether if the Subject in question be capable of existing and enjoying some part of that infinite Goodness, it be not evident from those Attributes that it will be made to exist? that which is infinitely Good, as certainly denoting by a *Logical Necessity* every thing that is good, (no other Attribute gain saying) as infinite Fire will necessarily burn whatever is combustible, if put to it. Wherefore unless God act by such arbitrary Humours, as we mortal Men are ashamed of, as Weaknesses and Imperfections in our selves, there is no doubt to be made but that this Conclusion is true, That the Souls of Men did exist and act before this present World was fitted for their Habitation; at least, before they were born up on Earth. I have heard some Men seriously profess, that

There was a Light and Power in this Argument far more vigorous and convincing to their Minds, than in the plainest Demonstration in *Euclid's Elements*. But yet they wonder'd not that others were not mov'd by it, because it requir'd a peculiar Disposition of Spirit to feel the force of it. For there are Moral Axioms *Noematically* true, as well as *Geometrical*: and as if you imagin a Man so miserably confounded in his Mind, that the common Notions of *Geometry* appear'd not certain to him, he must necessarily be insensible of the Evidence of any Proposition in that Science; so in like manner will it happen to him whose Soul is so much out of her natural Order, as to have lost or dull'd, or silenc'd by what way soever her discriminative Sense of what is good, worthy, congruous, and decorous; all Argumentations proceeding upon those *κοῖναι ἐννοιαί* of a diviner Sense, which to others are Demonstrations, will affect him no more than an Ape is taken with the Air of Moral Beauty.

2. The Actions of Providence will not otherwise correspond to those holy Attributes in the Deity, *Righteousness* and *Benignity*, according to which he governs and orders the Affairs of all the World. This Argument he makes use of two ways, in his Book against *Celsus*, and in his *Περὶ ἀρχῶν*, viz. in respect of the Place and Time wherein we are born, and of the Temper and Disposition of the Body wherewith we are born. As to the First of these, there is no Man doubts but that Education, Institution and Company are of wonderful moment to the making us good or bad. For it is manifest enough that few are born into this World in any higher condition than a possibility (as I may so speak) or capability of being made good and vertuous; which Capability is perfected and actuated by good Instruction and wholesome Precepts assiduously inculcated to us, and by exhibiting and commending to us daily Examples of Vertue and Honesty: So that when or where either these are wanting, or of little credit and esteem, or the contrary more in use and practice, there seems little less than a Necessity of our running into all Wickedness and Vice. And if we call to mind the sad Accounts we have met withal in History, of Times and Places almost all the World over, over-run with all manner of Barbarity and Lust, adopted even into their Laws, and practis'd in their most solemn Religions, how can we but think that the Soul then and there born and living, is inevitably condemn'd to all Iniquity and Impiety? What Father will care for instructing his Children in such things as are of no use, and small regard in the place he lives in; especially when they will certainly unlearn what he teaches them, by the stronger and more pleasing Impression of publick Practice?



Practice? And indeed what Father will be fit to teach them such things, who himself hath all his life long, in all probability, done the contrary, being carried away in his younger years, as his Children are now, by the popular Stream of his Country's Vices? Certainly there is very little likelihood he should prove a benign, loving, compassionate, or a just and upright Man, who by the Laws of the City where he was born, is especially train'd up in his earliest years to the ferocity and rage of War, and the sleights of Theft and Cozenage. And as small hope is there of his Purity and Chastity, who is so solemnly led, by his Father, it may be, to behold impudent Strumpets strip themselves, and wind their rotter Bodies into all unclean and lascivious Gestures; and who with great Devotion sacrifices to an allow'd Deity his foul Embraces of mercenary Harlots. It would be very easy for me to be copious in this Argument: The Histories of all Countries of old, all the Apologies and Disputations of the Primitive Fathers against the *Gentiles*, the latter Descriptions of the Religions and Manners of several Barbarous and Idolatrous Parts of the World, not long since discover'd or visited, would afford me too plentiful Matter to fill up a very sad Catalogue of all manner of Iniquity, which hath and doth still reign amongst them with little or no controul. For God therefore to send out of his pure and holy Hands an immaculate Soul, capable of living elsewhere, and fit for all Vertue and heavenly Wisdom, lest the Lust of two brutish Persons possibly should come to nothing, and condemn it to an Habitation in such Part of the Earth, where reigns nothing but gross Ignorance and Vice, by which she cannot fail, without a Miracle, to be overborn (having such a Principle in her, vivid and vigorous, to which those brutish Depravities are natural and hugely pleasing; and that better principle of Life which should defend her from them, being scarce in a possibility of being awakened into any considerable degree of Power and Energy in such an Education and such Converse, and amongst such Examples as are above describ'd) what is this, says the Father, but to betray his own Offspring (for he is the Father of Spirits) unto unavoidable Misery; and to put off the chief Excellencies of his most blessed Nature, Goodness and Righteousness, and to govern the World with less Justice than an ordinary upright Man would do? You may, if you please, taking occasion from what hath been said, carry this First Part of his Argument from Providence further, and enquire how it came to pass that so many whole Nations both of old, and at this present day, were so over-run with all kind of Barbarity, Ferocity, and Bestial Lust, so utterly estrang'd from the knowledg of

God and the love of Vertue, so abus'd and tyranniz'd over by the accursed Rebels of the Airy Principality, the Kingdom of Darknes; lastly, so quite estrang'd from themselves and human Nature, that they seem to have left themselves nothing whereby they might be distinguish'd from downright brutes, save Speech, and a something larger and more methodical Wit and Craft to compass the satisfaction of their degenerate Appetites. Truly, Sir, if you would form the Idea of human Perfection in no greater Glory, or set the Attainments of a reasonable Soul at no higher pitch than the certain Knowledge of some of your own vertuous Friends will warrant you to do, in whom (as you have oft with joy and wonder related to me) appears so pure and Angelical an Understanding, so firm and radicated a Life of all Holiness and Sanctity, Love and hearty Benignity to all the World, of Justice and Purity, and whatever is truly Divine: and if you then consider the vast Dissimilitude between this Idea, and the Spirit of so many whole Nations in the World; I make no doubt but you will say, that the Life of Man upon Earth is too short so far to abuse the capacity of what he might come to, as to put him in so low a degree of Degeneracy as those forlorn People contentedly live in. But not only the degree of their Apostacy from a divine and intellectual Life, and of their Immersion in the brutish and sensual, is so wonderful; but their continuance also in that wretched Estate for so many Ages together, without any remarkable appearance of Providence for their Deliverance, nay rather with her perfect leaving them to the insolence, subtilty, and conduct of the Devil, is a *Phenomenon* inexplicable without the *Origenian* Hypothesis. For since whole Nations and their continuance are but the Aggregate of single Souls born into the World in successive Generations; and since every particular Soul comes into such or such parts of the Earth with so vast disadvantages as is above declar'd: If beside this, the crafty and malicious Serpent hath such free Scope to tamper with them, who at the best are very deceivable; it can seem to you little less than necessary but that they should be wrought into that enormous lapse from God, which History and too sad Experience witness they are and have been. Now since the two great and most proper Objects of the gracious and beneficent Providence of God are the vertuous and faultlessly-calamitous (of which latter Order those miserable Nations would in great measure be, if Souls did not preexist) who can doubt but that Providence would very early have appear'd for their Rescue, or rather taken such care, that they should not so much have needed any extraordinary Assistance from her? But since we see She hath done

neither, and yet are sure that all her ways are gracious and equal, it will be very hard for us to keep our selves from concluding, That all those wretched Souls had of old, by their long Revolt from God, and the Laws of his Righteous Kingdom, highly deserv'd this Scourge from him, to be so put out of his Care, as it were, and given up to the barbarous Domination of the Devil; the Head and Prince of the unrighteous and rebellious Empire of Darknes; and whom they by Choice and Affection fell off to, in other Regions of the World, that him and his Tyranny they should here upon Earth still suffer, whether with or against their Wills. *Exedendum est tibi quod tibi intristi*, is a piece of warrantable Justice. And since there is possibility and hope that the present sad part of the Drama may end, and a more chearful Catastrophe close up all, the Benignity of Providence may in due time be as illustrious as her Justice hath been conspicuous.

