

The honour of Christ vindicated: or, a hue and cry after the bully, who assaulted Jacob in his solitude.

Publication/Creation

London : 'Printed for the booksellers of London,', 1732.

Persistent URL

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THE
HONOUR
OF
CHRIST
VINDICATED:

OR, A
HUE and CRY
AFTER

The BULLY, who assaulted JACOB
in his Solitude.

*Si de veritate Scandalum sumitur, utilius permittitur
nasci Scandalum, quàm ut veritas relinquatur.*

Gregor. 1. 7. Homil.

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MDCCXXXII.

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MDCCLXXII.

TO THE
Reverend Dr. J. T.

REVEREND SIR,

I Humbly beg leave to put under your Protection this small Treatise, which is writ with no other View than to promote the Glory of GOD, and the Honour of CHRIST.

The Cause, which the Author defends, is the very same, in which you have always shewn your Zeal, Assiduity, Learning and Courage. If you go two different Ways to work in Defence of the Truth, it shall be the Comfort of all discerning Men, that you both meet in the Center.

To

To furnish the Palace of a great Prince, is the Duty of those, who are in a high Post in his Household; yet the Care of inferior Servants to keep these rich Goods clean, and in a regular Order, is very necessary.

I have heard the Author say, that he is bound in Conscience to remove from, or sweep off other Places of Scripture the Cobwebs and Vermin Commentators have covered them with: that Zeal is not discommendable, if it be attended with Discretion; but if you apprehend any Danger, I make bold to recommend you to the Rules of the Divine HIPPOCRATES, Principiis Obsta.

*There are here, I own, a few bold Criticisms, but learned Men are allowed to differ in their Opinions
upon*

upon Particulars, so long as they preserve the Fundamentals.

I am sure, you'll be pleased to do the Author Justice, that he does, in no manner, attack the 39 Articles of the Church, and who can desire more?

I speak without the least Partiality, for we Booksellers, as good Christians, make a solemn Vow, to keep the Ballance even amongst Authors, and to hear both Sides; the OFTNER THE BETTER. We delight justly in Contradictions, as the true Test of Truth, never allowing AMEN to be said but in Churches.

*Upon that Account, if any Person be willing to answer this Dissertation, I shall always be ready, from the bottom of my Heart, to serve him in
his*

(vi)

*his turn to the utmost of my Power.
I am with due Respect,*

REVEREND SIR,

Your most humble Servant,

BIBLIOPOLA.

THE

THE
H O N O U R
O F
C H R I S T
V I N D I C A T E D, &c.

C H A P. I.

*The Design, and Method of the
Discourse.*

THE Subject of this Dissertation is the strange and unaccountable Accident of *JACOB*, who, in the *Dark* of the Night, in a *By-place*, *Destitute* of Help and Assistance, was, *without the least Provocation*, and *unexpectedly*, *set upon* and *wounded* by a Person *unknown*, as 'tis related at large in *Genes. xxxii.* according to the common Translation.

Ver. 24. And JACOB was left alone : and there wrestled a MAN with him, until the breaking of the Day.

25. And when he saw, that he prevailed not against him, he touched the Hollow of his Thigh : and the Hollow of JACOB's Thigh was out of Joint, as he wrestled with him.

26. And he said, let me go, for the Day breaketh : and he said, I will not let thee go, except thou blest me.

27. And he said unto him, what is thy Name ? and he said, JACOB.

28. And he said, thy Name shall be called no more JACOB, but ISRAEL : for as a Prince, thou hast Power with God, and with Men, and hast prevailed.

29. And JACOB asked him, and said, tell me, I pray thee, thy Name : and he said, Wherefore is it, that thou dost ask after my Name ? and he blessed him there.

30. And JACOB called the Name of the Place Peniel : for I have seen God Face to Face, and my Life is preserved.

31. And as he passed over Peniel, the Sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his Thigh.

32. Therefore the Children of Israel eat not of the Sinew which shrank, which is upon the Hollow of the Thigh, unto this Day : because he touched the Hollow of JACOB's Thigh, in the Sinew that shrank.

That History, well examined, is certainly attended with Circumstances uncommon, and very surprising, and, on the other Side, the Opinions of *Divines* are so odd, and singular, and so contradictory to one another, and sometimes to themselves, that the Difficulties are rather increased, than removed by their Commentaries.

I confess, that it seems, at first View, to be a Case of very little or no Importance, to know what sort of *Wrestling* this was, and who were the *Combatants*; but since Interpreters have attempted to build upon that sandy Foundation certain Notions, which are very dishonourable to the Nature of an Infinite Being, I think 'tis the Duty of every one, who has any Love or Respect for his MAKER, to oppose such a scandalous Practice, to the utmost of his Capacity.

I hope then that no body can find it amiss, if I venture to give an Explanation of such an extraordinary Adventure, more easy, and rational, and better grounded than any that has yet been offered.

The Method I follow is this.

1. To set down, in their full Strength, the several Interpretations that I have heard of, and to shew their Nullity.

2. I deliver my Conjectures, and the Reasons they are grounded upon.

3. And, lastly, I'll answer all the Objections that can be made against me.

I have, in this Undertaking, nothing in View but the Discovery of TRUTH, and the HONOUR of GOD; upon that Account, I desire *full Liberty* of Speech, a *Calm, Impartial,* and *Judicious* Reader, and NO FAVOUR.

CHAP. II.

That JACOB's Wrestling was neither a DREAM, nor a VISION, nor the Fit of the INCUBUS.

THE first Conjecture is, that the whole Business was nothing else, but a *natural Dream*, in which JACOB thinking himself assaulted, did stand upon his Defence, and, with great Pains and Labour, did obtain an entire Victory, according to his Fancy and Imagination.

It is certain, that when we are asleep, several different Objects do, many times, present themselves to our Consideration so regularly combined, that they have an Air of Truth and Reality; they are commonly but a Rehearsal of the Transactions or Thoughts of the former Day: so that there's no Absurdity to say, that JACOB having, when he was awake, made serious Reflections upon
his

his melancholy Circumstances, and the imminent Danger he was in from his Enemy, and his Incapacity of defending himself against his Brother, and his four hundred Men: These Considerations, I say, being very heavy upon his Heart, might give occasion to the Dream.

