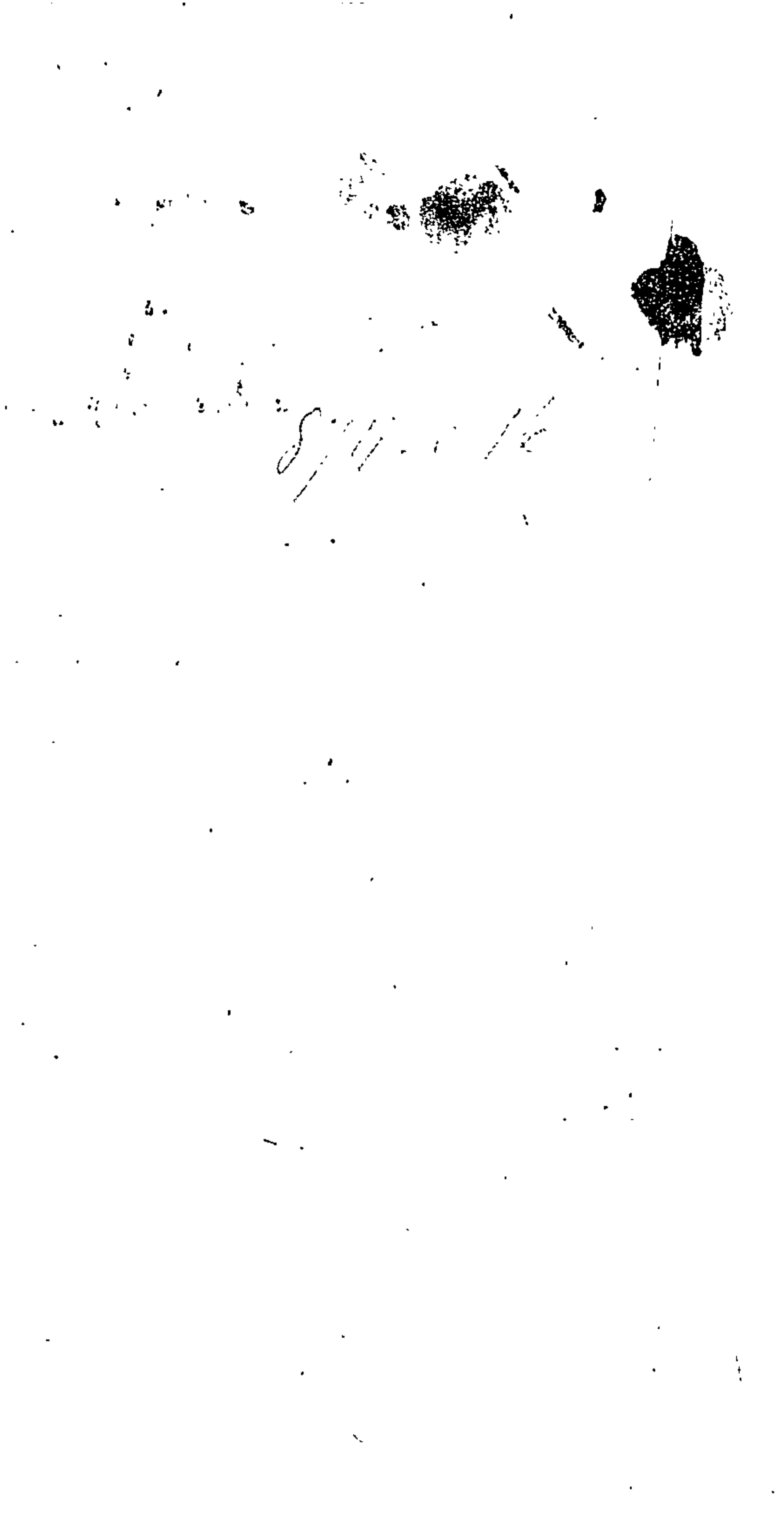


Smith & Jones  
123 Main St  
New York

Wm. J. Brown

James J. Green



Whereas it hath pleased Almighty God of his  
Great mercy to take unto himself our late  
Sovereign King George of happy memory  
the Imperial Crown of these Kingdoms is  
Rightfully and solely, and to the High and  
mighty Prince George Prince of Wales,

© Wm. Lawrence  
Ann. Henry  
1727



*ANNA*  
*Angliae, Scotiae,*  
*Hiberniae,*  
*Defensor, etc.*



*D: Gratia*  
*Franciae, et*  
*Regina, Fidei.*

*Printed & Sold at a Bible in Grace Church Street London*



THE  
**New Practice of Piety:**  
Writ in Imitation of  
*Dr. Browne's Religio Medici:*  
OR,  
**The Christian Virtuoso:**  
DISCOVERING  
*The Right Way to Heaven,*  
Between all EXTREAMS.

Together with

- I. The Character of a Moderate (or Right) *Christian*, in all the Degrees of Perfection attainable in this World.
- II. A Specimen of Holy *Living* and *Dying*; copied from the Lives of the Primitive Christians.
- III. The *Secret Diary*, Shewing how the Author intends to govern his Thoughts, Words and Actions, for the remaining Part of his Life.

The whole being a *System of Uncommon Thoughts* (Speculative and Practical) extracted from the Christian EXPERIENCES of Forty Years.

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By a Member of the New Athenian Society.

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The Third Edition.

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Dedicated to the Learned Mr. JOHN LOCK, Author of the Essay upon Human Understanding.

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May we know what this New Doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is? Acts 17. 19.

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LONDON:

Printed for John Marshall at the Bible in Gracechurch-street. M DCC V.

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*To the Learned*

Mr. JOHN LOCK,

Author of the ESSAY

*Upon Humane Understanding.*

SIR,

**M***Y* Ambition to have your Worthy Name standing in the Front of my Book, was to induce the World to be at least Civil to it. I cou'd indeed have Dedicated these Sheets to some Men of a High Title, but they make but small Reckoning of such Presents as these; in regard they are often either above their Understanding, or disagreeing from their Genius; but for my part, I prefer Piety before Birth, and Learning before Dignity; and consequently chose rather to Address this **New Practice of Piety** to Mr. Lock, than to any other Person whatsoever.

Sir,

The New Athenian Society ( of which I own my self an unworthy Member ) have ever had an Extraordinary Value for your Person and Writings; and I had sooner paid my Respects to you in this Publick manner, had I thought any thing less than a New Practice of Piety cou'd deserve so

## The DEDICATION.

*Great a Name as yours to be prefixt to it, a Name that is equally Rever'd and Lov'd by all Pious and Learned Men.*

*Sir, Great is the Contention about the Right Way to Heaven; but of the many Religions Profess'd in this Land, our Spiritual Guides have sufficiently prov'd, that there is only One True Religion, and that the Protestant is it; and therefore I have endeavour'd in this Book to draw Right Christianity into a narrow Room, as a vast World into a small Map; to the end, that with a little Travel much may be Discover'd.*

*I hope, Sir, 'twill no ways offend you (tho' you have been settled in the Right way to Heaven for 60 Years) that a Review of matters belonging to Religion shou'd be thought needful; for since the Scripture doth premonish us, that Heresies must of necessity be, and False Teachers wou'd come to disturb the Peace and Unity of the Church: It is doubtless necessary to try which of all these Spirits are of God, and which is that Right Christianity so plainly shewn in the Holy Scriptures.*

*In which important Search, the Reading of this Book, will ( by Gods Grace ) discover such Light to discern Truth from Falshood; and such Directions to find out the Strait Gate, which only leadeth to Eternal Life, as may satisfie the most Scrupulous, especially if they Read with that Impartial Eye, and Humility of Spirit, as they ought to do, who desire to see the Truth between all Extreams.*

*Having therefore ( amongst the Great Variety of Religions ) discover'd the Right Way to Heaven, I shou'd be wanting to my self in so Nice an Under-*



## The DEDICATION.

Undertaking, if I did make choice of any other Patronage than yours, whose Refin'd Conversation has rankt you in the Number of Primitive Christians: Others owe their Honour to Great Titles, you to Piety and Learning; their Conquest is of others only, yours of others and your self too: In a word, all the Addition that can be made to your Pious Character, is a continuing to Live as you now do: Dr. Burthog observing this, obtain'd your Patronage to his Ingenious Essay upon Reason: But tho' I can't merit your Favour as he did, yet from your Condescending Goodness, I raise to my self a Hope, that you will dart a Ray to Quicken and Cherish a Search after Right Christianity; and I'm the more encourag'd to hope this, as it owes its very Essence to your self, being compos'd of your Heroick Vertues; your Large Soul is so Brim-full of Knowledge and Piety, that he that Converseth with Mr. Lock, need not peruse this Book, for you two differ in nothing, save in the Lively Grace which all Originals have above their Copies: Or if my Christian Virtuoso has mistook his way ( of which you are a proper Judge ) look into your self, and form him a New one out of your own Bosom, where Perfections dwell to which I can never Penetrate.

Worthy Sir, I intend not by this Address merely to satisfie an Old Formal Custom of Dedications, but to tell you and others, what Esteem I have for a Pious, Sober and Peaceable Genius, such as you seem to be Inspired with; especially in this Contentious Age, when Charity seems to be swallow'd up by a bitter Zeal, and Right Christianity pin'd and shrivel'd into a bare Skelton, thro' the Idleness,

## The DEDICATION.

or Security, or Impertinence of its Professors: I am mightily pleas'd with that Impartial Censure, which a Reverend Bishop of our Church hath given upon his Polemical Studies: I shall not be ashamed, saith he, to say, that I am weary and toyled with rowing up and down in the Seas of Questions, which the Interests of Christendom have Commenced; and in many Propositions (I am heartily perswaded) I am not certain that I am not Deceived, and I find that Men are most confident of those Articles which they can so little Prove, that they never made Question of them. But I am most certain (*continues this good Prelate*) that by Living in the Religion and Fear of God, in Obedience to the King, in the Charities and Duties of Communion with my Spiritual Guides; in Justice and Love with all the World, in their several Proportions; I shall not fail of that End which is Perfective of Humane Nature, and which will never be obtain'd by Disputing. — *So that 'tis clear from Bishop Taylor's words, Matter of Difference in Opinion, is often but an abatement of Devotion; but words appertaining to Piety, are sweeter than the Honey or the Honey-Comb: Sure I am, the time will come, when a Life well Liv'd, and Transacted in a quiet Pursuit of our Proper Duties, will be a better Cordial than all the Wrangling Disputes, of either Churchmen or Dissenters. There it were to be wish'd, we had less contending in Matters of Controversie, which avail little to Godliness, and more sincere Practice of Christian Piety; that we had less Questioning in general, and*

## The DEDICATION.

*in particular, less Curious Prying into Sacred Mysteries, and more Religious Preparation for Heaven; that there were more Moderation amongst Protestants, that ( as my Lord Russel expresses it ) Dissenters were less Scrupulous, and Churchmen less Severe: For we may consider, that after all the stir about Occasional Conformity, Re-Ordination, &c. the Devotion of most is but SO, SO; for the Heaps of Volumes that treat upon this Subject, how do they all in a manner tend only to matter of Contradiction?*

*But the aforesaid Bishop has set us in The Right Way to Heaven, and what he observes concerning Practical Vertue, and the Ill Success of Disputing, shou'd make us all strive for an Union in Religion, which King William ( as a Common Father to all his People ) desired so much, that 'twas part of his daily Prayer,*

*Lord Bless and Preserve  
thy Church, dispersed over  
the Face of the Earth, Re-  
store to it UNITY and  
Concord in the acknow-*

Lately Publish'd by  
the Bishop of Norwich  
and sold by W. BARNES,  
at the Crown in Pall-  
Mall.