I know there are many Men who, part out of Piety and Humility, part from a Parrot-like talking such words as their Books and Education have taught them, would make no bones of this Difficulty of the Holy Father, but can with very great ease and satisfaction of Mind resolve all into the Pleasure and Sovereignty of God, who being the Creator and Lord of all Men, may (they say) dispose of them how and where he pleases. But it would be very well if they were as zealous Patrons of the more excellent Attributes of God, as they are peremptory Assertors of his absolute Will and Power. For then they would both render his Existence and Government in the World so desirable to all Men, that none but the extremely-guilty would wish either his not-being, or his not concerning himself in the Affairs of Men; and also cut off many scandalous Occasions of Atheism and Epicurism, and spoil the Professed of those execrable Mysteries of those overplausible Pretences they now have and craftily manage against the Truth. For tell me, Sir, if the Frame of the Bodies or the Passions and Affections of Men or Beasts in whole Regions of the Earth, or of many in every Region, were such as did plainly serve for nothing but to incommode or create them, or make them an inevitable Prey to others; could you with any reasonable Confidence affirm, that the Goodness and Providence of a wise Mind did preside over their Generations? or think you could reasonably satisfy the Exceptions of an Atheist, or an Epicurean, taken from such manifest Phenomena, by saying God might make them as he pleased which were his own voluntary handy-work? I am glad for my own particular, all things are so made, that there is no occasion given for any such Exception; for, believe me

If there was, I know not how I should behave my self in so gross a rencounter. And may not these Men with the same plausibility of Reason, maintain the same Conclusion from the odd Frame of Things in the Moral World, were it such as the Deniers of Præexistence must needs make it? I think they might do it with far juster Reason; forasmuch as a Man is a far nobler Creature, and the interest of his Mind and immortal Spirit much greater and more lasting, and therefore a more proper Object of the Care and Providence of God, if any Providence there be. Or are they so little peremptory in their Assaults, as to be beaten off by such painted Fire, such hurtless lambent Flames as are cast against them, by those who oppose to their Arguments nothing but the Will and Sovereignty of God? For they profess themselves well assur'd, that if God be at all, he is infinitely Good and Wise, as well as Powerful and Uncontrollable; and therefore by the necessary Consequences of Reason, wherever he is pretended by any to intermeddle either as to the making or disposing of any thing, they expect to find the Impresses and Indications of those Attributes: but if instead thereof they find all things quite contrary, it is not in their power to think that God hath had any thing to do there. But whatever ruin their Argumentations from such substantial Grounds may threaten to the ill-built Fabrick of ordinary Theology, the House of Wisdom and Truth, which hath made Præexistence one of her Pillars, stands as firm as a mountainous Pyramid; and by that Hypothesis, the great Phanomenon of Providence we have been speaking of, is clear and righteous. Neither hath the Atheist or Epicurean any thing considerable to say against the Truth of it, either as it is a single Proposition by it self, or as an Hypothesis to salve the *Phanomena* of Providence. Which Straits of theirs they plainly enough confess by their either only gravely smiling at it as an Extravagance, or with a more solemn Brow chastising it as a dangerous Paradox. And truly a dangerous one it is to their pretended and boasted Wisdom: but to the genuine Plants of heavenly Truth and Divine Knowledge, 'tis as agreeable and salutary as Showers and Sun-beams are to the growing Spring.

The Second Part of the Father's Argument from Providence, is much what the same with the first, *mutatis mutandis*. For the experience of most Men can bear witness, that there are not stronger Allurements from without to all manner of Viciousness, than we find Incitations to the same from our own intrinsic Constitution: which (according to the common Hypothesis) is not properly our Fault, nor any Fruit of it, nor was it in our power to prevent it; yet we are so fatally in-

tangled in it, that it is next to a Miracle to rid our selves in any good measure of its Chains. Is not the World disorder'd, and Society poison'd, and Mens own particular Peace and Honour miserably violated with the baleful Effects of the four Elements of our Terrestrial Composition? whilst some live even in this World, in a perpetual Fire, and are tormented before their time through Wrathfulness and Strifes, Contentiousness and injurious Zeal, which their Choler kindles in them; others on the contrary are drown'd in sottishness and stupidity, and an utter ineptness to all things worthy of a Man, by the overflowing of stupifying Phlegm; a third sort toss'd about like feathers with light-mindedness and admiration of trifles, or waisted into the foul Lake of bodily Pleasures by the gusts of reeking Blood; a fourth consum'd by that slow-devouring Demogorgon in the Earthy Melancholy, in which lodg anxious Fear, dark Suspicion, and fretting Envy. And tho you possibly may have heard some Men talk of Liberty and Free-will, and a Sovereign Power in us to keep all these rebellious humours in good order, and that with much ease, if we would but give our Minds to it; yet if you but consider whence it is that they talk in that high strain, you will begin to think they reckon without their Host, and against Experience. Such Men have a sort of Adversaries, who from the assurance of their very Senses, that there is a great Lapse and Degeneracy in Universal Mankind, do, without all ceremony, bluntly cast the Cause upon God, or at best assign such a Reason of it as their Antagonists think comes to the same; who therefore out of an abhorrency to such Blasphemy (as they call it) think it better and more pious to deny the Truth of a manifest Observation, than to make God the Author of so calamitous a *Phænomenon*. Where, by the way, you may observe, that both sides, by their earnest contention, making good half of their respective Opinions, have, to the free Enquirer and Lover of Truth, facilitated his finding out the true Cause, which neither contradicts Experience, nor is injurious to the Glory of the Almighty. But granting to these Contenders for Free-will, that something of what they plead for is true (as indeed it cannot be deny'd) I yet would ask them, whether or no, the condition of our Nature consider'd, the strong inclinations in us naturally to that which is evil, and these strengthen'd and further confirm'd for several years before we can come to have any considerable use of our Reason, or arrive to any Command over our selves; lastly, the way and manner how the Elections of our Will are perform'd, which we never find free where there is a Custom or Passion against it, and how corporeal Motions determine the Thoughts and Passions

of

of our Mind: I ask them whether, these things being considered, it be not hundreds to one odds, that we shall chuse the ways of Vice rather than Vertue? Or let the disproportion be as little as they can with any colour pretend, they cannot clear the Goodness and Rectitude of Divine Providence by their Hypothesis, which thrusts pure and immaculate and most innocent Spirits into so great danger of being defil'd and corrupted by the Passions of the Body, and of soundly smarting for it hereafter. But for my own part, I think the Observation of their Adversaries is much the truer, that the disproportion is exceeding great: For since the ways of Holiness and Vertue are so full of Peace and unspeakable Contentment, and shine with so enravishing and irresistible Pulchritude to prepar'd Minds, and do so perfectly correspond to all the Senses of so happy a Temper, that we are fully assur'd our Soul is then as she should be, and in conjunction with her most proper Good; I cannot see why Men should universally take the contrary course, and that with so much passion as they do, jeering at those who have made the better choice, as Mad-men or Fools, if there was any Liberty in them worth speaking of, to Vertue or Piety. 'Tis true indeed, there is great variety, as to degree, in the backwardness of Men to Goodness and Vertue, and proneness to that which is Evil; yet those who have the care and nurture of Youth, Fathers, Schoolmasters and Tutors, do with one consent affirm, that they not seldom have some in their charge, who from their earliest years are of so inexpugnable a propension to that which is naught, so wretchless and insensible of all wholesome Counsels, and have their Eyes so perfectly seal'd up, and their Hearts so frozen to all impressions of Vertue and Sobriety, that you may as well read Lectures of Temperance to a Goat or a Boar, and as successfully teach Goodness, Pity and Kindness to a Bear rob'd of her Whelps, or a Tyger inrag'd with Hunger, as think to fasten any such things upon their blind and obdurate Minds. Whence is this strange Phænomenon? If the Soul was not in the World before she was born upon Earth, it is not conceivable how she should in so little a time contract so peremptory an affection to Vice, amidst those continual chidings and reproofs, those sharp and painful corrections, those several ways of ignominious punishments she meets with, those advantageous representations made to her of that which is good and laudable, those many and earnest invitations and allurements of her to embrace it, with all other methods of a good and prudent Institution. That she comes pure and undefiled out of the hands of her Creator, all grant; and be this Purity what it will, whether with or without those