2. Others are of Opinion, that the *Wrestling* was indeed a *Dream*, but a *miraculous* one, of the same Nature as the Vision of *Bethel*, where JACOB is reported to have seen a *Ladder*, and the *Angels of GOD ascending and descending on it*, though, in reality, these spiritual Beings have need in their Journeys neither of *Ladder*, nor *Wings*. In short, they say that God Almighty being graciously pleased to encourage the PATRIARCH in his Adversity, and to give him palpable Assurances of his Protection, did, by a divine Impression upon the CEREBRUM, cause in him *supernaturally* the very same Sensation, as if he had been actually in a real Engagement.

3. Some pretend that JACOB might, in his sleep, be troubled with a Fit of the INCUBUS, a nervous Distemper known by the Name of NIGHT-MARE: And as those who have that Indisposition are afflicted, for a time, with a great Oppression, and an extraordinary Difficulty of Breathing, do generally believe themselves to be attacked by a monstrous and frightful Adversary, and to be

be seized by the Throat, and even squeezed to Death; so possibly J A C O B thought a strong and lusty Giant had taken hold of him, and was attempting to give him the C O R N I S H H U G G, which obliged the P A T R I A R C H, in his Imagination, to struggle and to make all his Efforts for disengaging his Body from his *chimerical* Adversary. This is so natural and so common, that I make no doubt but many of my Readers have experienced upon themselves the Weight of that troublesome Bed-Companion.

Now these three Interpretations being considered, I declare I would not speak one single World against them, could they be reconciled with all the Circumstances of the History. Some People, I own, may, upon those Occasions, be frightened, and even to Death; but who has ever heard, that any Persons were hurt in their Limbs, BARELY by their *Dreams*? Whereas J A C O B was actually so much bruised in his Thigh, that he could not walk straight, and without limping: *And he halted upon his Thigh.*

Mr. John Calvin, who was an acute Logician, seems to have been sensible of that Difficulty, and to have made his Endeavours to solve it: *Although this was a Vision by Night*, says he, *yet the Lord was willing that Mark should remain upon him for ever, to shew thereby that it is not a Dream* insignificant. *This teaches us, that if we are victorious of*
our

our Temptations, we must expect to receive some Damage; for if we remained whole and entire, and were neither wounded nor bruised, nor disabled in the Fight, our Flesh would grow proud, not remembring that we have overcome by the help of GOD. But, with submission to the Judgment of that great Man, the Question is not, what is the End and Design of Providence in bringing Trouble and Affliction upon us; but whether it appears by Scripture, that any *Dream* or *Vision* has ever been attended with any Bruise or outward Wound, which, I think, the Author should have proved by some Instances, without spending himself into an unintelligible Declamation. *Reason*, adds Mr. CALVIN, tends to make JACOB know that GOD has taught him by a Vision in the Night. In answer to this I say, on the contrary, REASON tends to prove, that since JACOB was wounded and disabled, this *Wrestling* was neither a *Dream* nor a *Vision*, but a true and real Engagement.

C H A P. III.

That JACOB'S Wrestling is not Allegorical.

THIS particular Point of History has not escaped the Care of the ALLEGORISTS, a sort of Philosophers, who have the Skill and Privilege of drawing QUODLIBET EX QUOLIBET.

They pretend, that by *Wrestling* is to be understood *Mystically* the fervent *Prayer* of the PATRIARCH, who by the force of *Faith*, and by repeated *Supplications* and *Importunities*, was striving to *besiege* GOD ALMIGHTY, to *take hold* of him, as the Church does of her *Spouse*, Cant. iii. 4. and to *wring* the Blessing out of his Hand: *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.*

During that spiritual Conflict, JACOB was left alone; and why? *No doubt**, say they, *that he might* more freely, *and* vehemently *pour out his Soul unto* GOD. So the Church gets her into the *Clefts of the Rocks*, Cant. ii. 14. ISAAC into the *Fields*, DANIEL to the *River-side*, CHRIST into the *Mount*, PETER up to the *Top of the House*,

* *Clavis to the Bible, or a new Comment upon the Pentateuch, by John Trapp.*

that they might solace themselves with GOD in secret.

At last JACOB being modestly Impudent and Invincible, does prevail over GOD in his Demands; and he said, thy Name shall be called no more JACOB, but ISRAEL; as if GOD should say, thou art such a Fellow, that I have never met withal; Titles of Honour are not worthy of thee; Kneel down, JACOB, Rise up ISRAEL: Thou art a Conqueror, if ever there were any.

If you ask these new GNOSTICKS, what is the meaning of JACOB's Thigh being wounded? They answer, in good earnest, and without smiling, that, according to Philo *περὶ ἄθλων*, it signifies *συστολήν οἰήσεως*, that is, the Dejection of the Soul, and the Trouble of Mind JACOB was in, by the violent Efforts he made in his Addresses towards GOD. Thus our Saviour prayed himself into an Agony, says Mr. Trapp, NEHEMIAH prayed himself pale, and into a sad Countenance, Chap. ii. 6. DANIEL prayed himself sick, Chap. viii. 27. HANNAH prayed, striving with such an unusual Motion of her Lips, that old ELI looking upon her, thought her drunk, 1 Sam. i. ELIJAH puts his Head between his Legs, as straining every STRING of his Heart in Prayer.

As for JACOB, add some others, “ No
“ doubt fear came upon him in that aw-
“ ful Approach to the supreme Being; his
C “ Heart

“ Heart was contrite and bleeding to the
 “ Lord, the Hair of his Flesh stood up,
 “ the sudden Reflux of the animal Spirits
 “ towards their original Spring, wherein
 “ they confined themselves to take care of
 “ the main Chance, caused all his *Sinews*
 “ to *shrink* : In short, his *trembling* probably
 “ was such, that it *shook*, as it were, the
 “ very *Bones* out of their *Joints*. So great is
 “ the Energy of *Prayer*.” Oh, the great
 Depth of MYSTICAL Learning !

After all, 'tis easy to see, that these nice
 and witty Thoughts are nothing else but the
 fruitful Wantonness of the Fancy, and that
 they have no solid Foundation; for if, ac-
 cording to the ALLEGORISTS, by *Wrest-*
ling we must understand PRAYER, it
 shall follow, that GOD himself *prayed* also
 unto JACOB, and even was the *first* who
 began to *pray*; for it is not said, that JACOB
wrestled with a Man, but *there wrestled a*
 Man with JACOB, until the breaking of
 the Day.