*ledgement of the Truth; and the Practice of  
Righteousness and Goodness: Remove out of  
it all Divisions and Dissentions, all Tyranny  
and Usurpation over the Minds and Conscien-  
ces of Men: Lord, Pity the Distractions, and  
Heal the Breaches of that part of thy Church  
which thou hast Planted in these Kingdoms:  
Take away thole mistakes and mutual Exaspe-  
rations which cause so much Distemper and Di-  
sturbance and Restore to it Piety and Vertue,  
PEACE*



## The DEDICATION.

PEACE and Charity; Endue the Pastors and Governours of it, with the Spirit of True Religion and Goodness: Give them Wisdom to discern the best and most proper means of composing the Differences of this miserably Divided Church; the Heart to Endeavour it, and by thy Blessing upon their Endeavours, the Happiness to Effect it.

Thus Pray'd King William ( of Ever Glorious Memory ) for an Union in Religion amongst his Protestant Subjects: And seeing we have lately seen Heads of Agreement Assented to by the United Ministers ( formerly call'd Presbyterian and Congregational ) why might not those Heads be enlarg'd to a Comprehension, or a General Union amongst Protestants.

Our Sovereign Lady ( who is no ways behind King William, for Compassion and Tenderness to all Her Subjects ) does also desire an Union in Religion; for in her Speech to the Parliament, Nov. 9. 1703. She's pleas'd to say, 'I want words to express to you, my Earnest desires of seeing all my Subjects in Perfect Peace and UNION among themselves: I have nothing so much at Heart as their General Wellfare and Happiness: Let me therefore desire you all, that you would carefully avoid any Heats or Divisions, that may disappoint me of that Satisfaction, and give Encouragement to the Common Enemies of our Church and State.

And as at the opening of this Parliament Her Majesty express her Earnest Desire of seeing all Her Subjects in PERFECT UNITY amongst themselves,



## The DEDICATION.

‘selves ; so at the Proroguing of it, She persists in  
the same EARNEST DESIRE, Advising the  
Commons, ‘to go down to their several Coun-  
tries, so Dispoled to Moderation and Unity,  
‘as becomes all those who are joyned together  
‘in the same Religion and Interest. And as  
our Gracious Queen desires to see all her Subjects  
in PEACE and UNION among themselves ; so I  
believe the Moderate Clergy wou’d greatly Rejoyce  
to see all Her Majesties Subjects United in one  
Church, for in a Letter, lately sent by an Emi-  
nent Conformist, to his Kinsman, a Dissenter,  
are these words, ‘As for the Strangeness you  
‘charge me with, you wou’d be more just, to  
‘impute it to my seldom coming to London,  
‘and my short stay there, then to any Diffe-  
‘rence in our Opinions ; for I think a Man may  
‘spend an hour or two with a Relation, with-  
‘out any Disputes upon Controversial Subjects;  
‘and I can Assure you, That the POWER of  
‘Godliness, is that which I have a much great-  
‘er Regard to, than the FORMS of it.

But notwithstanding this seeming Con-  
currence of all Parties for an Accommo-  
dation in the Disputable Matters relating to  
Divine Worship, yet I much Question whether  
UNION in Religion will e’er be effected in our  
days ; for to be sure the Devil and the High Flyers,  
will do all they can to oppose it : However, I have  
undertaken in this Book, to reduce the points in Con-  
troversie to so short a Compass, that I can’t think  
any Moderate Men will dissent from ’em.

But seeing the High Flyers and the Moderate

## The DEDICATION.

Men, are Persons not so well understood as they shou'd be, 'tis fit I shou'd further explain what I mean by 'em.

By *High Flyers*, I mean a sort of Soaring Politicians, that Sin against all the Prospects of Sense and Reason; they are Credulous Bigots, that never think; and tho' they pretend to be Sons of the Church, they are in Reality, but half Papists and half Protestants. Their Charity to Dissenters waxeth colder and colder, and their Zeal (tho' late A-la-mode) is a little too hot; for 'tis not that Holy Fire, which is kindled by a Coal from the Altar, but is that *Ignis Fatuus*, or *Will-o'-the-wisp*, which is but a Meteor piec'd up of Malignant Vapours: Had they liv'd in the time of the Ten Persecutions, what clean work wou'd they have made with those *Nonconforming Christians*? Our Gracious Queen desires perfect Peace and Union amongst all her Protestant Subjects; but these Fiery Mad-caps do now fling about their Bombs and their Granadoes against the Phana-ticks, as if they were storming a *Conventicle*, every word is a Snap-Dragon, or a Flash of Lightning, enough to singe all the Periwigs in the Congregation. — Strange! — That such Fiery Men should be for *Passive Obedience*! But that's a Vertue which they only Preach to others, never Practice themselves. — *This I take to be the True Character of the High Flyers.*

*But the Moderate (or Right Christian) is a Man of a different Principle; for by Moderate Men, I don't mean Luke-warm Professors, but such as are Zealous to serve God, and (tho' members of the*  
Church

## The DEDICATION.

Church of England, or any other Protestant Church) do cordially Embrace with the Extended Arms of Good Will, whoever are dignified with the Image of Piety, tho not distinguished with their own Superscription.— I own these Moderate Men are branded with the Odious Name of Trimmers; but seeing Faith is above Reason, I wonder not to see even the Best Temper'd Christians, think that which is not their own Religion, to be therefore Ridiculous. However the Variety which we behold in the Universe, is not its Deformity but its Beauty; as the Eye is more Ravisht with a Landskip, which invites it with the grateful Interpositions of Hills and Valleys; Woods and Champion Grounds, than if it were let out, to lose it self in the Uniformity of a waste Horizon, or Empty Prospect; so is the Truly Pious Soul, more surpriz'd with the Glory of the Christian Religion, when Various Apprehensions agree in the same Substantial Holiness, one Star differing from another in Glory, yet all shining with a Light borrow'd from the same Fountain. And therefore (as I said before) I can't think any Moderate Man will dislike the Subject of this Book, as my design is to put an end to needless Controversies, and to perswade us all to an Union in Religion; but alas, Sir, We are come to that height of Madness, that if a Man will not be Drunk, or Swear, streight he is a Dissenter: If you ask such as these, Of what Religion they are? They will tell you they are Protestants of the Church of England.— Ask'em, Why then they side with Young Perkin, who is a Papist? Because,



## The DEDICATION.

quo' they, the Papists are better than the Presbyterians. — Ask 'em how so? Because, cry they, the Presbyterians are worse than the Papists; Nay, such senseless and unreasonable Bigots are some Churchmen, that it is not enough for a Moderate Man to own Episcopacy, to hear Common Prayer constantly, to receive the Sacrament according to our Church, unless he will say and do in every thing as the High Flyers; he is a Phanatick, an Occasional Conformist, &c. Hence such a Bustle, such a Clutter, such a Hurry, hence so much canvassing at Elections, such Bawling out St. George for the Church, as if all lay at stake, when nothing is in danger: I have heard in a late Election of Parliament Men, a Clergy-Man of some Note, usher'd in a Company of Electors, Crying Out, No Popery, no Presbytery; the sober hearers, wondred what he meant, none looking towards Presbytery, being in any Nomination, or under any Pretensions to the Election. That therefore Men might no longer be Abused with Empty Noises and Clamours; 'twas high time for some Christian Virtuoso, to discover who that Right Christian is, that deserves our Vote and Esteem. I wou'd have a True Churchman to be one that is able and ready to give account of his Faith clearly to every one that asks him; and if all those of other Perswasions were able to do the like; I think all such as own the Scriptures to be the Word of God, and their Rule, wou'd quickly be agreed. If we of the Church of England have a Latitude to give to Men a further Power in the things of God than others can, we have no rea-



## The DEDICATION.

son to be angry with the Dissenters that are more straitned; for we have no reason at all, to cry out against the Pope, for his claim to Infallibility, if we will not allow, that we or any Church may be mistaken.

However, the Souls of Men are Precious, and I have here said my utmost to direct us all in that Right Way that leads to Heaven, and I verily think, wou'd all Parties agree to lay by their Bigottry and Prejudice, an Union in Religion, wou'd soon be Effected. However, that I might contribute all I can to this Blessed Work.