those Natural Notions of what is good and honest, the business will be much-what the same as to our present purpose. For if the latter way be the Truth, even this Negative Purity will leave her in an Indifferency to Vertue or Vice; and therefore if her first Precepts and earliest Inculcations be good and vertuous, she would be form'd unto Vertue: which yet we see is so far from happening to some (tho the very same instruction to others proves successful) that they on the contrary, impatient of every Curb and Rein, and deaf to all Calls and Charms, run headlong into all iniquity. If the former way be true, it would be still more wonderful how her first-appearing Inclinations should so eagerly carry her to that which is vicious, contrary to the positive Restraint of her inward Light. But if they say (as they generally do) that the Soul her self is pure and immaculate, but that she contracts this unreclaimable proclivity to Vice from the Body she is put into, beside the ignorance they discover by so saying, in the speculation of things, in joining such ill-agreeing Mates together into one vital Composition, where Sympathy and Congruity is the only *Vinculum*, the Father asks them how it is consistent with the Goodness and Righteousness of God, the blessed Spring of all Vertue and Holiness, and tender Lover of all his Creatures, to put such innocent Souls into such foul and untam'd Bodies, which so fatally and necessarily hurry them to that which alone of all things in the World he disapproves of, and which he knows will be their utter bane and miserable ruin. And therefore upon the whole of this Second Part of his Argument from Providence he concludes, That since so great a part of our pitiable bondage to Vice and Passion, in the judgment of all sides, proceeds from these Bodies of ours; if the Soul was merely passive in being born into this World, and was not before she was born here, much of the calamity she suffers from Vice, for which she must suffer more hereafter, must in his judgment be cast upon God: which he thinks is impious to affirm, and utterly contradictory to his holy Attributes.

A Third Argument of his I find in St. *Jerom*, from the misbecomingness of the contrary Position, which makes the blessed Majesty of Heaven and Earth diligently wait upon the unclean Embraces of lawless Persons, even to the degenerate vileness of Incest and Buggery with Beasts, and by a special Act of Providence carefully to perfect their impure Rudiments of Life. Which monstrous *Indecorum*, tho coarser Spirits are not sensible of, and think they have answer'd the Argument by those mean Comparisons of the Sun's shining upon Dung-hills as well as flowery Meads, and stollen Seed's growing as well as that which the Sower came justly by; yet it was exceedingly

ceedingly harsh to the more delicate sense of *Origen's* Mind, and not to be put off by such slight and ill-fitting Similitudes. 'Tis a shrewd sign that Soul is much discompos'd in her Harmonical Nature, who hath so far lost her sense of proportionateness and congruity, as either not to think this is a very humble Office to the Supreme Deity; or if it be so, not to feel in her self a great Reluctance, to the making God so particular an Executor of it. If they imagin'd all things were made and order'd by such settled Laws of Nature as might in some sense be call'd Necessary, this Indecorum would be more tolerable; but to make God work all things in an express and voluntary way, and with his own hands, as it were, and yet to fancy so special an interposal of his Will and Power in so abhor'd an occasion, is to be very bold with the Sovereign Majesty on High, and to make him do that which they themselves, were it in their power, would be asham'd to do. And what contrariety would it be to any of the Divine Attributes, or what loss to the World, if God did not appear in such unlawful Inchoations of life, but let them come to nought in the end, as they were without his Approbation begun? But the true Judgment of this Argument, as I intimated above, is the inward Touch of a Man's Mind; which in you I know to be so comely and graceful, that at the first Proposal you felt the force of it, and need not that I further enlarge upon it.

4. Tho Scripture no-where particularly and plainly teaches us when the Soul was first produc'd and came into Being, yet there are some passages in it which favour her Præexistence. *I have glorify'd thee on Earth; I have finish'd the Work thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with that glory I had with thee before the World was.* In which Text these two Things are plainly enough intimated, the Existence of the Subject of this Glory pray'd for before the World was, and an Intercision of this Glory for a while, and Recuperation of it again; the former whereof, tho it be true of the Divine Λόγος, yet the latter is incompetent to him. And the Event plainly shews the Subject of this Glory: for he that humbled himself to the Death of the Cross, was exalted by God to be the Sovereign Prince of Men and Angels; and he that was made in the Likeness of Man, or sinful Flesh, in a vile Body, was invested with Power to change our vile Bodies into the Similitude of his glorious Body. *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the World: again, I leave the World, and go to the Father. His Disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no Parable.* For the opinion of Præexistence, but in a special manner of the Soul of the Messiah,



fiah, was the common Doctrine of their Nation; and that Key easily unlock'd our Saviour's meaning. *Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, did not, like Lucifer, think equality with God a prey or spoil to be invaded by him, in that sense that Cicero says of Verres, lib. 5. Omnium bona prædam suam duxit; but was so far from assuming that which was not his own, that on the contrary he made himself less than indeed he was, and emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, which consisted in his being made in the likeness of Man, or of one of the Sons of Adam; and being found in fashion as a Man, he humbled himself yet further, becoming obedient even to death.* If this place be to be understood of the Humanity of Christ, nothing can be more plain than that his Soul præexisted: for otherwise to be born, tho' but in the Likeness of a Terrestrial Man, would have been a gain to him, not a diminution; since there is no good at all in *not being*, save to those who are extremely miserable. And that it is so to be understood, will be very probable, if we but take notice of the importance of the Phrases here us'd, and compare them with others in Holy Scripture. *Ἐν μορφῇ Θεῆ ὑπαρχων*, is as much as if he had said, *θεόμορφος*, or, after the more Attick Purity, *θεοειδής*, or *θεοεικέλος ὤν*, or *ὑπαρχων* even as St. Mark, in the story of the Woman which had the Issue of Blood, says after the Jewish way, *ἔσα ἐν ῥύσει αἵματος*, but St. Matthew more elegantly *αἱμορροῦσα*. St. John, after the Seventy, *διδακτοὶ Θεῶ*, but St. Paul *θεοδιδάκτοι* a very usual Hebraism in these Holy Writers. The thing signify'd by the Phrase in hand is Christ's Angelick Purity both in Body and Spirit. This is that Image of God according to which we were all at first made, and which Christ had not lost as the rest of his degenerate Brethren had; and this is the Divine Nature we shall again be made partakers of, when we shall have escap'd the Corruption that is in this World: for the Sons of the Resurrection are truly the Sons of God, and like unto God. But tho' the Humanity of Christ was so truly Deiform, yet he emptied himself of this Fulness of Life and Glory by taking the Form of a Servant, *μορφῶν δούλου*. What this means, the Apostle tells us in another place: *The Creature, i. e. Man in the Jewish Language, shall be manumitted from the servitude of corruption, and asserted into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God, i. e. Angels, or Angelick Souls, by the redemption of his Body.* So that *μορφῶν δούλου* is a mortal corruptible Body, which the Soul of Christ voluntarily took upon her, by which he became like unto us mortal Men, as he immediately adds, *ἐν ἰμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων* which he elsewhere calls *ὁμοίωμα σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας*, and *εἰκόνα τῆς τοῦ κόσμου*. And being by this his Servile Schema made lower than the Angels, he was