2. The PATRIARCH, say they, did
 pray with *great Vehemence* and for a *whole*
Night : 'tis more than can be proved by
 the *Letter* of the Scripture : But let it be so,
 and what then? Had JACOB immediately
 after this long and painful Exercise, been af-
 flicted with a swelled Tongue, a dry Throat,
 a Hoarseness, a Difficulty of Breathing, a
 Palpitation of the Heart, an Inflammation
 3 of

of the Larynx, or of the Lungs, or with any such Distempers? Then, in that Case, one might believe these bad Symptoms proceeded from elevating his Voice beyond his natural Strength, and straining all the Organs of Speech beyond the *Tonus* of the Parts. But what Affinity there can be between a wounded Thigh and the Agitation of the Mind, is, I must confess, beyond my Apprehension.

3. But nothing shews the Vanity of those allegorical Interpretations so well, as the Comment which is made upon Ver. 26. *And he said, let me go, for the Day breaketh: And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.* Which is pretended to be as much as this: *Give over, JACOB, to make any more Demands; I am not willing to hearken unto thy Supplications; they shall not be granted.* To which the PATRIARCH is supposed to answer, *Good LORD, Hear my Prayer; suffer me, not to give over, till thou be so gracious, as to bestow a Blessing upon thy humble Servant.* So far as this, there's no Absurdity. But what is the meaning of the Cause assigned against granting the Petition, *for the Day breaketh*? Is it not our Duty to pray at all times, both by *Day* and by *Night*? The meaning is, says Mr. Pool, *I am not willing there should be any Witnesses to these Transactions.* Really, I beg the Author Pardon, if I don't understand him;

I don't know what Witnesses had to do in this Affair: J A C O B was alone and retired to a solitary Place, where, notwithstanding the rising of the Sun, he might pray outwardly or inwardly in his Heart, with or without uttering any word, both ways being acceptable to G O D. Mr. *Pool* might as well, I mean to as little purpose, have ventured upon this Interpretation: " Let me go ;
 " Dost thou think, I have no other Bu-
 " siness than to hear thee? I must remove
 " farther into the Country, according to
 " the Course of the Sun, there I am ex-
 " pected to give Audience to a Multitude
 " of Petitioners, my time is short, I can't
 " stay any longer ; farewell."

Ah! what Abyss of Absurdities are not Men in Danger of plunging themselves into, when instead of being satisfied with the Mysteries, which G O D has plainly revealed in the sacred Writings, they coin some of their own, by the Strength of their Imagination, and so counterfeit the divine Stamp?

C H A P. IV.

*That the Wrestler was neither an
Angel of GOD, nor the DEVIL.*

ALL that I have said till now, tends to prove, that JACOB's *wrestling*, and the Consequences thereof, can never be explained, but upon the supposition of a *corporeal* Fight, in which the PATRIARCH was wounded, notwithstanding that he got the Victory. Now the next Question is, to find out that quarrelsome Adversary, who came to challenge him in his Retirement.

JOSEPHUS, who lived about eighteen hundred Years after the Fact, and who consequently knew very little of the Matter, is of Opinion, that the *Wrestler* was οὐρανίου ἀγγέλου, but whether he means one of those spiritual Beings, which we call *Angels*, or, in general, a *Messenger* sent by GOD upon that Expedition, I leave it to the Reader to judge.

Let it be how it will, his Words are these; JACOB, says he, *being left alone was assaulted by a Phantasm, which he fought and overcame.* Then the Spectrum said to the PATRIARCH, *Rejoyce, JACOB, at your Victory: you have not had to do with a mean Person; I am no less than a divine Angel:*
This

This Success is a Prefage of much greater Advantages, and of the Perpetuity of your Race, and that no Man shall ever be superiour to you in Strength ; upon that account assume the Name of ISRAEL, which, says JOSEPH, does signify one, who has resisted a divine Angel. This was spoken, adds the Historian, at the Request of JACOB, who desired to know what his Fate should be.

This is a mere Romance of JOSEPHUS's own making, if we think fit to take the *Scripture* for a Judge.

1. In MOSES's account, there's not one Word of the *Wrestler* being a *divine Angel*, or of any thing tending to it ; he is called barely by the Name of MAN, *There wrestled a Man with him.* If he was an Angel, how comes the holy Writer to conceal it ?

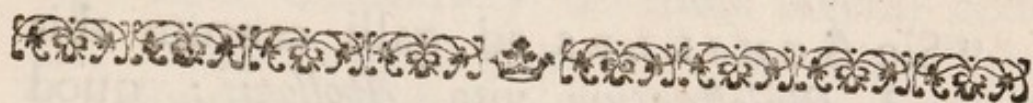
2. Where does it appear, that JACOB took his Adversary for a CONJURER, and desired him to *cast* his Nativity ?

3. 'Tis false, that ISRAEL does strictly signify, *One, who has resisted a divine Angel.* This is an unpardonable Fault in a *Jew*, who was well acquainted with the Original.

4. How comes JOSEPHUS to be better acquainted with the *Wrestler*, than JACOB himself, who, notwithstanding his great Familiarity with Angels, took this one for a Stranger, and asked for his Name, *Tell me, I pray thee, thy Name.*

5. In

5. In short, JOSEPHUS seems to have nothing else in View, but to accommodate his History, to the Humour and Customs of the Heathens, who, in their Accounts, always introduced upon the Stage, a GENIUS, to tell the HERO of the *Piece*, the future Events, both of his Reign, and of his Successors.



A Friend of mine, who is a great admirer of the Works of Dr. *More*, *Glanvill*, *Baxter*, and such other Books of Witchcraft and Apparitions has a very singular Opinion.

The Gentleman believes, that the *Wrestler* was an ill Spirit, and one of those who are confined to the lower Region of the Air, and that he had, upon this occasion, put on a particular VEHICLE adapted to his diabolical Design, *viz.* of doing the PATRIARCH all the Injuries in the World, only out of pure Malice, and because JESUS CHRIST was to proceed from his Family.