In the First (or Speculative Part) of this Book I endeavour to imitate Dr. Brown, in his Religio Medici; I own I am far from matching that Brave Original; yet I found it easier and more proper for me to write after Dr. Brown's careless way, than to pretend to any Form or Method wherein I might commit a thousand mistakes; but in this, some of 'em will pass like his, for Uncommon Errors, and please for the sake of Novelty.— As for my self, my vanity never prompted me, to be a Standard Bearer to any either NEW SECT, or Old Heresie; and I pity such as Love to Live like Pew-keepers in the House of God, busied in seating others, without ever providing a Room for themselves. If then my Speculative Part, does offend such as are truly Pious, it will much grieve me, and it shall always be my endeavour for the time to come, rather to drop Tears for my own sins, than to upbraid other Men with theirs. But tho' Nice Speculations in Religion are not so Necessary, and are more dangerous than Sincere

## The DEDICATION.

Practice (for our Piety and Principles scarce ever grow after they begin to be too Curious) yet who knows but my Watch goes right, albeit it agree not with the Publick Clock of the City, especially where the Sun of Righteousness hath not by pointing clearly the Dial of Faith, shewed which of the two are in the Error. —

But however New, or Orthodox, my Speculations are, I intend not to gain to my self the Title of Reformer, by Publishing of them, seeing most of these have had the same Fate with that Curious Painter, who having drawn an Excellent FACE, as well as cou'd have been expected from the Smoothest Mirror, did therefore dash it afresh upon the dislike of every New Spectator, till at last he Reform'd it from being any ways like to the Original. But suppose our Christian Vertuoso has been too CURIOUS in drawing the Curtain of Holy Mysteries, to see what passes in Heaven, tho I wont defend such Bold Speculations (for we shou'd not be curious to know more than's Reveal'd) yet I find there be such Prying Christians amongst us as wou'd not be ignorant of Gods Secrets; as if it were a matter of nothing to be Saved, unless we also knew what God will have Unknown; these are Bold Querists indeed, that to be cur'd of the Athenian Itch, go to the Devil for Brimstone. For my own share, I think that sufficient, which God hath thought enough for me to know (and I hope I have kept within Bounds in these Speculations) And do only seek to know what is just Necessary for Practice: What that is, is

## The DEDICATION.

is coucht in a few words, Fear God and keep his Commandments, is the whole Duty of Man. *Eccles. 12. 13.*

King James was much in the Right, when he told us, 'Disputations were the Scab of the Church. We shou'd not make the Way to Heaven, more Difficult than really it is; and therefore when I meet with Doubts that I can't Resolve, I have recourse to this sure Decider of all Differences, — Dominus Dixit; — and that makes me easie; for the Bible has cur'd my Vain Curiosity, and I am satisfi'd with PLAIN TRUTH. — 'Tis Practical Divinity that must bring us to Heaven. When Mr. Hoadly and Mr. Calamy, have vented all their Subtilty and Nice Reasoning against each other, many Pious Men will judge it no other than a Witty Scolding, but a Vain Curiosity; and a Contention who shall out do each other, has been so much the Sin of the Present Age, that it has given occasion to a Learned Writer to say, 'That (it was his Opinion) Disputing and Wrangling wou'd be a considerable part of the Torments of Hell.

However, To cure this Athenian Itch, in the Practical (or Second Volume) I have added a MAP of Right Christianity (to warn us of all Extreams) and insure our Passage for Heaven, and that my Readers might have a NEW Directory for Holy Living and Dying, have intermixt both First and Second Volume, with such Variety of Original Manuscripts, as Entitles my Book The New Practice of Piety, which (tho compleated in Two Volumes) shall be Publish'd in Four Parts, for the ease of the Pocrer Buyer, and as Two of the  
Paris



## The DEDICATION.

*Parts relate to the Speculative Part of Divinity, and the other Two to the Practick, there shall be added a Distinct Table to each Volume, for the sake of those that will Bind them up when the Works Compleat.*

*It had been well (for the High Flyers) if this Christian Moderator had been Published some*

*In his Book Intituled, The Golden Grove.*

*Years ago, for (as Bishop Taylor observes) 'Some Men never think of Heaven, and they that do, 'think to go thither in such Paths 'which all the Ages of the Church did give 'Men warning of, lest they should that way 'go to the Devil. And I pray God indue us all with New Faculties of Mind, and give us Power to discern Spiritual things with Fresh Appetite: For the Right Christian discovers more Solid Comfort, and Material Support, in one Article of Faith, in one Period of the Lords Prayer, than in all the Disputes of Furious People, who take more pains to defend a Ceremony, or quarrel with the Common - Prayer, than to perswade Men to avoid Hell. But I was never any Friend to Controversie, and therefore in this Second Volume, I endeavour Only to shew what we are to Believe and Do, in the Right Way to Heaven, and what those things are, which do most require our Time and Diligence; Rescinding the Superfluities of an Ambitious and Curious Study.*

*To this end I have begun (this Practical Part) with my own Soul, &c. and hope I have found a Clue to wind me through the Labyrinth of all Religions, and lead me directly to Heaven. — Oh the Matchless Kindness of God to Bewilder'd Sinners*



## The DEDICATION.

ners! That he shou'd Reveal to us the Glory we are like to have, though we lost our Way through our own Folly; yet he shews it us again, that we may regulate our course accordingly. So that the First and Second Volume of my New Practice of Piety, is to shew, what Right Christianity is, both in Speculation and Practice; and I hope it may serve as a Light to all in their Way to Paradise; for the end which most propose to themselves in Disputes, is the VICTORY; but the end which I seek for, is the TRUTH; which if I have found, why look we further? But if we Believe without Searching, we may very well be Deceiv'd, and for that Reason, I have look'd into all Religions for the Right Way to Heaven, and conclude, my Christian Virtuoso has found it out, and I rejoyce therein; for the Finding of Truth is Sweet and Comfortable; but whether my Discoveries, are such as will please the Reader, I can't foresee: but the Press is Open, and I have advanc'd nothing in this Essay, but what I am ready to Defend, or Retract, if there be occasion; but Moderate Church - Men will be pleas'd to find a Right Way to Heaven between all Extreams. — And I can't see why the High Flyers shou'd be Angry at me, for Dr. Fuller tells us, Once in an Age the Moderate Man is in Fashion, each Extream courts him to make 'em Friends: And one wou'd think, the common Danger of Popery, shou'd move us all to lay aside our Differences, and all Persecuting Inclinations. 'Twas part of King Williams Prayer, ' That they who Profess the same Faith, may no longer Persecute and Destroy one another, but may be Kind and Tender Hearted one towards another

## The DEDICATION:

‘ another, as it becomes Brethren, and those  
‘ that are heirs of the same Common Salvation :  
*What tho all Christians of the Same Religion ( for  
so we are, tho we go by different Names ) are  
not Church-men ( in that sense we take the Word )  
yet all Orthodox Christians are Members of the  
Church of Christ, and shou’d Agree, and Love as  
Brethren: Let’ says Bishop Hall) thoe Nick names,  
of Lutherans, Calvinists, Prelatists, Presbyte-  
rians, Independents, &c. which are commonly  
wont to be objected to Professors of the same  
Faith, be condemned to the Lowest Hell, and let  
us all be truly, and be called by one name, CHRI-  
STIANS. — So that whatever my Performance is,  
my Intention I’m sure is Good, since ‘tis to discover  
the Right Way to Heaven between all Extreame.*

S I R, I know not what Judgment you will pass  
upon me ( or upon my Athenian Brethren ) for  
desiring your Patronage to this New Scheme of Re-  
ligion : But I hope ‘tis the more Excusable, as I  
don’t presume to discover any thing you don’t  
know : You have advanc’d so far in all Art and  
Science, as that the utmost of my Studies, can’t  
contribute one Thought to further your Progress,  
ceither is it possible for me to flatter you in this As-  
sertion ; for whoever reads your Essay upon Hu-  
mane Understanding, must own Mr. Lock, the  
Greatest Master of Reason this Age has produc’d.

I wou’d enlarge, but am barr’d further Protesta-  
tion, by the Haste I take to subscribe my self,

Worthy Sir !

Your Constant Admirer and Very

Humble Servant, H. N.

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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**T**H E R E is scarce a House in the Three Kingdoms, but has got the *Old Practice of Piety*; but we Live in an *Athenian Age*, and perhaps, a *New Practice of Piety* shall be lookt into, when the *Old One* shall lie by till the leaves moulder.

I Publish'd a Specimen of this Nature, some Years ago, in Imitation of Dr. Brown's *Religio Medici*; and another, Entitled, *Right Christianity*, &c. The first of which, met with such a kind Reception, that there is not one to be had in *London*, and the latter was Twice Printed, and is now so scarce, that a *Third Edition* of it has been much desired, and will be Published, in this Work with such large *Additions*, as do Entitle it, *The New Practice of Piety*; and as it discovers the *Right Way to Heaven*, between all *Extreams* ('tis hop'd) 'twill put an end to all those *Controversies* that have been manag'd so *Furiously* between the *High Flyers* of all Perswasions. 'Tis true (in some sense) every Man is a *Divine*; that is, suppos'd to know his Duty towards God and towards Man. *Fear God and keep his Commandments, is the whole Duty of Man.* And for this reason, the *Holy Bible*, and Dr. *Scot's Christian Life*, limit my Curiosity.

But tho' the Way to Heaven is *Plain and Easy*, yet we all labour under great *Prejudices*; and our Conception of Things, are for the most part Irregular and *Monstrous*: We often Pry into *Divine Secrets*, further than the Scripture allows, and are ready to Censure every one that is not of *our Church*; but let such as are troubled with this *Athenian Itch*, observe the following Rules, and they'll be perfectly Cured, for I have Entitled this Book, *The New Practice of Piety, or Christian Virtuoso,*



## The Preface.

*Veruoso, &c.* not only as it discovers the *Right way to Heaven*, between all *Extreams*, but as it contains a **NEW MODEL** of Christianity, by the *Rules* whereof, we may shape our better Part, Rectify our Reason, Form our Manners, and *Steer the Course of a Spiritual Life*. And as every Man is oblig'd to look oftner to his *Practice of Piety*, than to his *Confession of Faith*, I have added to these Sheets,

I. *The Right Christian Exemplified in all the degrees of Perfection Attainable on this side Heaven.*

II. *A Pattern of Holy Living and Dying, Extracted from the Lives of the Primitive Christians.*

III. *A Secret Diary, Shewing, how the Author intends to order, his Thoughts, Words and Actions, for the Remaining part of his Life.*

IV. *And have added at the end, Devout Prayers and Ejaculations, Suited to a New Practice of Piety.*

I know, a *New Play*, or *Obscene Novel*, wou'd have been more acceptable to some Readers, than a *New Practice of Piety*; they'll shrug at the very Word, and call the Author, a *bold Phanatick* (tho' a Son of the Church) for troubling their heads with such *Grave Matters*; but such as these, wou'd do well to consider, that half their Lives are frequently pass'd over in *Sleep*, or what is next to it, in pursuing *Trifles*; and yet they scarce perceive how *Time Spins* away, till they come within two steps of the *Grave*, and then they are apt to start, and begin to bethink themselves, that they have in a manner, *Dream'd away their Lives without improving them*; therefore this is a most *Convincing Argument*, to excite every Man to a **REFORMATION** (or *New Practice of Piety*) because so great a change of the Soul as is necessary to Translate it from a *Wicked Life*, to that *Divine State*, which alone is meet to partake of the *Inheritance with the Saints in Light*, is not in the *Ordinary way* of God's Saving of Men, accomplisht in a few Moments, much less in the *Last Hours* of a *Dispirited Dying Man*: And wo to that *Person*, who fancies, that God will break his *Establisht Order*, to save him in his *Sins*.