put

put in a capacity of being obedient even unto Death, and of tasting Death for every Man; and was thereby made perfectly like unto his Brethren, partaking of Fleth and Blood as they did, that he might by Death destroy him who had the power of Death, as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* speaks. For without this exinanition of himself, and descent from his Æthereal or Angelical condition, it was not possible for him to die. I might further add, for the justifying of this interpretation, that it is not conceivable how the Eternal Λόγος, who is what he is by an unchangeable and undiminshable necessity of Nature, can be said to empty himself; especially since the several parts and degrees of the Humiliation here describ'd, are spoken of the same person: but certainly he that is *Life it self* cannot be said to die, or become obedient to the Death of the Cross. Neither is it proper nor usual in Scripture to propound the Deity to us as an Example of Humility; tho' nothing is so frequent there, nor more congruous than to exhort us to be conformable to him in Love, Goodness and Purity. I shall say no more upon this place but this, That *if being in the form of God*, be to be expounded of the Soul of Christ, as in Physical Union with the Divine Λόγος, yet still our Argument for the Præexistence of his Soul will be every whit as good; as is plain at first sight. I have been something long upon this Text, but will make amends for it in only pointing to the rest which countenance this Opinion of Præexistence, as all those many Texts most naturally do, which say Christ *came down from Heaven*. For every other Interpretation of this Phrase *coming down from Heaven*, will either be *Soci-nian* as to the Notion, and a mere Violence as to the Words; or else will make the Λόγος alone to be the *Christ*, and him that *fills all things* to quit a place.

And certainly something in favour of this Opinion may be made of that question of the Disciples to our Saviour concerning the Man that was born blind; for either he approv'd of the common Opinion as true, or at least thought it very harmless, if false; since having so fair an occasion of rectifying the common Belief, he yet said nothing against it. I know indeed that the Silence of Scripture and the Arguments from thence, which they call *Negative*, are esteem'd of little force in Disputation, unless in some certain Cases. But he that shall seriously consider how great a Change does necessarily follow in the whole Frame of Christian Religion, from the beginning to the end of it, by the taking in or leaving out this Opinion of Præexistence, may possibly be induc'd to think that our Saviour's saying nothing on so apt an occasion, is one of those Cases wherein Silence is almost as argumentative as a positive Approbation.

Para-

Parables likewise will not be taken for Arguments: which is no ill Rule, if understood of the minute Circumstances of them, and of such parts as the Decorum of an Apologue requires; but certainly the whole will argue as well as instruct. But I lay no stress upon them, because they may have other true and sober Interpretations; yet I thought good to cast them in for variety sake; that you may see how congruently they may be apply'd to the Doctrine we are upon. The Prodigal Son's leaving his Father you know is describ'd by his going into a far Country, and there wasting his Substance with riotous Living: and in his return, his Father says of him, This my Son was dead, but is alive again; was lost, but is found. The Son of Man is come [from Heaven] to save that which was lost. If a Man have an hundred sheep, and one of them go astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now return'd unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your Souls. I am the good Shepherd, not an hireling, whose own the sheep are not. You may consider these places also, tho they do not all belong to this head of Parables: I am not sent, but εἰς τὰ ἁγέλας τὰ σκωλότα — and not for that Nation only, but that he should gather together in one τὰ πάντα τὰ ὄντα τὰ δεσποτιζόμενα — and having made peace by the blood of his Cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself, whether things in Heaven, or things in Earth. Dearly belov'd Brethren, I beseech you as Strangers and Pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul — And confess'd that they were Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth.

Lastly, The History of the Creation, cabbalistically interpreted, confirms the Truth of Origen's Opinion. And that the Word may not fright you, nor you think I mean by it fancifully and extravagantly, I will more particularly tell you my meaning; which is this: So interpreted as becomes the Majesty of that Spirit which dictated it; the profound Wisdom and Science of Moses who wrote it; the Natures of those things whose production is there deliver'd; lastly, so as may answer that form of delivery which it manifestly pretends to: For do but read it over, and then tell me whether it does not plainly aim at a Philosophical Method of completely teaching us the Natures and Order of God's universal Creation: and then apply the literal sense to this design, and see whether that alone does not infinitely fall short of it. Therefore necessarily some higher sense must also be added: which if it be so manag'd as to contain nothing but what is Great and True, answering the Title of the Sacred Story, and continuedly applicable to the Letter; I should not be very difficult to grant that this is the very thing intended by the Holy Spirit and his

Men-man *Moses*. And that this hath been so done with all these Conditions observ'd, and that the *Præexistence of Souls* is found amongst the other noble Doctrines of that great Physiologer, *Moses*, I refer you for satisfaction to the most judicious and ingenious Essay of the learned Gentleman above-nam'd. This may serve to let you see that the Father had very probable Reasons for his Second Opinion.

His Third is this, That these præexisting Souls, through their Fault and Negligence, became Inhabitants of the Earth in Terrestrial Bodies.

Which Opinion he grounds upon these Considerations.

1. That that infinitely full Goodness, the first blessed Spring and Original of all things, communicated of himself in their production to all possible varieties and degrees of Life, which his essential and eternally-assistant Wisdom judg'd best for the things produc'd, and most fitting and decorous in it self, so as they might neither incommode one another, nor yet be unhand somely crowded together without due distance and discrimination of their Natures. In which long Chain of Life and Being, propagated from the highest to the lowest of all, from the most incorporeal Deity to Matter it self, 'tis not to be wonder'd at, nay, 'tis necessary, that many of the intermediate Essences should partake of both the Extremes, and so there be brought into light Spirits incorporate. But since few Spirits after the First and Best are of immutable Purity, and since every different degree of their changeable Purity is proportion'd to a correspondent degree of Purity in Matter; and since Matter is actually existent in the World according to all degrees of Purity, 'tis not to be wonder'd at neither, that the same individual Spirit, or same Order of Spirits, should be sometimes united with one sort of Matter, sometimes with another. But whatever happen'd to them afterwards through the Mutability of their Nature, we may be assur'd from that infinite Goodness which produc'd them, that they were at first join'd to the purest Matter, and plac'd in the best Regions of the World, that the highest Life and Purity of Essence they then had made them then fit for. The Souls of Men are one Order of these essentially-incorporate Spirits, as both their deep Immersion into Terrestrial Matter, the Modification of all their Operations by it, and the heavenly Body promis'd us in the Gospel, as the highest Perfection of our recover'd Nature, do sufficiently argue. And therefore if our Souls did exist before they appear'd Inhabitants of the Earth, the Sediment of the corporeal World, they did exist in a purer Element, to which an higher degree of Life and purer Operations, and consequently greater Happiness, did belong. Who then

then should turn them out of that better condition, in which the Order and Course of Nature, and the internal Congruity of their own Essence had plac'd them? Certainly not He whose overflowing Goodness first brought them into Life and Being, and who, no doubt, in the first moment of their Existence, set them to exercise those Powers of Life he had given them, in those Parts of the World as were most advantageous for the Happiness they were capable of. And tho they should through the Lapsability of their Nature fall from this eminent pitch of primitive Felicity, to a state less happy and perfect: yet this State being not the lowest and worst of all, and that same Goodness which first made them, and always governs them, being undiminshable; it is almost as harsh to think he would precipitate them from this something better condition into that which is the most miserable of all, as that he did originally create them in such a condition as was far worse than what he then judg'd them capable of. And to think that any other external Cause could do it by Force and Violence, is very unphilosophical, since there is an inward Maturation of vital Congruity to be first wrought, before they be so much as capable of uniting with this or that Element, much less of living in it as a Seat and Habitation of a durable Life: besides, it seems inconsistent with that most wise and gracious Providence which governs the World, that any thing should have a power of disposing of any Being in it, *κατὰ τὴν ἀξίαν*. What then remains, but that through the faulty and negligent use of themselves, whilst they were in some better condition of Life, they rendred themselves less pure in the whole Extent of their Powers, both Intellectual and Animal, and so by degrees became dispos'd for the susception of such a degree of corporeal Life, as was less pure indeed than the former, but exactly answerable to their present disposition of Spirit; so that after certain Periods of Time they might become far less fit to actuate any sort of Matter than the Terrestrial; and being originally made with a capacity to join with this too, and in it exercise the Powers and Functions of Life, it seems necessary, according to the Course of Nature, that they should sink into it, and so appear Terrestrial Men? And that this is a very probable Cause of their becoming Inhabitants of the Earth, the learned Father thinks cannot be doubted, if we consider the necessary Mutability in created Essences, the Freedom of Will in humane Souls, and the great Sympathy there is betwixt the Parts of the Soul, (for he, according to the *Platonick* Doctrine, thinks the Soul heterogeneous, and nothing is more easy than to prove she is so.) For as he often inculcates, Goodness and Truth are not  
Essential