What seems to confirm his Sentiment, is, that Spirits very seldom or never venture abroad in the Day-time, and that, in all probability, our *Wrestler* was mightily afraid of the Light; or, it may be, had a *Furlough* for no longer time than a single Night, *Let me go for the Day is a coming.*

Sic JUPITER Plautinus, *

“ ———Cur me tenes?

“ *Tempu'st: Exire ex urbe, priusquam lu-*
“ *cescat volo.*

“ ANCHISES Virgilianus *Æneid.* 5.

“ *Jamque vale: torquet medios nox humida*
“ *cursus,*

“ *Et me sævus equis oriens afflavit anhelis.*

“ Sic ACHILLES ad galli cantum abit
“ apud *Philostratum* vita *Apollonii*: quod
“ & *Eusebio* notatum contra *Hieroclem*:
“ CHRYISIS apud LUCIANUM. Et ge-
“ nerale hoc in nocturnis visis observat *Æneas*
“ *Gazæus* THEOPHRASTO.

As this Hypothesis is not like to make many Profelytes, I'll make no farther Reflections, but leave it to the Judgment of the Reader.

* *Vid. Grot. in Genesin.*

C H A P. V.

That the Wrestler was not J E S U S
C H R I S T.

TH E Contrariety of these several Sentiments upon one and the same Subject, does plainly demonstrate the Weakness of human Reason, when it recedes from the true and literal meaning of Scripture.

But the most *shocking* Interpretation is that of a great many Divines both amongst the PROTESTANTS, and the ROMANISTS, who flying to another Extreme, do boldly, and without the least hesitation, affirm, that the Wrestler was no less than JESUS CHRIST himself, the eternal Son of G O D, and the second Person of the Blessed T R I N I T Y.

There's no doubt, but, under the old Dispensation, the L O G O S has very often, and in divers ways, manifested his Power and his Glory by several Operations; but to say, that in order to converse with Men, he was ever made F I R E, or did assume any *Aereal Vehicle*; or, lastly, that he has *occasionally* been F L E S H before he was made F L E S H at the time of his Conception by the Holy Ghost; that Assertion seems to be groundless, rash, and inconsistent with Scripture and sound Reason.

This unaccountable Theology, which makes a DRUDGE of the LOGOS, has been originally broached in the second Century by *Justin Martyr*, the very first Author, who ever said that the *Wrestler* was JESUS CHRIST; 'tis in his Dialogue with *Trypho* the Jew.

But the Authority of this Philosopher, who, notwithstanding his Conversion, entertained still a great many heathenish Notions, does not seem to be of so great a Weight, as to render this strange Hypothesis the more creditable.

I don't take notice, that *Justin* makes openly, and by Arguments not much to be admired, all his Endeavours to metamorphose PLATONISM into CHRISTIANITY, for that was a *pious Fraud* much in use in those Days.

But I cannot forbear observing, that he places the LOGOS at such a vast Distance from GOD the Father, that he appears plainly either to have forgotten, or rather never to have known thoroughly his Catechism upon the most fundamental Article of Religion, the CONSUBSTANTIALITY of the Persons of the blessed TRINITY.

What this Writer affirms of the *Immensify* or *Ubiquity* of the FATHER is very sound and orthodox; but he has a very *mean* Opinion of the SON, whom he represents in a literal Sense, as a *circumscribed Deity*, which
is

is *confined* in a narrow Place, either *lurking* in the Corner of a Garden, or *concealed* behind a Bush, or familiarly *sitting* at Table with A B R A H A M ; in short, as a *finite* Being, which is necessitated to walk and move from Place to Place, like us poor Mortals when we go about our Affairs.

I know some charitable People have been so good, as to speak in Vindication of that holy Father.

“ *Justin*, says *Monsieur Dupin*, asserts, that
 “ the *Father* is invisible, that the Majesty of
 “ the *Father* is greater than the Majesty of
 “ the *Son* ; but, if the Case be well examin’d,
 “ St. *Justin* does not pretend, that the *Father*
 “ is of another *Nature* or *Substance* than the
 “ *Son*, but only, that ’tis the *Son* who has
 “ made himself known to Men, or rather,
 “ that the *Father* has never made himself
 “ known but by his *Son*.

“ His Principle is, that the *Father* works
 “ nothing outwardly but by the W O R D his
 “ S O N, who has created the World, who
 “ has appeared under *divers Shapes* to the
 “ Patriarchs and Prophets, and who at last
 “ was made M A N.

“ Upon that Foundation *Justin* asserts,
 “ that the *Son* is visible and the *Father* invi-
 “ sible, because the *Father* is not visible but
 “ by the *Son* ; but this does not hinder them
 “ to be of the same *Nature*. We find like
 “ Expressions in St. *Athanasius*, who can

“ never be suspected to have had erroneous
 “ Sentiments upon the Divinity of J E S U S
 “ C H R I S T.” [*Ergo, Our Martyr must have
 been exactly of the same Opinion as good
 Athanasius, and other Post-nicean Fathers,
 who lived some hundred Years after him.*]

This Plea is very ingeniously contrived ;
 but yet 'tis begging the Question, a mere
 Evasion, and cannot at all justify the harsh
 Expressions of *Justin*, who *bluntly* does op-
 pose the *infinite Greatness* of one Being to the
Diminuteness of the other, as appears by the
 abovesaid Dialogue with *Trypho*.

Justin being challenged by the *Jew* to
 prove, that the *Holy Scripture* does acknow-
 ledge A N O T H E R G O D besides the Maker
 of all Things; *Justin*, I say, makes this
 Answer, which he repeats over and over a-
 gain, so much pleased he was with his Con-
 ceit.

M O S E S the happy and faithful Servant of
 G O D intimates, that a G O D appeared to
 Abraham at the Oak of Mamre, together with
 two Angels, being sent to the Judgment of
 Sodom by A N O T H E R, who perpetually abi-
 deth in the heavenly Places, and never appeared,
 nor discoursed with any one, and whom we con-
 ceive to be the Maker and Father of all
 Things.

I shall endeavour to persuade you, that the
 G O D, who is said, and recorded to have ap-
 peared unto Abraham, Jacob and Moses, is

Another in Number, than the GOD who made all Things; — he is also named a Messenger and a Lord, that you may from thence know, that he was Servant to the Father of all Things.