I thought such subjects as these fit to compose *A New Practice of Piety*; but as 'tis a *Nice and Difficult Work*,



## The Preface.

to discover the *Right Way to Heaven* (when every *Churchman, Presbyterian, Independant, Anabaptist, Quaker, &c.* thinks he only has found it out) for this Reason, I saw it necessary, to Invite several Learned Persons to my Assistance in this *Search*, and the *Curious Hints* they have sent me, have rendred the following Sheets a *Comprehensive System of Uncommon Thoughts*; and tho they desir'd me to conceal their *Names*, yet I cou'd not but lend my hand to open the *Curtain*, and discover that *Right Way to Heaven* these Men of Temper and True Piety have found out.

There have been great Contentions of late, about *Occasional Conformity, Kneeling at the Sacrament, &c.* and other things not Essential to Salvation; but if the Glory of God, were the mark at which these *Angry Disputants* level, why bestow they not their Zeal rather in Converting such, as scarce know or acknowledge that there is a GOD? And why are they more enraged against those, who agree with them in most things, than those who Dissent from them in all? Take not Christians more pains to Refute one another, than to Convince *Gentiles*? And stand not some *Churchmen and Dissenters* at greater distance than either of them do with *Turks and Pagans*? And to evidence that rather Humour than Piety, occasions our Differences, we may easily perceive that the meaner the Subject is, the HEAT is always the greater.

Our *Christian Virtuoso*, discovers, to such as these the **RIGHT WAY to Heaven**, and wou'd make those Friends that Quarrel, in a manner, for nothing; or (which is next to nothing) about a few *Harmless Ceremonies, &c.* which our Church has declar'd *Different*: But all *Christians are but Pilgrims here*; and 'tis a Thousand Pities these *Pilgrims* shou'd leave off to Journey, and stand Skirmishing and Fighting with all such as will not *Travel their Road*: The design therefore of these Sheets, is to *Clip the Wings of the High Flyers*, or (in other words) to Direct the **FANATICKS** of all sorts, in the *Right way to Heaven*; or at least, it may serve as a *Directory* to those, that wou'd see **RELIGION** divested of all those Foreign and Specious Accoutrements, with which  
Error

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*Error and Prejudice* have Cloath'd it; that would have a *Glimpse of Vertue and Vice in their own Nature and Naked Forms*; and desire rather to REFORM themselves, than the rest of World. —

I own, whoever attempts a work of this *Nice and Difficult* Nature, must endeavour to *Imitate* that Excellent Piece of *Dr. Brown's*, called *Religio Medici*, which I have here endeavour'd to do, but without the least *Presumption* of Reaching so *brave an Original*, tho' not without the hopes of very nearly *Resembling* him, in his *Love and Charity* to those that *Dissent* from him.

But tho' I venture on *Mysteries of a Soaring Nature*, yet I hope 'tis done with that *Reverence and Tenderness*, as may render me at least *Excusable* in that behalf; for notwithstanding the Expression may seem *Dogmatical*, the Design is wholly, a *Pious Essay and Experiment*, and not to be taken for an *Arbitrary and Decisive Sentence* of those matters. —

But perhaps my Readers will say, what signifies your *New Practice of Piety*, if *TRUTH* be not the Standard of all? —

In answer to this, I never pretended to be *Infallible*, yet this may give my Essay the *Prebeminence* to some others; that I present my Reader with nothing but what I received from those *Learned Persons* I mention'd before, or from the *Experience I have had of my own Soul, for near Forty Years*; whereas others *Confining* themselves to their Books, have obtruded upon the World, what they have taken upon the *Bare Credit of those who were more Ignorant than themselves*; but these Sheets (for the most part) are so perfectly *New*, that they contain my *Intere* *Forwaicature*, which was (as it cou'd only be) drawn by my self. —

But though I wou'd fain discover the *Right Way* to Heaven, from my own *Experience*, yet I a'n't so vain as to set my self up for an *ORACLE*; for the *Zeal* I assume in *Point of Worship*, I have only in *Speculation*, not *Practice*; what I here *Discover*, is not what I am, but what I shou'd be: However, Reader, you have the *Dissection of my Soul*, as far as I am able to make it; and as *Anatomy* discovers all the *Curious Contexture* of our *Bodily Fabrick*,

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Fabrick; so here are vivid Representations of *Faith, Love, Humility, Meekness, Self-denial, Repentance, Moderation*, with whatever parts and principles besides compose the whole Frame of the **NEW CREATURE**. But tho I have travell'd as far as I cou'd into *my own heart*, and lookt into all Religions, that I might close with the Best, yet I don't pretend to have found out a *New Way to Heaven*, but only to perswade *Christians of all sorts* to a **NEW PRACTICE** of those Articles which are grounded not only upon *Reason, and Universal Consent of Religions*; but are extant and operative in the Hearts of all Men, which are not prepossess'd and obstructed with *Erroneous Doctrines*; and is, I confess, in some measure True, of those which will handle *Arts and Sciences*, from whom some *New Discovery* is justly expected. But from a *New Practice of Piety*, we are to require nothing that was never harped on by any *Orpheus*, for the *Theory of Divinity* is a path so trodden with throngs of Authors, that perhaps *Solomon* himself, if he were now alive, wou'd find it hard to say something in this kind, which might be as **NEW** to us, as Gunpowder and the Loadstone once were.

From this *New Practice of Piety* thererefore, you are to expect only matters well Examind, with such a *trimming and Furbishing of the Argument*, that the Reader may be Tempted like some Gentlemen, as it were to buy that Horse in *Smithfield*, which himself lately sold in a *Cowrey Fair*: Such an Art of **NEW COMPOUNDING** the same Notions in variety of Expressions, that the *Herbalist* shall have much ado to discern his own Simple: But tho' I don't pretend to discover a *New Way to Heaven*, yet I may seem to be a *Digester* of what I have read in this kind; and without assuming to inform an *Man's* Judgment, may serve in some sort, to clear his Notions, which is the best way that I know of to make him a *Right Christian*; and in this sense, my **ESSAY** is properly called the *New Practice of Piety*. Or, suppose, *Reader*, You find nothing **RARE** in the following **ESSAY** (I mean **RARE** in the Notion) yet you'll find many things (God knows) too **RARE** in Mens Practice; and yet such as are necessary to be **Known and Studied**.

But



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But perhaps some may like the Matter of this Book, that may object against the Method or; indeed that I have used none; but this let my Subjects answer for, there being many things that follow naturally enough, which yet could not *properly be reduced under the same head*; my design here being chiefly to Profit, which cou'd not so effectually be done any other way than what I have here taken; but whether the *Criticks* are pleas'd or no, 'tis the same thing; for I neither matter their *Judgment*, nor shall court their *Favour*; but perhaps I have reason to beg Pardon of the *Athenian Society*, in that I have only mentioned the Subject to them, without taking their Advice in the Composure.

But however the World treats it, its design is to *Reform our Lives*, and to beget such a Friendly Agreement between *Protestant Brethren*, of all Perswasions, that they may go *Hand in Hand* in the Way to Heaven, where we shall Love and Embrace one another, not as *Churchmen, Presbyterians, Independants, &c.* but as *Glorified Christians* (for so the *Disciples* were called at Antioch, *Acts 11. 26.*) And what a Joy will it be to the *Saints Above*, to see all their Friends of the same Mind?

*In his Books Entituled, the Christian Life.* For as Dr. *Scot* observes, there will not be *One Dissenting Brother in Eleven.* But a **COMPREHENSION**, (or General Union on Earth) will scarce be enacted in our days, neither do I expect so Great a Blessing from these Papers; however, if they any ways tend to *Satisfie the Curious, to Please the Grave, to Establish the Doubting, or to Baffle the Common Objection of the Little Wou'd-be-Wits, who set up for no Religion, because they never understood any,* I shall think my Labour was well bestow'd. We have at this present time, *The Whole Duty of Man, The Old Practice of Piety, Bishop Taylors Holy Living and Dying,* and many other Pious Books, which *Eccho* one another (for this Age is as Fruitful in Words, as 'tis Barren in Works) Nevertheless, in matters of **DEVOTION**, it is apparent, that a Man cannot say too much, as that we think he can never do enough.

Then Reader, carry this **ESSAY** in thy Pocket, as the  
Clock

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Clock which a Great Prince wore in a Ring; *it strikes every Hour of the Day*, and agreeth with Reason, as the Dials with the Sun.

Great Books (says a Late Author) *make men sometimes more Learned, seldom more Innocent*; but this not only gives a Schem of Religion in *Speculation*, but reduceth *Piety to Practice*, and ('tis hop'd) shews the *Right Way to Heaven*, between all Extreame. Then, Reader, peruse it often, and do what it directs you to; whilst others *Wrangle about Religion*, do you endeavour to *Practice it*, for this Book hath no other Character of its worth, than that of your **NEW LIFE**.

But I'll forestall the Readers Impatience with no more *Preface*; not in the least doubting, but that upon the first Reading the *following Sheets*, they'll see how little they, and others; have studied the *Old*, and what need there was of *A New Practice of Piety*.

I shall only add, so far as I have gone in my *New Practice of Piety*, I have fairly prov'd, That the *Moderate Man* is the Best Christian, and that the *Right Way to Heaven lyes between all Extreame*; but seeing the *High Flyers* can't approve of such *Healing Principles*; to Pacifie these Gentlemen, I endeavour (in the conclusion of these Sheets) to Retract my *Moderate Principles* (so far as I can with a good Conscience) and this I attempt by writing — *A SATYR on the House of LORDS, for not Passing the Bill against Occasional Conformity*. — And as the Gentleman, who writ a *Satyr on King WILLIAM*, shew'd himself a Generous Friend to the Merits of that *Glorious Prince*; so I hope (by this *Satyr*) to shew a True Concern for the Souls of the *High Flyers*, and if it prove the Conversion but of one *Bigot*, I hope he'll turn this *Satyr into a Panegyrick*; or at least own, *That the House of Lords are in the Right Way to Heaven*; and that if ever we design to get thither, we must follow their *Noble Examples of Piety and Moderation*; and in particular, that of the Bishop of *Salisbury*, who says in his Speech to the House of LORDS, 'I own I began the World on a Principle of Moderation, which I have carryed down through my whole Life, and in which I hope I shall continue to my Lives End.'