Essential or Substantial in these inferior Natures, so as that they should be in a perpetual Contemplation of them, and under that most happy Constraint of never losing the sight of their glorious Forms, and of never swerving from their Laws; but do in a more accidental way belong unto them, and are efficacious in them only upon certain terms and conditions. From which imperfection of their Nature arises the *ἀντεξέσιον*, (for this, in some sense, is no perfection) and by the too great liberty of that power it easily happens, that they observe not those terms and conditions; being drawn away from a press and careful attendance to them, by converting to the delightful Motions of their congenite Bodies: which delight is both natural, and in some degrees allow'd; but all corporeal Pleasures have something of Confusion and Disturbance in it, together with a strong magical Devocation of the Animadversion to the sense of it, they might, in this dark huddle, easily lose the sight of those Bounds and Limits beyond which they ought not to proceed in the enjoyment of those Pleasures they reap from corporeal Life. For it is very hard for the Soul, under the present actual Fruition of what is delightful to her, and meeting with nothing in this her freer indulgency, which by its sharpness may check her, not to be tempted a little and a little further, she feeling a freedom in her accompanying this her secret desire and inward presages all along. This unwarrantable Liberty is not at first so free, while the Principle of the more divine and intellectual Life is more intire: but this by little and little is weakned by those Permissions we make unto our selves, in favour of our natural Propensions to corporeal Joy; and so the superior Life extinguishing by degrees, and the inferior more eagerly kindling, we rush at last, without Bounds and Measure, to take our fill of those Pleasures, which the lawless Motions of the Body we are then united with, offer to our corrupted Sense. But whatever Aberrations we make from the Laws of intellectual Life, the ill effect of them is not confin'd to that chief and principal part of our Soul wherein that Life is seated, but descends from thence, and spreads its impure Contagion through all the Seats of inferior Life, by reason of that close Continuity which is in all the parts of the Soul. And whatever happens to her principal part, as the Centre of all the rest, does in a correspondent manner affect these which ray from that: For as these, in their first Emanation, were determinately such or such only, because that from whom they proceeded was of such or such a degree of Purity and essential Power; so in all the After-mutations which happen, they constantly sympathize with one another. For if the inferior Parts of the Soul destin'd unto her meaner Functions,

do so punctually obey the most still and silent Volition or Imagination of that which is Supreme, as we plainly find they do in Passions and spontaneous Motion; what Wonder is it if the present Frame, Habit and Temper of that supreme Part (which is certainly more powerful than a single transient Command) does mould and form them into a suitable Temper with it self? And therefore if that Central part, by forsaking the Laws of a better Life, become so impure, that her Operations in this degenerate condition, would not exceed those which may be expected from an Understanding in conjunction with Earthly Matter; the parts Derivative will necessarily be chang'd into a correspondent Feculency, and so the whole Soul will sink into Terrestrial Matter, for which alone it is now fit, and by her Seminal Reasons, proper to this State, shape it into the Fabrick of a Terrestrial Man.

2. And the Father further thinks we ought not to wonder at any thing in this procedure, if we do but read and understand what the Holy Scripture teaches us of the sinning Angels; That they kept not their primitive Excellency, but left their proper Habitations in the Regions of heavenly Light, and are therefore bound ἐν πύλαις πύλων παρτίσω, with the Chains of fuliginous Air. For what greater Wonder is it that *aereal Genii* become Terrestrial Men, than *athereal Angels aereal Demons*? But this parity of Reason is not all the assistance which *Origen* conceiv'd the Scripture afforded him in this Assertion. For the Sacred Story of *Man* in *Genesis* plainly describes a Transgression, for which he was turn'd out of Paradise, and became Mortal, as the Text says. Which History *St. Paul* carries further in his Epistle to the *Romans*, and says, That as by one Man sin entred into the World, and by sin death and mortality; so also did this death and mortality go through all Men, because, or so far as all have sinned; or in his own words more elegantly, ὡς περ δι' ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἡ ἁμαρτία εἰς τὸ κόσμον εἰσηλθε, καὶ διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὁ θάνατος. καὶ ἔτως εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὁ θάνατος διήλθεν, ἐξ ὧ πάντες ἠμαρτήσαν. And again to the *Corinth*. As by Man death— and, As in Adam all die.— By which places it appears that *Adam* sin'd, and as a consequent thereof became Mortal; his Sons also sin'd, and Mortality pervaded them too. Now who this Mortal *Adam* is, whose Image all that bear are likewise Mortal, the Apostle tells us in the same Chapter, to wit, ἀνθρώπου ἐν γῆ, χαϊκός. Therefore we all become χαϊκοί, or Terrestrial Men by sin. But since we are such from our first coming into this World, and the fault must needs be before the consequents of it, that Sin and Transgression by which we became such, must be look'd for higher, or in some former State. I know this conclusion would not be thought by many Men

Men rightly deduc'd from these places of Scripture: but this ought to be no prejudice against it, if you but remember that the gainfayers are of two sorts of Divines; the one those who deny this Original and general Depravation of Mankind; the other those who ascribe all to the Will and Sovereignty, or mistaken Justice of God, upon occasion of the personal miscarriage of the First Man that dwelt upon this Earth. The first of these do manifest Violence (in my apprehension) to Scripture, and contradict Experience: the latter grossly pervert the Nature of Things, and rudely dishonour the Divine Attributes; as might with much ease be shewn, if I thought it necessary to your sagacious Judgment.

But lest I should expose this Doctrine of the Holy Father, we have been debating, to a suspicion of greater inconcinnity than as he himself asserted it; I am to give you notice (if I have not already sufficiently done it) that this passing of the soul through several States of Life, and different Elements, is neither perform'd in a short time, nor ever descends so low as to destroy her Rational Nature, or put off Humane Form; both these are expressly deny'd by him. What the length of her better States of Life is, he only can truly judg who knows the internal Frame and Constitution of our Nature, and how vital every Congruity of Life is which he implanted in the soul, or he who is a present Inhabitant in that State of which the question is ask'd. But for us Terrestrial Animals, so perfect an Oblivion hath seiz'd on us through the great Change we underwent in our descent hither, where we now are, (that I may name no other reason) that we are utterly disabled to make any certain Answer to so curious an Enquiry. Only upon that Hypothesis, that to every remarkable difference of Purity in the Essence of created Spirits, there is a difference in Matter exactly answering and fitted thereto; and by how much more pure they are, by so much more durable is their Life, as approaching nearer to, and more fully partaking of the first and purest Fountain of Life: Upon this Hypothesis, I say, we may probably guess that the ordinary duration of Aereal Life does as far exceed the common Limits of the Terrestrial, as the subtilty and tenuity of that Element does the coarseness of that Matter which the Soul does especially actuate in our Terrestrial Bodies; and the Aereal Period falls as far short of the Celestial, as the blended Atmosphere of the pure lucid *Æther*. But these are mere guesses, and let them go with you for no more. This only we know, what the life of Man upon Earth commonly is in this Age of the world, and to what length it was drawn out in the days of old, when all the Elements were in their Spring and whole-



some Verdure, and before the fiery Principle, was grown so potent and copious as now it is; and the Gospel assures us, that the days of the heavenly or æthereal Life are so numberless, that it is call'd Eternal. The other part of my Advertisement was, That the Soul never descends below her rational Nature, and humane Form. Which I therefore take notice of, because I perceive the Adversaries of *Origen* have been something forward to draw this into the heap of their Criminations, that he did hold the contrary. But the Father was not so slight a Contemplator as to believe the Truth of it; and knew better what was the meaning of the Fable in the *Pythagorick* Doctrine, and could not but have observ'd after what manner *Plato* talks of it in the Close of his *Timæus*: who tho he do not (as far as I remember) call it a Fable; yet it is plain he handles it so carelessly, compar'd with the other parts of the Dialogue, that there is little doubt to be made but that he held it for one in the literal sense. Which will be more probable, if you observe, that he in that excellent Dialogue does punctually follow the Method and Opinions of *Timæus Locrensis* in his *De Anima Mundi*, who does expressly call it Fabulous. Beside, the learned Father, where he does mention it, discreetly affirms, that it is not an Opinion which he believes, but was propounded by him only for the *Copia* and variety of disputation. And that he may not seem to have said this in a colour, and cautiously for his own security, as *St. Jerome* very charitably would have him, he does in several places upon *St. Matthew*, and in his *contra Celsum*, dogmatically declare, that there is no such *μετενομασίαν*.