It is not GOD the Maker of all Things, that said to Moses, that he was the GOD of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, but he, whom we demonstrated to have appeared unto Abraham, and to JACOB, waiting upon the Pleasure of the Maker of all Things, and who, at the Judgment of Sodom, did in like manner attend upon his Will; so that though it were, as you say, that they were two, even an Angel, and GOD, yet none whosoever, tho' of mean Understanding will dare say, that the Maker and Father of the Universe having left all Things, that are above the Heaven, did appear in a small Parcel of the Earth.

When my GOD says, GOD went up from Abraham, or the LORD spoke unto Moses, or the LORD came down to see the Tower which the Sons of Men builded, or GOD shut up the Ark of Noah from without, do not imagine, that the very unbegotten GOD himself did descend from or ascend to any Place; for the unspeakable Father, and Lord of all Things, does neither come into any Place, nor walk, nor sleep, nor rise up, but abides in his Place, wheresoever it is, sharply seeing, and sharply hearing, not with Eyes, or Ears, but with an unspeakable Faculty, he does both look over, and know all Things; and none of us lies hid from him, neither

is he moved, who cannot be contained in a Place, no not in the whole World; who was before the World had a being: how then should he either speak or appear to any one, or present himself in a little Parcel of the Earth?

Therefore neither Abraham, nor Isaac, nor any other Men saw the Father, and inexpressible Lord of all Things entirely, and of CHRIST himself; but only him, who is by his Will a GOD, being his Son and a Messenger, in that he waits upon his Pleasure; whom he would have to be born a Man by the Virgin, who was also sometimes made FIRE in his Conference with Moses out of the Bush: otherwise, if we do not thus understand the Scriptures, it will happen that the Father, and Lord of the Universe was not then in Heaven, when it was said by MOSES, the LORD rained upon SODOM Fire and Brimstone from the LORD out of Heaven.

When 'tis said, the Lord rained down Fire from the Lord out of Heaven, the prophetick Word intimates two in Number, the One being on the Earth, whom he affirms to have descended to see the Cry of Sodom, the OTHER abiding in Heaven, who is LORD even of the LORD upon the Earth, as being the Father, and God and Author to him both of his Existence, and of his being powerful, and Lord, and God. So far St. Justin.

This is sufficient to make the Readers sensible what Opinion our Martyr had of
JESUS

JESUS CHRIST, whom he makes no scruple *ORE ROTUNDO*, to call *ANOTHER GOD*, than the *Maker* of all Things. A very proper Man indeed to convert a *Jew* to the Christian Religion, or to defend the Unity of *GOD* against those who were for *Polytheism* ! Oh, strange ! that this *Father* should speak so negligently of the second Person of the *Holy Trinity*, without any *Guard, Salvo, or Modification*, even when he was surrounded by a vast Number of *Idolaters*. Our present Divines do certainly take a better Method, for though they can never, in the least, be suspected to admit more than *One God*, yet to prevent the Cavil of Hereticks and Unbelievers, they never speak of the sacred Persons of the *Trinity*, but immediately they proclaim 'em as loud as they can to be but *One God* ; TRINITY in UNITY, UNITY in TRINITY.

I beg pardon for this long Digression, but it was, in a manner, necessary to shew, upon what sort of a System, the Opinion of our *Divines* relating to *JACOB's* History is engrafted.

The whole comes to this ; JUSTIN is in the wrong to assert the *LOGOS* to be an *inferiour God*, or *Another God*, than the *Maker* of all Things ; but, upon that false Supposition, he argues consequently, in putting him only upon such Expeditions, that are answerable to his pretended Quality ; but
when

when ORTHODOXES, who have the Happiness to acknowledge the CONSUBSTANTIALITY of the three Persons, do make a *Wrestler* of the LOGOS, I cannot forbear thinking that they don't argue *Logically*, and that they draw false, absurd and incongruous Conclusions from their Premises.

Now I return to my Subject. I should be glad to have a clear, positive, full and categorical Answer to these following Questions.

I. Was the *Wrestling* in question a true and real Engagement, in which the two *Combatants* were in earnest on both Sides, and exerted their Strength to the utmost? Was the *Wrestler*, who is pretended to have been JESUS CHRIST, overcome or not?

If it be answered in the Affirmative, how can it be supposed that JACOB should ever prove stronger than an ANGEL, or JESUS CHRIST?

The general Opinion is, that the *Wrestler* was not overcome through Impotency, but that he designedly suffered himself to be conquered: For instance, Is not a good-humoured Man willing to play with a Child of two or three Years old, and to permit the weak Infant to snatch seemingly by force an Apple out of his Hand, which he does shut but faintly? GOD, says Mr. *John Calvin*, *assaults us with his LEFT-hand, and does protect us with his RIGHT.* This is the Case of the *Wrestler*. But

But is not this altogether overthrowing the literal Account, the Scripture gives us of that History? What Judgment must we make of all the fine Compliments paid to JACOB upon this Occasion; *for as a PRINCE hast thou Power with ELOHIM, and with Men, and hast prevailed?*

2. The second Question is CUI BONO? for what end should the Son of God have been concern'd in this Expedition? for GOD in all his Operations has nothing in view, but what is worthy of his Divine Majesty; for instance, the wonderful Mystery of the INCARNATION is of such a high Nature, that the very ANGELS *desire to look* into it. Thereby is demonstrated the transcendent Goodness of the supreme Being, in giving his only Son to make Atonement for our Sins, and to deliver us from eternal Punishment: Such a Condescension is the Surprize of Heaven and Earth, and a continual Inducement to Charity, to Humility, to Gratitude, and to the praising and glorifying the holy Name of GOD.

But what was this *Wrestling* good for, but only to have an Opportunity to Nick-name JACOB, to put a Feather in his Cap, and make him appear great and victorious?