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# T H E

## New Practice of Piety; &c.

**S**T. Austin says, *He that Repents, is well near Innocent*; and for that Reason I shall Recommend *A New Practice of Piety* to such as have Erred and Gone Astray.

*A New Practice of Piety*, according to my Notion of it, is, *A Becoming another Man, or New Creature*, Putting off, as to the Former Conversation, the *Old Man*, &c. or more plainly, It is a denying all Ungodliness and Fleshly Lusts, and Living Soberly, Righteously and Godly in this present World. — *Therefore if any Man be in Christ, he is a New Creature, Old things are past away, behold all things are become New.* 2 Cor. 5. 17.

If any Man wou'd be Saved, he must first be Born again of the Holy Spirit, be Converted and become a *New Creature*, Holy in Heart and Life; otherwise he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

So that if I'de Live ( as well as Write ) *A New Practice of Piety*, I must Conform to the Rules of Temperance and Chastity; Moderate all Inordinate Passions and Brutish Appetites, by a *Religious Reason*, Bridling my Tongue also, and setting a Guard upon my Outward Senses.

And that none ( no not so much as my self ) may doubt my sincerity in this matter, I Resolve henceforward — *To avoid every Known Sin ( whether it be of Omission or Commission ) — To Acknowledge God in all my ways. — To do all Things to his Glory — And be very Zealous in Sending others to Heaven*; for I read St. Andrew was no sooner Converted, but he strait findeth his Brother Simon, — *And he brought him to Jesus.* John 1 41. 42.

This I call *A New Practice of Piety*: But 'tis a Folly to



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pretend to Live up to it, without I come to God in the Posture of a *Truly Penitent and Reform'd Believer*; that is to say, That I Truly REPENT of all the Sins of my Former Life (*whether Known or Unknown*) and have such a Godly Sorrow for 'em, as worketh the Hatred, Confession and Forlaking of 'em; for the *Leading of a New Life*, is, what in us lies, the Undoing of the Evil we have done; neither can I pretend to a *New Life*, except to a True Repentance of all my Sins, I add, — *Faith in Christ.* — *A Firm Belief of the Apostles Creed.* — *And a Strict observance of the Ten Commandments, &c.* or (in fewer Words) That I stedfastly believe the *Whole Word of God*, and Square my Life and Actions according to it.

But seeing *A New Course of Piety* can never be effected, till my PRINCIPLES are as much Refin'd as my Daily PRACTICE.

I shall first present the Reader with *A Practice of Piety in Speculation*, and when I ha' run through *A System of New Thoughts* (as a Guide to my Future Life) I shall Publish the *Practical* (or *Second*) Volume of this Work, where our CHRISTIAN VIRTUOSO presents the Reader with a MAP of Right Christianity, and hopes (*by looking into all Religions*) has Discover'd the RIGHT Way to Heaven.

But my Present Task, is to present the Reader with *A New Practice of Piety in Speculation*; and here, the better to Imitate *Religio Medici*, I shall pry into every room of my Heart and Life, to make what Discoveries I can there; for if we consider *the Original of our several Deviations from the Right Path*, we shall find, they all proceed from our not Knowing *our selves nor God*; to Know our selves; therefore must be our first Care, which will lead us to the *Knowledge of God*; for we must needs perceive after the *strictest search* we can make into our own Being, how impossible 'twas for us to make our selves, that we are forced to conceive our being, to be the Gift of an Almighty Power. — *Then with draw thine Attention a little, Oh my Soul! from the Notice and Impressions of External Objects; View a while, with Application, the image of thy Self, within the sphere of thy own Activity; Exert the power of Reflection upon those Acts*  
which

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which have no Affinity with the Body; and claim an Independence upon Inferiour Beings; gather thence the clear Notions of thy Nature, and how nearly thou art ally'd to the Intellectual World. The most successful Method is to Contemplate thy own Image in the mirror of Peculiar Operations, which are Exhibitive of the apparent powers and faculties of their Active Source. How Extensive are thy Capacities? the Heavens are not Commensurate; thou art grasping beyond the circuit of the 8th. Immoveable, and stalking along the Fields of the Empyreum. Thou art swifter than the Rays of Light, and out-runst the courser of the Skies; thou canst measure the tardy round of a Saturn in a moment, and stretch away into Empty Space, and all this, whilst thou art Enshrin'd at Home, Clasping thy Dear Companion. How Nice the motions and turns of Thought! How Charming the Spoils which they prey upon! Thou art possess'd of a double Vertue, whence thy Thoughts roll along the Channels of Understanding and Will; the searches of the first, are for the sake of the Second, and the latter winds up the springs of the first, especially when the Game is practicable, and rang'd within the boundaries of Good and Evil.

Reader, As bad as the Age is, there is a Retail of Men, who are no Strangers to themselves; but whether the Author of this Essay is one of those Blessed Few, is now left to thy Candid Judgment.

However, having sincerely Repented of all the ERRORS of my past Life, I am bold to Challenge the Title of a Right Christian, neither am I asham'd to expose my Naked Thoughts with respect to the Time that is past, or to that New Life I wou'd now lead; and seeing the Right Way to Heaven lies first in the Knowledge of our selves, I shall (In imitation of Dr. Brown) begin my New Practice of Piety, with Divine SPECULATIONS on my Birth and Parentage; and however strange my thoughts appear in the following Sheets, I hope to prove that they all contribute to a New Practice of Piety.

I have no reason to tax my Education, or blame those who had the care of my Juvenile Years; my Parents were Learned and Orthodox, and made it their Business to form my Mind, and square my Soul by the best Precepts and Purest Examples; yet when I arriv'd at Years  
of

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of Maturer Judgment, I found occasion to Prune my self, and Lop off many *Excessencies*; to wipe out the Early Impressions of my Infant Years, and *unlearn* the Notions I suck'd in with my Mothers Milk; tho there were no *Legends* in the Nursery, nor *Heresies* in the Schools where I was brought up, yet my Blooming Fancy was fertile in ERRORS, and sprouted forth in many Luxuriant Thoughts: It was the task of my *Riper Judgment* to correct these, and reduce my self to the standard of *Reason and Faith*.

As soon as I had finish'd *all the course of my Studies*, at the end whereof Men are usually receiv'd amongst the Rank of the Learned, I began to be in great fears about *my Eternal State*; for tho I was *Master of all the Sciences*, and had looked into all Religions, yet I found my self intangled in so many *Doubts and Errors*, that methought I had no other Profit in *Seeking to instruct my self*, but that I had the more discover'd my own Ignorance: Being thus dissatisfi'd in my own Mind, I resolv'd at last to enter on a *New Practice of Piety*, and now looking on the *Divers Actions and Opinions of Men*, there is almost none which to me seems not Vain and Useless; yet I am extreamly satisfied with the Progress which (as it seems to me) I have made in the *Search of Truth*, and have now chosen that *Right Religion*, in which I'll venture my Heaven and Eternal Happiness.

I know how subject we are to mistake in those things which concern us, and how Jealous we ought to be of the *Judgement of our Friends*, when it is in our Favour. But I discover in these SPECULATIONS, the Experience of Forty Years, and Represent therein *my Life, as in a Picture*, to the end that every one may Judge thereof; and that learning from Common Fame, what Men say of my Naked Thoughts, I may find a *New Means* of Instructing my Self, and thereby Pass to Heaven with greater Assurance.

The *Atbenian Oracle* never pretended to be Infallible; neither is it my design to charge those with *Schism*, who serve God in a Meeting, with as much (or perhaps more) Devotion, than I do in the Establish'd Church, but only to shew how I govern my own Life, and what need there is (in this Wicked Age) of a *New Practice of Piety*.



I Reverenc'd our *Theology*, and pretended to Heaven as much as any ; but having learnt, as a most certain Truth, that the *Right Way* to it, is no less open to the most Ignorant, than to the most Learned ; and that those Revealed Truths, which led thither, were beyond our Understanding ; I durst not submit to the weakness of my *Ratiocination* ; and I thought that to undertake to examine them, and to succeed in it, requir'd some extraordinary Assistance from Heaven and somewhat more than Man.

I shall say nothing of *Philosophy*, but that seeing it hath been cultivated by the most Excellent Wits, which have liv'd these many Ages, and that yet there is nothing which is undisputed, and by consequence, which is not doubtful. I cou'd not presume so far, as to hope to succeed better than others. And considering how many Different Opinions there may be on the same thing, maintain'd by Learned Men, and yet that there never can be but one only Truth : I declar'd ( almost ) all false, which had no more then Probability in it.

As for other Sciences, since they borrow their Principles from *Philosophy*, I judg'd that nothing which was Solid, cou'd be built upon such Unsound Foundations ; and neither Honour nor Wealth were sufficient to invite me to the study of them ; For ( I thank God ) I found not my self in a condition which oblig'd me to make a Trade of Letters for the Relief of my Fortune. And although I made it not my Profession to despise Glory with the Cynick ; yet did I little value that which I cou'd not acquire but by False Pretences.

And lastly, for Unwarrantable Studies, I thought I already too well understood what they were, to be any more subject to be deceiv'd, either by the promises of an Alchymist, or by the Predictions of an Astrologer, or by the Impostures of a Magician, or by the artifice or brags of those Quacks who profess to know more than they do.