His Fourth Dogma is, That the Mystery of the Resurrection is this, That we shall be cloth'd with heavenly or æthereal Bodies, properly so call'd, and in a physical sense.

What is the Truth in this Opinion, must be learn'd from the Faith and Doctrine of the Gospel, whereof it is so eminent an Article, the great *βεβήσιον* of our holy Faith and Obedience; and the whole Evangelical Mystery, so far as it respects our Good and Advantage, is for the recovery of Mankind to this high pitch of Felicity: and the pious Father does most willingly resolve his Belief in this Opinion, into the sentence of those infallible Writings. But that you may have a more orderly and demonstrative Understanding of what they teach us in this matter, you are to recall to your Memory something of what I have before discours'd out of the Father, that so you may with one View see how coherent his Speculations are, and how much they confirm, and are confirm'd by the Doctrine of the Gospel. We have out of him affirm'd That the Souls of Men are Spirits essentially incorporate

That such Spirits depend much in all their Operations on that Body they are united with; That the Elements of our Terrestrial composition are such as almost fatally intangle us in Vice, Passion and Misery; That these Souls did exist and act (for what purpose else did they exist?) before they became visible Inhabitants of the Earth; That therefore they then had at least aëreal Bodies; That the purer the Body is the Soul united with, the purer, more perfect and happy is her Life and Operations; besides, that Supreme Goodness which made all things, assures us, that he made all things best at first: and therefore his recovery of us to our last Happiness (which is the design and purpose of the Gospel) must restore us to our better Bodies, and more happy Habitation. In the declaration of which recovery, if it be found that he promises us Celestial Bodies, 'twill be both according to what our Reason should expect in so gracious a design; and does also not obscurely intimate, that Earth was not the first Element wherein we did exist. Upon these Principles the Father establishes the present *Dogma*, some whereof we have already largely endeavour'd to prove; the rest are plain of themselves, and confessed by all, or you know where to have the accurate proofs of them, if you think they can be doubted of: and therefore I shall leave you to make the best of them for the advantage of the Father's present Assertion, betaking my self to see what Scripture says in the business, after I have taken two Arguments in my way, which I shall offer to your consideration in a more careless and popular manner.

I. He that is a Christian and Disciple of the Son of God, hath given up himself to the Observation of such Laws as require of him perfect Holiness and Purity, universal Abstinence from all Wrong and Injustice, hearty and unfeigned Love and Good-will to all Mankind; and all this in the inward Affections of his Mind, so as that they become his Nature, and the very Life of his Spirit. He is by the Tenour of that Holy Institute to mortify every inordinate Affection, to be dead to the sense of bodily Delights, not to be carried away with Self-interest, and the tickling Air of Fame and Honour from Men, not to be transported with Anger, to have no esteem of those things the World so much admires, and so eagerly pursues, Power and Wealth: but cut off from all things that are without, and perfectly commanding all the allow'd Motions and Desires of his Natural Spirit, he is solely to live the Life of God with intire Subjection to his Will. But do not all the World complain of the extreme difficulty of the Task? That it is as painful to their imagination when they think of it, and as painful to their sense when they go about it, as the violent dis-

cision of their very Life would be, could it be forcibly torn in pieces? Not but their Minds are very well satisfy'd of the reasonableness and justness of such an undertaking, and their most inward Light cannot but pronounce, that the possession of that Life they are call'd to, by the Counsels and Exhortations of the Gospel, would be a State of most desirable Felicity: so that if the Law of their Mind had a perfect Sovereignty over the whole Man, the business was done. But alas they are drawn away by the pleasing Force of the Magick of the Flesh, and in despite of all the Succour which their Mind Reason and Conscience bring them, are willingly led Captive by an Enemy whom they love. This is the *Law in the Members* whose very Nature is warring and opposition to the *Law of the Mind*: it is also call'd the Will, Sense, or *Affection of the Flesh* which hath such an essential Enmity to God, and whatever divine, that it can by no means be made subject to his Law. For the *Body of Death*, or the mortal Body, is, according to St. Paul, *sinful Flesh, in which dwells nothing that is good*, and the Law of it is the *Law of Sin and Death*. And that *Members, Flesh, Body, Death*, are to be taken plainly and literally, both St. Paul's Discourse make evident enough, and the Experience and Confessions of Men confirm; who palpably feel, that their Transgressing the Law of God and the Mind, proceeds from the Motions of the Earthly Body they are cloth'd withal. Now these Motions being as natural to it as Descent is to heavy Bodies, and as necessarily affecting us with the Sense of Sin, as Fire does with Warmth and Heat; it follows, that our Establishment in truly divine and sinless Life, which is the End of Christian Religion, cannot be effected but by our obtaining such a Body, as is farthest remov'd from the Nature of our present *Body of Sin*, that is, an heavenly or æthereal One.

2. You cannot but have observ'd, even in those who are Instructors of the People in Knowledg and Piety, Men otherwise learned, and of good capacity, a strange fatal proneness to such Opinions, as are as plainly repugnant and contradictory to the most easy and natural Ideas of our Mind, as can be: which Opinions, many of them, are concerning such Subjects, whose Worth and Excellency should make us very careful what we think of them, and hugely tender that we pronounce nothing of them which is injurious or mean; as of God, his Works, and Counsels, what is Holy, Righteous, Comely, Equitable, and the like: whose Natures rightly known, and according to Truth, bring the greatest Ease and Satisfaction, ineffable Peace and Quiet, and the most pure and ravishing delight that our Minds can receive from any knowledg whatever, and govern all the Purposes and Endeavours

Prizes of our Soul, all the Actions of our Lives consistently, quicken and encourage us to all growth and progress in Vertue, and whatever is good and laudable, and with unshaken Firmitude support our Hope, that our Labours shall not be in vain; lastly, which are also with abundant Clearness defined in those holy Oracles, which we all believe infallible. Whence is it then, that all that Light which should direct us to the Truth of such Objects, is not seen? That we are so easily content to want all that Pleasure and Peace arising from the Knowledg of their Truth; and patiently endure to live, act, and expect at random, without any sufficient Grounds, or Coherency of Reason? If the Souls of Men were Essentially unlike one another, or the Ideas of Truth were not everywhere the same, my Wonder would quickly cease: nay, if these erring Persons were but affected with their odd Conceits in that moderate degree of Prejudice which Authority is apt to beget in us, where we respect the Man who first deliver'd them to us, I could be content to look for the Reason of this Phenomenon in the modesty and humble deference of the Mind itself: but when I see them believe such gross Errors with such eagerness of Spirit, and with so settled an Affection, and from a congruity and sympathy of vital disposition, I am at a loss to find the Cause any where but in the complexional Impurity of their Earthly Bodies; whose foul Steams mixing with, and infecting that subtile Instrument the Soul uses in all her Senses and Perceptions, and by which all her Operations are modified, condemn them fatally to such gross Mistakes, and to an utter Intensibility of the contrary Truths, so long as they are condemn'd to see nothing but through such a coarse Medium, and to labour for Truth with such unqualify'd Instruments. And knowing that not only Vertue and Piety, but also Truth and Knowledg are the natural Accomplishments of the Soul, I conclude according to the Father, That that complete Perfection, which by the warrant of the Gospel we hope for in the Resurrection, cannot be wrought in us, unless we be possess'd of such a Body, whose Purity of Temper will be as subservient to Truth, as I find the Terrestrial one an hindrance thereto.