This Question gives a great deal of Trouble to the *Divines*, who can't agree in their Answers. Dr. LIGHTFOOT's Thought upon this Subject is certainly an *Original*; for

he makes of JESUS CHRIST a sort of a BAILIFF, who comes to take the Body of JACOB in *Execution*, for neglecting to pay the Tithes to his *Father*. I'm afraid the Gentleman had not Justice done him by his Congregation, HINC LACRYMÆ. *The Angel of the Covenant*, says he, CHRIST meets JACOB by the way, wrestles with him, and seeks to kill him: And why pray? Because, adds Dr. LIGHTFOOT, *he sendeth his Brother ESAU above a thousand Cattle of all Sorts, of which he had vowed the Tithes to the LORD, and before he paid them.*

When the Author's Hand was in, I wonder he did not pretend that JACOB had fair Warning, and had been sufficiently DUNN'D by whole Armies of ANGELS, which he met at MAHANAIM: This had been as true as the other; for upon what Authority is JACOB accused not to have perform'd his Vow? 'Tis not, I own, recorded in Scripture, but he may have done it, from Time to Time, in offering Sacrifices to the LORD, or in bestowing the Cattle, or the Value of them upon the Poor and Indigents.

Others have a very different Opinion; they pretend that CHRIST permitted himself to be MASTERED, to encourage JACOB's Faith and Hope, against the approaching Danger from his Enemies: But on the contrary, I ask, should not rather this *Victory* have created in the PATRIARCH, *Pride, Sauciness,*

ness, and *Impudence*, made him believe he was no MAN, that the EMPIRE of the whole Universe was devolved to his Person by *Conquest*, and that the ANGELS waited upon him as his *Leve*, and *Couche*, out of Duty, as being their SOVEREIGN?

I wonder People be not ashamed to bring down the SON of GOD from the Bosom of his *Father*, from his celestial Court of ANGELS and ARCHANGELS, who are continually singing his Praises; and what for? for nothing else but to put on a *Masquerade Habit*, and to play, AL FRESCO, the contemptible part of a *Prize-Fighter*, and even to come off the Stage with Disgrace.

The HONOUR of the Day is all reserved for JACOB; 'tis true, that he was wounded, but (says LIGHTFOOT, in Contradiction to his own Hypothesis) “ the LAMENESS
“ of JACOB was not reputed to him for a
“ MAIM, but like the HONOURABLE
“ Scars of a VALIANT Captain, for a *spe-*
“ *cial Dignity*; for at BETHEL he exer-
“ cise the Part and Office of a PRIEST,
“ which if his *Halting* had been reputed
“ for a MAIM, he had been disabled to do;
“ and his Posterity in all succeeding Ages,
“ reserve the HONOURABLE Memory of
“ this LAMENESS.

C H A P. VI.

*Tending to prove, that the Wrestler
was Esau's EMISSARY.*

I Am now come to the last Opinion, which I defend, *viz.* that our *Wrestler* was a true *Man*, not different from others, but only in accidental Circumstances, as the *Look*, the *Shape*, the *Bigness*, and *Strength* of the *Body*.

That he was *barely* a *human* Person, appears by the following Reasons.

1. He is positively called a *MAN* by the sacred Writer; *And there wrestled a MAN with him untill the breaking of the Day*, Gen. xxxii. 24.

The Hebrew Word *אִישׁ* is commonly taken for a *MAN*.

She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of MAN, Gen. ii. 23.

I have slain a MAN to my wounding, Gen. iv. 23.

I have two Daughters, which have not known MAN, Gen. xix. 8.

They pressed sore upon the MAN, even LOT Gen. xix. 9.

And the Damsel was very fair to look upon, a Virgin, neither had any MAN known her, Gen. xxiv. 16.

If

If any Ox gore a M A N, or a Woman, that they die, Exod. xxi. 28.

This Moses the M A N, that brought us up out of the Land of Egypt, Exod. xxxii. 1.

By the M A N whose these are, I am with Child, Gen. xxxviii. 25.

Now I leave it to any impartial Reader to judge, if it be not very rash and presumptuous, when the sacred Writings do say a M A N, that Commentators should take the Licence to give the L I E to the Scripture, and to pronounce Boldly N O M A N, but G O D A L M I G H T Y, as if they knew the Particulars of that History better, than the holy Spirit. I think, 'tis our Duty to adhere, with a profound Submission, to the *Letter* of the Words, when there's no Absurdity in the Sense, which is commonly affixed to them.

2. The *Wrestler*, after the manner of M A N, was overcome in a Regular Fight, which is very carefully placed to the Honour and Glory of the P A T R I A R C H.

3. He was even made a *Prisoner* by J A C O B, who seized him, and would not let him go, but upon certain Conditions, which he conceived to be equivalent to a sort of a R A N S O M. *I will not let thee go, till thou blest me, Gen. xxxii. 26.*

4. The

4. The *Wrestler* wept, and made Supplication unto JACOB, as a *Man* in Misery and Affliction. But this shall be examined again hereafter, when I come to the Prophet HOSEA.

5. Some Interpreters have conjectur'd, that the *Wrestler* was ESAU's *Guardian Angel*. This Opinion, with a small Amendment, or Explanation may pass; for 'tis very likely, the Fellow was one of his Attendants, advanced Guard, and *Forlorn Hope*, who thinking to please his Master, came officiously, and out of Spite and Malice to surprise JACOB, and to HUMBLE him; or rather this CHAMPION was sent directly by ESAU upon that Expedition, and is, for that very Reason, called, in the Prophet, a *Messenger*; that is, one who is sent to execute a Commission, an EMISSARY.

When I charge ESAU with such a bloody Design, I don't venture much; 'tis true, that in his great Adversity, he never made the least Complaint against his MOTHER the Author, and Contriver of all his Misfortunes, but 'tis positively recorded, that he shewed the utmost Indignation against the *Smooth-fac'd* Youth her Favourite, who, like an *unconscionable Pawn-broker*, had taken the Advantage of his languishing Condition, to purchase his rich Inheritance for a *Mouth-full* of Victuals,
and

and who afterwards, by a downright *Forgery*, stole his Blessing. And ESAU hated JACOB, because of the Blessing wherewith his Father blessed him, and ESAU said in his Heart, the Days of Mourning for my Father are at hand, then will I slay my Brother JACOB, Gen. xxvii. 41.

And, pray, how can a Man, who has the least Grain of Sensibility, suffer himself to be used like a BASTARD, and that without any Provocation, and having always proved a kind Brother, respectful to his Parents, and a dutiful Son?

As for ESAU being married with *Hittites*, who knows, but the odd Humor of his Mother, who, by the VENISON-PLOT, appears to have been both *Deceitful* and *Imperious*, deterred him from taking a Wife out of her Family.