By reason whereof, as soon as my years freed me from the subjection of my Tutors, I wholly gave over the study of Letters, and resolving to seek no other knowledge, but what I could find in my self, or in the great Book of the World ; I employed the rest of my youth in Travel, to see Courts and Armies, to frequent People of several humours and conditions, to gain Experience, to hazard my self

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self in those Encounters of Fortune which shou'd occur ;  
 and every where to make such a *Reflection on those things*  
*which presented themselves to me, that I might draw Profit*  
*from them.* For (methought) I could meet with far more  
 TRUTH in the Discourses which every Man makes  
 touching those affairs which concern him, whose event  
 would quickly condemn him, if he had judg'd amiss,  
 then amongst those which Letter'd Men make in their  
 Closets, touching Speculations, which produce no Ef-  
 fect, and are of no consequence to them, but that per-  
 haps they may gain so much the more vanity, as they are  
 farther different from the Common Understanding: For as-  
 much as he must have imployed the more wit and sub-  
 tility in endeavouring to render them probable. And I  
 had always an extream desire to learn to *distinguish Truth*  
*from Falshood,* that I might see clearly into the *Errors*  
*of my Life,* and enter on a *New Practice of Piety;* and so  
 it hapned that by little and little, I freed my self from  
*many Mistakes* which did eclipse my Natural Light, and  
 render'd me less able to Comprehend Reason. But after  
 I had employed some years in *thus studying the Book of the*  
*World,* and endeavouring to get Experience, I took one  
 day a Resolution to *search also within my self,* and to em-  
 ploy all the forces of my Mind in the choice of *The Right*  
*Way to Heaven;* having therefore got the *Weather-*  
*gage of Youthful Mistakes,* by diligent Scrutinies, and pro-  
 per Remarks; having put in the Balance, and weigh'd  
 my *Native Religion* with all others that are extant, I now  
 make that the object of my Choice, which before was  
 only the effect of *Prepossession;* and as I was list'd a Sol-  
 dier of Christ in my *Baptism,* so now I declare my self  
*A Volunteer in his Service;* what was then done without  
 my Knowledge, I now ratifie by my free Free Consent.  
 And I resolve not to change my *Banner* as long as I Live.  
 'Tis no *Solecism* in Divinity, to say that the *Prince of*  
*Peace,* is the *Lord of Hosts.* The Church Militant, is his  
 Army compos'd of many Battalions in different *Posts,*  
 and under various *Orders.* So long as they all serve the  
 great *Captain* of our Salvation, and practise well the  
 Discipline of their Arms; I refuse not to give the word  
 of Peace to any, let him be of what *Company* or *Troop*  
 soever:

## The New Practice of Piety. 9

I am not fond of the Names which distinguish one Party from another in the *Church*. I esteem not a Man the better for being regimented in this *Communion*, rather than in that. And for ought I know, in the *Camp of God*, a *Reformade* may be as acceptable, as in those of Men. However, a Mutineer in either is odious, and to raise *Factions* about *Religion*, is to adore *Mars*, instead of *Christ*; and to commence a War, for the sake of Peace. I cannot approve of their bitter *Zeal*, who, if they cannot call down Fire from *Heaven*, will kindle it on the *Earth*, against all that think not as they do. He is an ill Disputant for Christianity, who uses no other Topicks than Gun-powder and Steel. *The Lick of Mahomet becomes not a Disciple of Jesus*; and I should make but an Hypocritical Convert, were I to be *Dragoon'd* into *Religion* by the Domineering Arguments of *Booted Apostles*.

The use I make of this Variety in *Religions*, is far different: *Truth* is *Homogeneous*, and attracts to it self all that is of its own *Nature*, wheresoever dispers'd or separated, rejecting the rest, as not pertaining to it. Thus I, overlooking the *Errors* and *Mistakes* of those who differ from me, at the same time embrace their *Orthodox Tenets*, and shunning their *Vices*, I imitate their *Vertues*. This is to take things by the right handle, and like the *Bee*, to suck *Honey* out of every *Weed*. It is of the *Nature* of the *Sun*, who has commerce with many *Pollutions*, yet remains himself undefiled.

I abhor that mercenary Course of joyning my self with any *Party of Christians* that is uppermost, to abet the prevailing *Faction*, and assert the Opinions most in Fashion; this is to be a *Weather-cock* in *Religion*; pliable to every fresh *Gale of Interest*. Neither, on the other side, do I think it good manners, or Prudence, to affront the *Religion* of the *State*, and by a sawty Impertinence condemn those who worship *God* in the manner prescrib'd by the *Laws* of the *Land*. In my *Travels* I learn'd this *Moderation*, and he that knows not how to practice it, is not fit to stir out of his *Chimney Corner*. *Religion* does not authorize *Rudeness*, neither is *Arrogance* compatible with *Devotion*. It is difficult to find a *Company* of four or five Men together, where

there is not at least a *Triumvirate* of Religions, and he that will set up for a *Dictator* among them, shall have all their Forces united against himself.

I do not value any Man's Religion by his stercor'd looks, or *supercilious Gravity*. I hate to put on an unchangeable Face, or screw my self into an ill-humour'd *Riddle*. I do not angle for the Character of a *Saint*, by magnanimously declaiming against the *Innocent Diversions* of Human Life, and ranking things Indifferent among the greatest Crimes. Above all, I cannot approve of those who are prone to fasten *Gods Judgments* on particular *Occasions*, as if they alone cou'd unlock the Secrets of the Almighty, and were the *Privy-Counsellors* of Heaven. No Man's *misfortune* shall escape their *Censure*, but forgetting what our Saviour said of those on whom the *Tower of Siloam* fell, they condemn all alike, and presume to distribute the *Divine Justice* by their own *Weights and Measures*. I am in love with that saying of *Plato*, *There is no Envy in the Deity*. Assuredly that Immense Ocean of Goodness never ceases to show'r down his Favours and Blessings, on all that are capable of receiving them; and he is not partial to any of his *Creatures*. Like the *Sun*, he imparts his Influence to all the *World*, and if they rejoyce not in his *Beams*, the *Cloud* that hinders them is of their own raising. Those Men will hardly profelitate me, who dress the *Deity* in a frightful *Figure*, and then wou'd perswade the *World* 'tis his *Essential Complexion*. While they exclaim against *Pictures and Images*, they themselves commit *Idolatry*: They set up an infinite Tyrant, morose, arbitrary and cruel, instead of the Original, Increated Beauty and Goodness; worshipping the *Idol* of their own Imagination, instead of the Indulgent Father of all things.

I do not take Prayer to consist in saying o'er the devoutest *Collets* and *Oraisons* of the Church, without a due *Application of Spirit*. This is the *Sacrifice of Fools*, without *Salt or Fire*, and therefore must needs be unfavoury to *God*. The bended *Knee*, *submiss Looks*, and even a *Body prostrate* to the *Ground*, unless accompanied with a proportionate *Fervour* and *Humility* of the *Soul*, are but *Religious Compliments*, and a  
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Pious Banter. Such Mock-Addresses, I doubt, are not graciously receiv'd in the Court of Heaven.

An equal dislike I have for those who offer up strange and unhallowed Flames; burning Incense, whose *Composition* is not warantable; who hold not fast the *Form* of sound VVords, but giving the Reins to their *Tongue*, suffer it to commit a thousand Indecencies in the Hearing of Him who made the Ear. These, as well as the former, are guilty of *Crimen laesæ Majestatis*; while they affront *Heaven* with *Tautologies* and vain *Repetitions*. The one thro' inadvertency, the other thro' *Presumption*. This bringing *Form* without *Matter*, That offering *Matter* without *Form*; and both wanting the *Spirit* and *Life* of sincere *Devotion*. Yet I neither censure such as use an *allowable Form*, provided it be accompanied with attentive *Devotion*: And less those who address themselves to Heaven in *words of their own choosing*, provided it be season'd with *Discretion*, and a modest *Sobriety* of *Spirit*. For when a Man fitly qualified, endued with *Learning* too, and above that, *adorn'd with a good Life*, breaks out into warm and well deliver'd *Prayer* before his *Sermon*, it hath the appearance of a *Divine Rapture*, he raiseth and leadeth the *Hearts* of the *Assembly* in another manner than the most compos'd or best studied *Form of words* can ever do: And those *Formal Suplicants*; who serve up all the *Sermon* with the same garnishing, would look like so many *Statues*, or *Men of Straw*, in the *Pulpit*, compar'd with those who speak with such a *powerful Zeal*, that Men are tempted at the moment to believe Heaven it self hath directed their words to them.

On the other side, I think not that to be the only *Authentick Prayer*, which is attended with *Sensual Raptures*, and melting *Entertainments*: This is but the *Smoke* of *Passion*, and soon vanishes; a mere *Vapour* or *Ebullition*, a pleasing warmth of good *Natures*, and frequently the proper Result of a *Sanguine Complexion*.

*Prayer is the Exaltation of the Soul, the Flight of a Sublimated Spirit: It makes a Man an Angel pro Tempore, while his abstracted Mind takes the Wing, and soars aloft, hovering on the Borders of Paradise. He then breathes immortal Airs, burns like a Seraphim, and flames out with Holy and defecate Fires, like the most exaltasi'd Orders of the Celestial Court.*

For my own part, I can Pray Kneeling, Standing, or Sitting; either at my Business or at my Repast; with or without Words and Ceremonies. And this I take to be the only Method of complying with *St. Paul's* Counsel, when he bids us Pray without ceasing, A swift and Pious *Ejaculation* many Times does the Office of a *multitude of Words* (tho' the most apposite and elegant in Humane Language) since *God* understands the *Dialect* of the *Heart*, as well as that of the *Tongue*, being the Architect of both.

The Posture which *Pythagoras* enjoyn'd his Disciples, when they appear'd before the *Gods*, was not without a *Mystery*. He bid them hold their *Tongues* revers'd; intimating thereby that they should observe a devout *Silence* in such Tremendous Company, and utter no Words which were not dipt in the *Heart*. And I could wish the Advice of *Solomon*, instead of a *Nosce Teipsum*, were engraven on the *Frontispiece* of our *Churches*. "My Son, when thou enterest the House of *God*, let thy words be few, and be more ready to hear, than to offer the *Sacrifice* of Fools. In all this, I aim at a *Devotion* that is Masculine and Solid, Discreet and Humble, Sincere and Modest; full of *Primitive Reverence*, and the *Fervor* of the first Ages.

In proper speaking, our very silent Necessities are eloquent *Prayers*, and the wants which are hardest to be uttered, are such a prevailing *Rhetorick with God*, as oft times brings down swifter Relief from *Heaven*, than our loudest *Letanies*; even we ourselves are most willing to dispose of our Alms to a *Dumb Person*, who by being disabled to make his Address any other ways than by mute Signs, does by that Pathetick kind of *Complaint* engage our *Charity*. Indeed every Innocent *Action* of our Lives is a *Prayer*: But the more extraordinary Performances of *Heroick Vertue*, pierce the Clouds, storm the Regions above, and plunder *Heaven* it self (if I may so speak) of its choicest *Blessings*.