3. -I said at the beginning of this *Dogma*, That the Truth of it must be decided by the Testimony of Holy Scripture, whereof it is so important a part, and that the Holy Father is most ready to be concluded by its decision; therefore, in the third place, he argues from thence. You know *St. Paul*, in his first Epistle to the *Corinthians*, hath a Discourse on purpose concerning the *Resurrection*; from thence therefore, if any where, we may very well hope to find a determination of the matter

in hand. The Apostle in that most excellent and learned Discourse, having first prov'd the Resurrection of our Ever-blessed Lord and Saviour, comes at last to answer the Objections of some incredulous or misinform'd Men in that Church, which he gives us in these words, *How are the dead raised up? and with what bodies do they come?* In which, if there be any sense or force to make it worthy of an Answer from the Apostle, it must be this, or some such like; How is it possible that those Bodies should rise again and be joyn'd to the Souls that formerly actuated them, which we see rotted in the Grave, dissolv'd into Dust, and scatter'd over the Face of the Earth, or evaporated into Air, and dispers'd as far asunder possibly as the Heaven is wide, and undergo Ten thousand several Transformations, and are adopted into as many several Bodies whether Animals or others? To which the Apostle answers, not by saying the Power of God is infinite, and his Knowledge infinitely distinct, so as he can find out and recollect all those wandering Atoms, and of them recompose that Building which once they made: but by calling first the Objector fool, for so grossly mistaking the Question, as if the Christians expected the same individual Body, made of the same numerical Particles of Matter, which his Objection supposes; whereas the Doctrine of the *Resurrection* is somewhat like that of a grain of Corn, which must first die before any thing spring of it, and that which does spring up from its Death, is another thing from that which was sown and died. And then, Secondly, by further informing him, that the differences of Body and Matter are far more numerous than he takes notice of; so that it is so far from being necessary, that we should have the same individual Bodies, that there is no necessity we should have Bodies of the same sort or kind: for the World is better stor'd than so, and contains Celestial Bodies as well as Terrestrial, of different Worth and Excellency; and that God who gives us a Body as it pleases him, is graciously pleased to give us one in the Resurrection of that kind which is most Excellent and Glorious, *viz.* Heavenly and Spiritual: and that tho we have born the *Image of the Earthly Adam*, having an Earthly Body as he had, yet it is not necessary we shall always do so; for there is an Heavenly *Adam* too, the *Lord*, whose *Image we shall bear*, having an heavenly and spiritual Body as he hath. And lest we should mistake what he meant by *Earthly* and *Heavenly, Animal* and *Spiritual Bodies*, and transfer these words to Dispositions in the Soul, or use them improperly any other way, to the countenancing any gross or slow conceit, he gives us a key of his meaning by this plain and down-right Affirmation, That *Flesh and Blood* (a Phrase well known to signify the

The Earthly Body, and for its sake a Man, in such a Body) cannot come to Heaven, or the Kingdom of God; for it is impossible that such a Body, which is in its intrinsecal Nature corruptible, should become incorruptible, or be fit to inherit incorruption. And further, you may possibly not think it a Remark altogether impertinent, that if the Apostle had been of the Mind of *Origen's* Adversaries, it would be very hard to imagine why he should give so long, so distinct and particular an Answer to the Question. For it may seem more suitable to the Authority of so great a Person, when captiously ask'd, *With what Bodies do they come?* roundly to have answer'd, *With the same they left behind them.*

Another Argument out of the same Apostle may be, that in his second Epistle to the same Corinth. For we know, that if our earthly House of this Tabernacle was dissolved, we have a building from God, an House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our House which is from Heaven. Where are plainly describ'd two several Houses, or Bodies, quite different one from the other in their Materials, Duration, and Benefit to the Inhabitant: the one is call'd Earthly, and a Tabernacle which shall be dissolv'd, wherein we groan through the burdensomness of it; the other Heavenly, and Eternal, and hugely advantageous and desirable to us: the former Characters designing the Body we have here upon Earth, the latter that which we expect hereafter in Heaven. So that unless any thing may be any thing, and the same thing while the same be quite another thing, it is not possible but that that Body we look for in Heaven, or at the Resurrection, should be a quite different thing from that Body of Flesh and Blood we are now clothed with, since it hath such different Properties. For unless the coarse Concretion of Earth, as Earth can be as liquid as *Æther*, or Heavenly Matter, and that which is in its own nature dissoluble, be eternal, and be actually dissolv'd only to be set together again, or that we groan through the Oppression of that weight which we earnestly desire to be burdened with again, the Body which we have here cannot (according to the Apostle) be that which we hope to have hereafter. And all the Properties of the former Body will, from its essential Contexture, necessarily adhere to it wherever it be, and the Properties of the latter are the most genuine Results of æthereal Purity; so that if *St. Paul*, by the Building we are to have from God, by the *House not made with hands*, describes that Body God will give us in the Resurrection of the Just, he says the same with the Holy Father, That the Mystery of that happy Time and Change is this, That we shall then be clothed with heavenly or æthereal Bodies.

This

This is sufficient for the proof of this Assertion out of Scripture: yet if you please you may over and above make trial, whether any convenient sense can be made of those so very frequent Phrases of a *mortal* body, a *corruptible* body, a body of *death*, a *vile* body, an *inglorious* and *infirm* body, a *dead* body, the *flesh of Sin*, and the like; if such bodies may be incorruptible, immortal, eternally living, never to die more, refulgent with lucid Glory, like the Body of Christ, who is the *Adam ἐπιγεννητός*, in the same sense that the other *Adam* was *κοινός*; and lastly, be the Instruments of perfect Purity, Righteousness and Holiness. I persuade my self you will find it an hard Task to reconcile such discordant Attributes. But to say, that whatever the Bodies we have upon Earth be in their own nature, God by his Omnipotent Power can make them such as the Gospel promises they shall be at the Resurrection, and keep them by his Almighty Hand from Death or Decay, is to say, that Miracles are very cheap with him; nay further, it is to say, that God, where he intends us a benefit, will work a perpetual Miracle to keep us in a worse state than we might arrive to by the ordinary Laws, and Course of Nature. For it is demonstrable from Philosophy and Apparitions, that an aerial Body will necessarily fall to our share upon the quitting of this we have; and where the Soul is more than ordinarily advanc'd in the progress of an holy and vertuous Life, that aerial Body of hers will be in great disposition to an æthereal Purity: so that if the Providence of God would not interpose her self, but leave things in that state they come to by her eternal Laws, it would be much better for so perfect Souls to stay where they are, than to be again clothed with Flesh and Blood. For this is plainly to climb downwards, and with pretence of Courtesy to remand the releas'd Man to his Prison and Chains. And it is very childish to think, that Flesh and Blood made gay without, by I know not what imagin'd Light and Glory, is one pin the better for it: For if the House be ruinous in the Materials and Make of it, and stuttish and unclean within, all the external Painting and Pargetting imaginable can neither secure the Inhabitants from its Fall, nor make their Dwelling one jot more wholesome. The Moon, as bright as she looks, is as very an Earth as this we tread on, contempt, and desire to leave. But as hard as you will find it to make sense of those Phrases above-nam'd, which characterize our Earthly Body, if this Earthly Body is to come to Heaven; just so easy and natural are the opposite Expressions which describe that Heavenly Body, which shall certainly come thither. For both the Duration of it, its refulgent Glory, and its eximious Subserviency to all Purity, Righteousness and Truth, do as properly

perly belong to a Body of æthereal Purity; and this only, as any natural Effect whatever, to its true and specifick Cause, as a very little Skill in Philosophy would satisfy any Enquirer. And what greater Assurance can any Man have, that he understands any thing he reads, than evidently to see that the Words are fit and apposite, and the very same that all Men use who write or speak perspicuously, and the Things asserted such as exactly answer to the Nature of Things?