After the Resolution that ESAU had made to KILL his Brother, 'tis natural to believe, that he made some Steps towards it, upon the News of JACOB's coming; for besides the personal Injury he had received, and which no doubt he did resent, he might conceive himself bound in Conscience and Duty, to vindicate the Honour of his *Father*, who had been treacherously imposed upon and deceived.

C H A P. VII.

*That ESAU had from ISAAC Letters
of REPRISALS against his Brother
JACOB.*

I Hope, that so far as this, it shall not appear strange, if I say that the *Wrestler* was one of E S A U's *Emissaries* sent on purpose to give J A C O B due Correction.

But there's something more, Interpreters don't take Notice of, and which no doubt will surprize the Readers, *viz.* that E S A U had from I S A A C a Permit, Command and Instructions to *harass* and *molest* his Brother, when and wheresoever he thought fit and convenient.

To put this P A R A D O X in a true Light, 'tis necessary to make first the following Observations.

1. It was a constant and universally receiv'd Opinion in those Days, that the Parents had the Power to dispose arbitrarily of the Fate of their Children, and that G O D was pleased to become immediately a G U A R A N T E E of their Will and Pleasure, according to the *literal* Meaning of their Words.

'Tis no doubt upon the account of these superstitious Principles, that J A C O B, a Per-
son

son of the greatest Integrity, is tempted to be *S P L E N D I D E M E N D A X*, and even to take the sacred Name of *G O D* in vain: *I am E S A U thy first born — the L O R D thy G O D has brought it [the Venison] to me.*

That's the Reason, that *E S A U*, partly out of Respect and Duty, and partly in Consequence of the *Prejudices* of Education, was so eagerly pressing for his Father's Blessing; that's the Cause also, that when he found himself disappointed, *he cried with a great, and exceeding bitter Cry, and said, Bless me, even me also, O my Father, Gen. xxvii. 34.*

But this unhappy sufferer made his Lamentations to very little Purpose; for *I S A A C* misled by that Prevention, answered, *I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed, Gen. xxvii. 33.* This is as much as to say, *the Decree is unalterable, 'tis already ratified in Heaven.*

2. However it appears, that *I S A A C* was much affronted at *J A C O B*'s proceeding, and that his Heart was filled with *Astonishment* and *Horror*, in Consideration of the sad Disappointment, and the great Misery of his beloved Son.

Thy Brother, says the common Translation, *came with S U B T I L T Y*; but the original Word מרמה is very emphatical: It does not only signify an *ABOMINABLE LIE*, *Psal.*

v. 6.—xxxiv. 13.—xxxv. 20. a FRAUD, a CHEAT, and ROBBERY, *Mic. vi. 11. Amos viii. 5.* It implies also INGRATITUDE, *Psal. cix. 2.* a BREACH of COVENANT, *Dan. xi. 29.* CRUELTY, VIOLENCE and OPPRESSION, *Psal. xxxv. 20.—xliii. 1.—lv. 11.—Is. liii. 9.* MURDER, or Intention of MURDER, *Gen. xxxiv. 13. Psal. v. 6.—lv. 23.* HATRED of GOD, *Jerem. ix. 6.* PERJURY, *Psal. xxiv. 4.* Playing the DEVIL for GOD's Sake, *Job xiii. 7.* In short, the Word imports the GREATEST Piece of VILLANY, that can ever be committed upon the Face of the Earth.

This is the dreadful Character, ISAAC gives of the Action of his *hopeful* Son JACOB, which made the old Man, and with a great deal of Reason, *Tremble with a great trembling exceedingly,* *Gen. xxvii. 33.*

3. In that *Agony* of Mind, what does ISAAC do for the Relief of ESAU? Nothing less, than to give him a full *Commission* to act OFFENSIVELY, and DEFENSIVELY against his Brother.

Thus when King *Abasuerus* had made a Decree in all his Provinces to *destroy, to kill and to cause to perish all Jews, both young and old, little Children and Women in one Day.* And it being by the Laws of the *Medes and Persians*

Persians out of the King's Power to repeal it, that Prince made a counter DECREE; whereby he granted the JEWS the Liberty to gather themselves together, and to stand for their Life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish all the Power of the People, and Province, that should assault them, Est. viii.

4. I make no manner of Doubt, but the Reader is very impatient to know, where that Commission of War in favour of ESAU is register'd: We have it ENTERED in due Form in the sacred RECORDS of MOSES, Gen. xxvii. 40. *By thy SWORD shalt thou live—*. And it shall come to pass, when thou shalt have the Dominion, that thou shalt break his Yoke from off thy Neck.

To have the true Meaning of these INSTRUCTIONS, I desire the Reader to consider,

1. That in *Hebrew* the future Tense is very often put for the Imperative Mood, as it is frequently done in *English*; as for Instance, *You shall repair to such a Place, you shall block it up, you shall annoy the Enemy as much as you can, &c.*

2. The Verb דריר which is here translated, by *Domineering*, or *having the Dominion*, signifies also to *humble, to cast down, to overthrow,*

of which we have many Examples in Scripture.

It is GOD that avengeth me, and that bringeth down the People under me, 2 Sam. xxii. 48.

The Pride of Affyria shall be brought down, Zech. x. 11.

King A H A Z took down the Sea, V. 16, 17.

Though thou shouldest make thy Nest as high as the Eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord, Jer. xlix. 16.

I could produce a great many other Places to ascertain the Signification I have given to the *Hebrew* Verb; but I hope these few are over and above sufficient to put the thing out of question. Now this being once granted, the Meaning of I S A A C's Words seems to come to this Interpretation.

“ That I M P U D E N T R A S C A L L Y Fel-
 “ low J A C O B has deceived me by his V I L-
 “ L A N Y; thou knowest it not to be in my
 “ Power to recall my Words; however, dear
 “ Son, I don't bind thee to the *slavish Doc-*
 “ *trine of Passive Obedience, and Non-Resist-*
 “ *ance*: Stand up for *Liberty and Property,*
 “ make use of thy Sword, humble, pull
 “ down, and destroy thy Enemies; in short,
 “ make all thy Endeavours, *vi & armis,* to
 “ shake off the J A C O B I T E Y O K E from thy
 “ Neck,

“ Neck, and force thy Brother to ABDICATE
 “ the Superiority, and for so doing, &c.