As to *Publick Prayer*, I own there is a Necessity of using some *Forms* and *Ceremonies*; and those are the best, which have the greatest Efficacy to excite and regulate our *Devotion*. Not too Pompous and Theatrical, nor slovenly and mean, but such as become the *House of God*, and give  
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is an external Beauty, not a meer Pageantry of Holiness.

That Custom of the *Greek*, and other *Eastern Churches* to separate the Men from the Women in the Publick Assembly, seems to have something of *Antiquity* for its Plea, tho' the dilute of it in these *Western Parts* make us think it a *Singularity*. I envy not that Sex the Liberty of Worshipping God, and being present at the *Publick Solemnities*; yet I grudge them a Privilege which is so manifest an Impediment to our *Devotion*, as is their rehearsing aloud the *Psalms*, *Responses* and other *Portions of the Common-Prayer*. I cou'd stand beside the fairest of that Sex in the *Church*, unmov'd as *Marble*, their brightest Charms serving but as *Foils* to set off the incomparable Eminency of that *Majesty and Glory* who is adored in that Place. But when I hear them break the bounds of *Female Modesty*, whose greatest Ornament is *Silence*; when I hear their Tongues running over the *Prayers*, as loud, if not louder, than the Men, either with a careless wantonness or affected Gravity, their Eyes divided betwixt an amorous Glance, and a devout Ogle. This, I must confess, gives me Offence; 'tis an Obstacle to my *Devotion*, and makes me think the *Grecians* are not without reason in assigning a particular Place of the *Church* to the *Women*, where they can neither be seen nor heard. And this will not seem uncourtly or austere, if we remember that *St. Paul* himself has said, *I permit not a Woman to speak in the Church*. And in another place, *Let Women have Power on their Heads* [that is, be covered or veiled] *because of the Angels*; or as some interpret it, *because of the young Men*.

I wish for a purer *Reformation* in the *Church* than we have hitherto seen; yet I am not for tearing up *Christianity* by the *Roots*. I could be glad to see the *House of God* purged and cleansed, the *Building* Repair'd and Beautified, without Removing it from the *Foundations*. The Office of a *Bishop* and a *Presbyter*, to me, seems no other ways differenc'd than thus; I look upon a *Presbyter* as a *Parochial Bishop*, and a *Bishop* as a *Diocesan Presbyter*. Their *Dignity* equal in *Quality*, tho' not in *Quantity*. The one has power of administering the *Sacraments* as well as the other: Only for the sake



for sake of *Order* and *good Government* in the *Church*, one is invested with a *Jurisdiction*, and *Superiority*, of which the other is as capable, it duely Elected to it.

I envy not the *Bishops*, or *Ruling Presbyters*, their *Temporal Honours* and *Riches*, neither wou'd I be a *Leveller* in the *Church of God*: Yet it were a desirable thing, if there were a more equal *Distribution* of *Ecclesiastical Benefices*, that the poorest *Preaching Presbyter* might have an *Income* that should free him from the *Temptation* of envying a *Journey-man Carter*, and other inferior *Trades* who many times can boast of a larger *Stipend* than some of the *Ministry*.

*Pluralities* and *Non-Residents* were never heard of in the *Primitive Ages*, and it is a shame there should be so many *fat Parsonages*, and yet so many *lean Parsons*. It is the *Devil's Market* where *Church-Livings* are bought and sold, and such *Spiritual Hucksters* deserve to be whipt out of the *Temple*.

I refuse not to bow at the *Name* of *Jesus*, yet can give no *Reason* why I should not as well bow at the *Name* of *Joshua*, they being both one and the same in the *Hebrew*. And that *Scripture*, which is made to countenance this *Ceremony*, seems to me to speak no more than that in the *Name* of *Christ* all addresses should be made to *God the Father*. For if it were to be literally taken, why do they who so receive it, bow the *Head*, instead of the *Knee*? Besides, I see no *Reason* why I shou'd not bow at the *Name* of *Messiah*, *Christ*, *Emanuel*, since the *Redeemer* of the *World* is called by all these *Names*? Nay, why should not I pay the same *Reverence* to all the *Names* of *God* in all *Languages*, especially to that tremendous *Name* *Jehovah*, which the *Jews* think it unlawful to utter? 'Tis true indeed, I can comply with the *Custom* of the *Church* in a thing not directly opposite to any positive *Command*; but I protest at the same time, my wishes are, that a *Custom* acknowleg'd to be indifferent, even by those who most zealously plead for its practice, were rather disus'd, than impos'd on Men of *tender Consciences*, since it gives so much *Scandal*, and has no *Authority* but that of *Tradition* to back it.

I am naturally a *Lover* of *Musick*, and believe it has an efficacy in composing or ruffling the *Spirits*, according

to the various kinds of it. But I find its most immediate Operation is on the *Fancy*, and sensual Affections, not on the *Superior Faculties* of the *Soul*. And therefore I see no use of it in the *Church*, where we come not to pay Homage to *God* in the strength of an exalted Imagination, or to present him with the *First-Fruits* of our *Passions*, tho' never so refin'd, but to offer up our selves a *Living Sacrifice*, which is our Rational Service, since *God* is to be worship'd in *Spirit* and *Truth*, and not with airy *Notions*, and carnal Raptures.

Tho' the *Ear* is a Member consecrated to the Service of *Religion*, since *Faith* comes by *Hearing*, yet I cannot observe that my *Faith* is at any time increas'd by the most Harmonious Lessons on the *Organ*, or other Instruments of *Musick*, used in Divine Service. Neither do I admire at the Countryman's Freak, who the first time he had ever been in a Cathedral, hearing the *Organ* strike up, fell a dancing, as tho' he had been in a *Musick-House*. To speak freely, I know not why we may not praise *God* as acceptably in a *Dance*, as with *Musick*, since the *Jews*, from whom we borrow our Arguments for the latter, did as usually practice the former; there being but little use of the one without the other. To me a Chapter in the *Bible* is the best *Musick* in the World, and no Melody like that of a good *Sermon*, where the Preacher, like a skilful Artist, reconciles the Discords of the *Law* and the *Gospel*; and between the Emblems and Types of the one, and the Substantial *Truths* and *Mysteries* of the other, strikes up such a grateful *Harmony*, as far exceeds the best *Confort* in the World, tho' it were as charming as *Nebuchadnezzar's*, and made up of the whole Family of *Musick*.

I am a great Admirer of good *Fainting* and *Sculpture*, yet can never find them Helps, but Hinderances to my *Devotion*; since it is impossible for the greatest Master that ever profess'd those *Arts*, to draw or carve to the Life, what was never expos'd to any of his Senses, or to contrive a *Figure* of that which has no Resemblance, the *Invisible Divinity*. Indeed a Man's own *Fancy* in such Cases is the best Painter; and if it be lawful to make use of *Pictures* or *Images*, 'tis of such as our own Imagination frames: Yet this is the way to become *Anthropomorphites*, and worship  
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God under the *Similitude* of a Man; or to follow the Pagan Vanities, and adore him under the likeness of a Beast, or some other sensible *Figure*; since all the *Ideas* of that *Mimick Faculty*, are but the Transcripts of External Objects; Aristotle's Maxim being truer of this, than of the *Intellect*, That there is nothing in it which was not first in the *Sense*. The only way to have a true *Idea* of God, is to suppress the Operations of this busie *Faculty*; and by withdrawing into the most inward *Recess* of the *Mind*, there, as in a *Mirror*, to contemplate that *Infinite Essence*, who is hid behind himself (if I may so speak) and cannot be discover'd but by his *Back-parts*.

It is with Pleasure that I behold Him in his *Rays* which shine in all his Works, and he has cast his shadow throughout the *Universe*, but I should be oppress'd with Glory, were I capable of fixing my Eyes on that *Abyss* of Splendors, before which the most *Illustrious Spirits* in Heaven cover their Faces, as if they were ashamed of their comparative Imperfections, and were not able to behold that Original *Increated Purity* without a Blush.

I have no ambition to become an *Eagle* in *Divinity*, neither do I emulate the towering Flights of such as pretend to extraordinary *Revelations*. I had rather walk under the *Piazas* of Gods Church, than on the *Battlements* of the Devils Chappel, lest my Head should grow giddy with *Enthusiasms*, and I be blown off from those Heights and Pinnacles with some wind of vain Doctrine. That Father of the *Arrian* Heresie was an *Icarus* in Religion, he had lofty Thoughts and soaring Speculations, but he flew without a Guide, he forsook the Path of his Mother the Church, his Wings melted, and he had a terrible Fall, which at once bereft him of his *Life*, and ('tis to be fear'd) of his *Salvation*.

I take great Pleasure sometimes to find my self entangled in *Difficulties* and *Dangers*, out of which I have no *Skill* to extricate my self. I never think my self safer than in such a *Labyrinth* of thwarting Events, as no *Clue* of my own Reason or Experience can lead me out. 'Tis then I can be chearful and triumph, knowing my Deliverance is near at hand. And herein lies the *Quintessence* of my Comfort,  
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that I am thus particularly, and demonstratively assur'd of the Divine Favour and Protection, since nothing below a Miracle of Providence could untie so knotty a juncture of Misfortunes.