Having Scripture so plainly on our side (for so for *decorum* sake I must speak, plainly the part of an *Origenist*) I think I may be bold to expostulate with the Adversaries, and ask them what it is they seek by their so eagerly-defended Fleshly Body, and what is the prop of their tenacious Confidence? For 'tis plain that we are nothing, and are concern'd in nothing more than what we are conscious of, feel and perceive; That the Soul alone is the Subject of all Sense, Perception, Memory, and Affections; That what she perceives by, is neither the Flesh nor Blood, no, nor the Brains themselves, nor any other gross part of our Bodies, but that purer and subtiler Matter in us which is call'd *Animal Spirits*; That if the Soul be an immaterial Substance, distinct from the Body, 'tis as easily conceiv'd, nay more easily, how she should unite with an whole Vehicle of such pure Matter, as with her whole Terrestrial Body; especially she giving us, even in this Body, a *Specimen* of that Capacity of hers, by being in her highest degree of Vitality united with some portion of that Matter already. What is it then that they expect from the most refin'd Flesh and Blood they can imagine, which they may not have with Usury and Advantage in a Body of purer Consistence? or what is the Scruple that makes them so backward in admitting such a Body? To the former Question I make no doubt they can answer nothing which will not be gross and ridiculous. To the latter I know they will say, that the Scripture says otherwise: we shall see that more particularly at the fifth Query. In the mean time consider, O ye fond Doaters on Fleth and Blood, what we have already produc'd out of that Sacred Treasury of Truth, contrary to your dull Pretensions: and further call to mind, that as Scripture calls those Bodies we hope for in the Resurrection of the Just, *Celestial* and *Spiritual*, and terms the place of our Abode at that blessed time, the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Inheritance in Light; so Philosophy and Astronomy can demonstrate, that the Matter of that happy Place is mere Light, and liquid Spirit or Æther. Why then do you pretend misinterpreted Scripture contrary to all Reason, Philosophy, and your own Benefit, against Scripture; having Philosophy, and your Advantage on its side? And since

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our present Bodies, by which we are Inhabitants of the Earth, are of a Terrestrial Concretion, and consist of such Matter which arises from the Earth, and which after all its Transmutations, Elutriations and Filtrations in the Body, is not purg'd from the coarse Tincture it had from its Earthly Original; and since the Scripture says that Angels, the Inhabitants of Heaven, are Spirits, and a Flame of Fire, and are call'd Angels of Light, as Heaven it self is Light and Fire, and appear always in a lucid Form, and that the Devils or Dæmons are the Inhabitants of the Air (whom the Stories of Apparitions, and the Confessions of Witches, plainly prove to have Bodies of Air) what Croſſness and Madneſs is it to believe we shall be Fellow-Citizens of the Angels in the Kingdom of Heaven, and have such a Body as the Apostle calls Heavenly and Spiritual, and yet to interpret that word *Heavenly* otherwise than in relation to the Subtily and Tenuity of the Matter of Heaven? But to leave these φιλοπάρες, and let you further see that St. Paul did not only sit at the Feet of Gamaliel, (from whom Mr. Gregory conceives he learn'd the Analogy between the germination of a Grain of Corn, and the Resurrection of the Body) but had also been admitted into the Pythagorick ὀμαχοεῖον, or rather that both he and the Divine Pythagoras were taught by the same Spirit of Truth and Holy Knowledg; I will give you a taste of that great Congruity of Phrase there is in the Delivery of their Doctrine. And not to trouble you with many Authors of that way, I will content my self with Hierocles in his Commentary on the *Golden Verses*, as they are call'd. The body of Flesh we have here upon Earth, he, with St. Paul, calls θνητὸν and ψυχρὸν that which the pure and perfected Spirits in Heaven have, he with him calls πνευματικὸν, as also φωτεινὸν and αὐροειδές, which plainly answer to St. Paul's σῶμα τῆς δόξης he likewise terms it ἀθάνατον, and αἰθεριον, and αἰθεριον, which is exactly the same with St. Paul's having put on Immortality, and Eternal, and Heavenly. He says likewise, that in order to our Heavenly Journey, we must first τρωτὸς θνητῆς σώματος εὐσιν ἀπεδυσασθαι, and that the σῶμα ψυχρὸν cannot ascend εἰς τὸ αἰθεριον τόπων. What is this, but that Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God? And again, — τὸ θνητὸν ἡμῶν σῶμα, ἐν ᾧ τὸ αὐροειδές ἐγκείται προσπίεον τῷ αἰψύχῳ σώματι ζωῆς. Ζωὴ γὰρ ἐστὶ τὸ αἰθεριον σῶμα. Than which it is not possible to find a better Comment upon that of St. Paul — Cloth'd upon with our House which is from Heaven, that Mortality might be swallow'd up of Life. Again, — τὸ θνητὸν ἡμῶν σῶμα ἐκ τῆς ἀλόγου ζωῆς καὶ τῆς ὕλικῆς σώματος συγκείμενον, ἔδωλον ὄν τὸ αἰθεριον, ὅς ἐκ λογικῆς ἕστιας καὶ σώματος αἰθεριον συνέστηκε. St. Paul's

Paul's outward and inward man, the Earthly and the Heavenly Adam. He says also that the Spiritual Vehicle of the Soul being perfected and purged from all material Unvitalness or Mortality, and the lucid Body being rendered pure and defecate, we are then fit to be admitted into the Company and Converse of the pure Spirits which have æthereal Bodies; and are then arriv'd to the Angelick Nature; which in the Words of Scripture is, *But ye are come to the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable Company of Angels, and to the Spirits of just men made perfect.*—*They are equal to the Angels, and are the Children of God* [*θεοὶ* in Hierocl.] *being the Children of the Resurrection.*—*If by any means I might attain to the Resurrection of the Dead. Not as if I had already attain'd, or was already perfected.* Lastly, that I draw the Parallelism no further, in this Theory of Bodies he uses the Words of *ἐπεργεῖν* and *ἀναβιώσκειν*. I need not tell you, much less shew you, that he does not use such Words alone. I shall trouble you with no more Examples, these being sufficient, and clear, and apposite enough (chiefly some of the first of them, which I especially intended) to shew you the Agreement in Stile between St. Paul and Hierocles. Now the use I make of it is this: 'Tis notoriously known, that the Pythagorick or Platonick Doctrine concerning the different states of Spirits incorporate, is the same with Origen's; and that the Words and Phrases they use to express the different nature of the Body by they are cloth'd with, are as fit and proper (if their Doctrine be true) as any that can be invented, is plain to every one that understands the use of Words. Now that St. Paul should use the same in the same Matter and Argument, yet not in the same sense, but a quite different one, is the most unlikely thing in the World; and besides, renders all Endeavours of finding his Sense and Meaning utterly frustrate, or desperately uncertain. But if St. Paul us'd them in the same sense with those Philosophers, then it is manifest that Origen's Doctrine of the Resurrection is the same with St. Paul's, and therefore infallibly true. There is a reverend Doctor of our Church of eximious Piety and Learning (and long may he live to be a Light in this perverse Generation, and the Envy of those that are Adversaries and Afflictors of our dear Mother) whom I have heard to be of Opinion, that this Hierocles, of whom we have been speaking, was a Christian; and who intends to increase the number of his learned and useful Writings, with a Dissertation to prove the same. If this Report of him be true, I make no doubt but amongst other Arguments which have persuaded him to entertain this Paradox, the great Agreement in Doctrine and Phrase betwixt the holy Penmen