Were all the Passages of my *Life* publish'd, it wou'd be taken for more than a *Romance*, it is so full of Adventures, which surpass the Stories of *Gyants*, *Monsters*, *Enchanted Castles*, and the whole System of *Knight Errantry*. Such strange and unexpected Escapes as I have made from the very Jaws of *Death*, exceed the Fables of *Poets*. And had I no other Reason but the Remembrance of my own *Perils* and *Deliverances*, it were more than enough to convince me of an unerring Eye that watches over *Mankind*. This makes me chearful and easie in all humane Circumstances, and reconciles me to the *Stoicks*. I look on all things to be govern'd by a fixed *Law* and *Destiny*; and therefore cou'd quietly sit down with *George Withers*, and say, *Nec habeo, nec careo, nec curo*. I consider my self as a *Part* of the *Universe*, and therefore am never troubled at any thing which happens to me, since it comes not to pass without the Knowledge and Will of him who in all his Dispensations has Regard to the *Good* of the *Whole*; from which I am not excluded as a *Member*, and therefore must needs participate of the *Common Benefit*, even when I think I suffer *Damage*. I am not peevish at a *Calumny*, nor waspish at a *loss*. When any one does me an *Injury*, I take a singular Pleasure in forgiving him. There is nothing so much gratifies an ill Tongue, as when it finds an *ANGRY HEARER*; nor nothing so much disappoints and vexeth it, as *Calmness* and a *Quiet Spirit*. It is the most exquisite and innocent Revenge in the World, to return *Gentle Words*, or none at all, to *Ill Language*. There is such a Noble *Pride* attends this generous *Conquest* of an *Enemy*, as far surpasses the celebrated *Sweetness* of *Revenge*. I hate to gratifie my *Passion* the *common way*; and because he has acted the part of an ill Man, I must do so too, or worse, by giving scope to my *Rage*, and executing the severest Dictates of my *Fury*. He is but a *Tinker* in *Morality*, who to repair one *Breach*, makes another; and perhaps wider than the first. Besides, 'tis the most profitable kind of *Revenge*, when I turn a *Wrong* to an *Advantage*, by cancelling it; since thereby I

make a *Friend* of an *Enemy*; and if he have but the least *Spark* of *Gratitude* and *Vertue*, my *Benignity* makes him not only blush at his *Offence*, but puts him upon some ingenuous *Study* how to make me amends.

This *NEW WAY* of revenging of Wrongs, has been my constant *Practice* for six Months; so that now, *to forgive Injuries*, is so easie to me, 'tis scarce a *Trouble*. And when any wound me with *Slanders*, I meet 'em with *PATIENCE*: *Hasty Words* ranckle the *Wound*, *soft Language* dresses it; *Forgiveness* cures it, and *Oblivion* takes away the *Scar*. It is more noble by *Silence* to cover an *Injury*, than by *Argument* to overcome or spread it.

Thus (when any wrong me) *I AM BRAVELY REVENGED*; I slight it, and the *Work's* begun; I forgive it, and 'tis finish'd: *He is below himself, that is not above an Injury*: But if my *Brother* *PRIVATELY* offends me, I reprove him privately; and by this means, when he has lost himself in an *Injury*, I find him again in my *Forgiveness*. *He that rebukes a private Fault openly, sordidly betrays it, rather than reproveth it.*

But in all *Cases* of this Nature, *I change Conditions with my Brother*, and then ask my *Conscience* what I would be done to? Being resolv'd, I *EXCHANGE* again, and do the like to him; and *that*, I'm sure, is *Right Christianity*.

I esteem it one of the most substantial *Exercises* of *Religion*, to subdue our *Passions*: And because *Anger* is the most violent and precipitate, I use my most strenuous *Endeavours* to stifle this in its *Embryo*. Other *Passions* take a gradual *Rise*, and insinuate by steps; but *Wrath*, like *Gun-Powder*, takes *Fire* all at once, and blows a *Man* up before he can look about him. Therefore I have by long and assiduous *Practice*, labour'd to get the *Victory* of this turbulent *Affection*; and I count it the *Master-piece* of *Humane Wit*, to be above all *Provocation*. I cou'd long ago stop my *Hand* in the midst of its *Career*, when aim'd at a faulty *Servant*, or scurrilous *Companion*; but now I can bridle the *Nerves* which wou'd have stretch'd it forth, and curb the officious *Spirits* which were so ready to sally forth on such an *Occasion*. I scorn to suffer my *Tongue* to be my *Hand's Deputy*, and to lavish out in unseemly *Expressions*; as if the *Height* of *Man's Wit* and *Valour*, lay in a biting *Repartee*.

*Repartee.* Nay, I will not permit so much as my *Cheek* to change Colour, my *Eye* to sparkle, or any other part of my *Face* to receive the least Impression of my *Resentments*, whereby it may be perceiv'd that I am fermented. If I am found dead on the spot, what matters it? *Not being able to govern Events, I endeavour to govern my Self.* 'Tis the greatest of *Dominions*, to rule ones *Self and Passions*. Yet at the same time I am not insensible of an *Affront*, nor void of due Reflection on it. All that I aim at, is to comply with the *Apostles Advice*, *To be angry and not to sin.*

I have no Pannick Fears of *Death* upon me, neither am I sollicitous, how or when I shall make my *Exit* from the Stage of this *Life*; much less do I trouble my self about the manner of my *Burial*, or to which of the *Elements* I shall commit my *Carcass*. I envy not the *Funeral State* of Great Men, neither do I covet the *Embalming* of the *Egyptians*. I wonder at the Fancy of those who desire to be imprison'd in leaden *Coffins* till the *Resurrection*, and to protract the *Corruption* of their *Flesh*, out of which they shall be generated *de Novo*: As if they dreamt of rising whole, as they lay down, and carrying *Flesh and Blood* into the *Kingdom of Heaven*, without a *Change*.

For my Part, I admire the *Indian Obsequies*; and were it not against the long establish'd Custom of my *Country*, wou'd sooner bequeath my *Body* to the *Fire*, than be *inhum'd*; that so I might be sooner resolv'd into the *Elements* of which I was first compounded.

Yet instead of that nearer way to Dissolution, I can be contented to undergo the tedious Conversation of *Worms* and *Serpents*, those greedy *Tenants* of the *Grave*, who will never be satisfic'd till they have eat up the *Ground-Landlord*.

I do not puzzle my self with projecting how my *scattered Ashes* shall be collected together, neither do I for that Reason take Care for an *Urn* to enclose them. I am satisfic'd, that at the last *Trumpet*, I shall rise with the same *Individual Body*, I now carry about me, tho' there may not then be one of the same *Individual Atomes* to make it up, which are its present Ingredients. For neither are they the same now as they were twenty years ago. Yet I may be properly said to have the same *Individual Body* at this Hour, which my Mother brought forth into the World, tho' it is



manifest, that there is so vast an *Accession* of other *Partic-les* since that time, as are enough to make *Ten* such *Bodies* as I had then. Which implies such a perpetual *Flux* of the former, as 'twould be a *Solæcism* in *Philosophy* to think I have one of my *Infant Atomes* now left about me.

If after all this, I may be still said to have the same *Individual Body* as I had then, tho' there be not one of the same *Individual Atomes* left in its *Composition*, why may we not assert the same of the *Bodies* we shall have after the *Resurrection*? *Matter* is one and the same in all *Bodies*; the *Individuation* of it, the *Meum* and *Tuum*, proceeds only from the infinitely different *Forms* which actuate it. Thus when my *Soul* at the *Resurrection*, either by its own *Energy*, or by the *Power* of *God*, and *Assistance* of *Angels*, shall be-reinvested with a *Body*, it is proper to say it will be the same *Individual Body* I have now, tho' made up of *Atomes* which never before were *Ingredients* of my *Composition*; since not the *Matter*, but the *Form*, gives a *Title* to *Individuation*.

I am the more willing to believe this will be the manner of our *Resurrection*, because I think it not *Decorous* to put the *Angels* on the *Drudgery* of *Scavengers*; as if it should at that *Day* be their *Employment* to sweep the *Graves* and *Charnel-houses*, to sift the *Elements*, and rake in all the *Receptacles* of the *Dead*, for *Mens* divided *Dust*. Not that I think it impossible for *God* even this way to accomplish the *Resurrection* of the *Dead*, tho' the *Bodies* of all *Mankind* were crumbled into *Dust*, and that *Dust* scatter'd before the *Wind*, or distill'd into *Water*, or attenuated into *Air*, or tho' those *Bodies* were eaten by the *Beasts* of the *Earth*, or the *Fish* of the *Sea*, and those *Beasts* and *Fishes* eaten again by *Men*. Tho' they shou'd undergo all these *Changes* and *Transmigrations*, yet were they still in the great *Repository* of *God*. The whole *World* in this sense, being but as one great *Store-house*, and all the *Elements* as so many *Cell* therein; so that wheresoever we shall be laid up, whether in the *Bellies* of *Fishes*, *Entrails* of *Beasts*, or by various *Alterations* become the *Food* of *Men*, yet the great *Architect* of all things knows where to find our scatter'd *Remnants*. But why should we engage him in so infinite a *Task*, when the *Work* may as well be done a nearer way? And put him

to the Expence of multiplying *Miracles*, when fewer will serve the turn? When the Grand Alarm is given, He can soon fit our *Souls* with proper Matter for their future *Bodies*, out of the *Elements*, as well as out of their own *Antiquated Embers*. The *Jewish Rabbins* seem to deny the gathering together our dispers'd *Ashes*, and assign the Trouble to a certain *small Bone* in every Man's Back, which they say, never suffers any *Putrefaction*, but remaining to the last Day in its *Primitive Consistency*, impassible and incorruptible, is then impregnated by a *Dew* from *Heaven*, which diffusing its *Vertue* like a Ferment, not only animates and quickens this *Seminal Bone*, but also attracts all the *Atomes*, which formerly constituted the *Body*, tho' dispers'd in the remotest *Corners*, and most hidden *Recesses* of the *Universe*, marshalling them in the same *Order* as they had before the *Dissolution*, and so in a moment recovering the *Body* to its *Primitive State*. But these are gross Concepts for *Christians*, who believe that our *Bodies* shall in that great and *Final Change* become *Spiritual* and *Immortal*, being for ever divested of all the *peculiar Circumstances* of *Flesh*, and *Blood*.

Let the manner be how it will please *God*, I am ravish'd to think what a bright and serene *Morning* the *Resurrection* will prove, after the long *Night* of *Death*, and the languishing *Slumbers* of the *Grave*! How vigorous and active we shall rise from our *Beds* of *Darkness*, how merry and blithe from the melancholy *Regions* of *Horror* and *Silence*! More sprightly than *Youth*; stronger than *Lions*; and swifter than *Eagles*! Full of *Light*, full of *Joy*, we shall soar aloft; and like well mounted *Travellers* post it away through the *Balmy Air*, and liquid *Skies*, till we arrive at the *Place* of admirable *Mansions*, and be welcom'd to the *House* of *God*.

I dare not, with some of the *Jewish Rabbins*, say that all shall not rise at the great *Day*; much less will I presume, with others, to particularize so far, as to exclude all those who perish'd in *Noah's Flood*; or with a third sort, to confine the *Resurrection* to the *Children* of *Israel*; as if we, that are of the *Gentiles*, were not capable of it as well as they. But above all, I reject the *Censure* of the *Talmudists*, who say, that neither *Bilha*, the Concubine of *Jacob*, that lay  
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