After such a positive Warrant, where's the Absurdity to suppose that the *Wrestler* was a true and real Man sent expressly by his Master ESAU to put his *Father's* Orders in Execution?

The PATRIARCH, like a Coward, and ashamed of his Actions, had run away, and concealed himself for many Years in a remote Country, without the reach of the PLAINTIFF; his Return from LABAN was consequently the very first time ESAU found to do himself *Justice*, and demand *Satisfaction*.

JACOB himself, notwithstanding so long an Absence, seems to have been apprehensive of such a Design, and of the imminent Danger he was in; for upon the News that ESAU was a coming with four hundred Men, *he was greatly afraid, and distressed*. That's likely the Reason, which obliged him to keep behind, and to try first the Fate of his Wives and Children.

Had not ESAU taken hold of that Opportunity to chastise his Brother, he must certainly have been very stupid and indolent.

He had likewise been guilty of Negligence, Disobedience, and breach of Trust, in omitting to perform the express Commands of his Father.

GIVE me leave to stop here, and to sum up the Evidence. Pray consider,

1. JACOB's *Jesuitical* Contrivance.
2. The just Provocation he gave his Brother.
3. ESAU's solemn Vow of Revenge.
4. ISAAC's Surprise and Anger, and his Directions of Punishment.
5. JACOB's Flight and long Absence.
6. The COLD Reception JACOB's Messengers met with, and how ESAU was upon a *Reserve*; at least it does not appear that he sent so much as his *Love* to his Brother.
7. The PATRIARCH's Fear upon their return.
8. And lastly, ESAU's March at the Head of a whole REGIMENT against a naked Man.

Now let the Readers be *Jurymen*, and bring their Verdict. What do you say, Gentlemen? Is it not very natural, and within the modest Bounds of Probability to assert, that the Wrestler was one of ESAU's Officers, who had a Commission to inflict upon JACOB *wholsome Severities*, according to ISAAC's Directions, to force him to cry *Peccavi*, and to bring him, if possible, to a State of *Repentance*?

I HAVE a great many other Reasons to prove my general Allegation, *viz.* that the *Wrestler* was a MAN, but they'll present themselves in Course, when I come to answer

swer the Objections that may be offered; for such is the Advantage of my *Hypothesis*, that the very Difficulties rais'd against me, do all together contribute to demonstrate the Truth and Certainty of my Opinion.

VIRES A PONDERE SUMIT.

C H A P. VIII.

*The first Objection examin'd, and why
E S A U received his Brother kindly.*

I Now proceed to take a View of all Objections, which are rais'd against my Sentiment.

The first is grounded upon the gracious Reception J A C O B had from his Brother, E S A U ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his Neck, and kissed him, and they wept, Gen. xxxiii. 4. How then can it be supposed, that he had, the Day before, made a Plot for the Destruction of J A C O B?

I answer, that the greater Tokens of Love and Friendship E S A U shews his Brother, the more surpris'd we ought to be, that he, who had in his Heart nothing but Malice, and who came, with a strong Body of Men, to execute his bloody Design, should all on a sudden go to another Extreme, and prove so mild,

mild, as not to drop so much as one single Word of Complaint.

I know, the Grace of God is very powerful, and can on a sudden convert the most obstinate Sinners; but, in this Case, there's no necessity to have recourse to Miracles.

We ought to suspect, that this History is so short, that we are not let into the Secret of such a sudden Alteration.

Let us only consider, that the Ancients acted upon Principles very different from ours, and that formerly Contests of the greatest Consequence were very often decided by a MONOMACHIA, or by the *Combat* of a Number of Persons chosen on both Sides, and even appointed by publick Authority.

That Custom has remain'd amongst Christians in *Europe*, till within less than two hundred Years; witness the Fight between JARNAC and *la* CHASTIGNERAYE, *Anno* 1547, in the Park of *St. Germain* by the Consent, and in the Presence of the *French* King HENRY the 2d.

That Practice went so far, that, if learned CIVILIANS, and Men of good Sense and Judgment could not agree in their Sentiment upon the Equity of a Law, the Controversy was ordered immediately to be decided, in Favour of the PRO or CON, with the Sword, by some *brawny* Fellows, who had more Strength than Brains in their Heads, as we learn from the Monk SIGEBERTUS,

T U S,

TUS, who relates such a Case in the Reign of the Emperor OTHO *the first*.

If we go higher, the Heathens had the same Infatuation; who does not know the Story of the HORATII, and CURIATII, whose *Fate* was to make an end of the War between the ROMANS and the ALBIANS?

There being a Controversy between the Lacedemonians and the Argives, about some Lands, they agreed that three hundred Men on each Side should try the Matter by *Combat*, in which OTHRYADES had the Victory.

That Custom, in all Probability, came from the eastern Country, where the Doctrine of *Fatality* is to this very Day upon the Throne.

We have two Instances of that sort of fighting in the Old Testament; the first is of GOLIAH, *And he stood, and cried unto the Armies of Israel, and said unto them, why are ye come out to set your Battle in array? am not I a Philistine, and you Servants to SAUL? chuse you a Man for you, and let him come down to me.*

If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your Servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our Servants, and serve us, 1 Sam. xvii. 8, 9.

Upon account of that Office, GOLIAH is called אִישׁ הַבְּנִים a Man of *Interposition*,
G that

that is one, who interposes between Party and Party, to make an end of their Differences.

The second Example we have is in the War between King D A V I D and I S H - B O - S H E T H, when, by Consent of the two Generals, twelve young Men were appointed on both Sides, as their *Representatives*, to decide the Quarrel. *And A B N E R said to J O A B, let the young Men now arise, and play* before us, 2 Sam. ii. 14.* 'Tis very true, that the Victory of D A V I D's Champions was follow'd by the Slaughter of about three hundred and sixty *Benjamites*; but it was A B N E R's Fault, who did not keep strictly to the Rules of that sort of War: *And J O A B said, as G O D liveth, had thou not spoken [of Hostilities] in the Morning, the People had gone up every one from following his Brother, V. 27.*

The Opinion of these People, no doubt, was, that G O D A L M I G H T Y, by an extraordinary Providence, did always give the Victory to the J U S T Cause; so those, who were overcome, had nothing else to do, but to submit patiently, except they were so impious as to make War against Heaven.

* The *U* in the Word, which is here translated, *to play*, being read with the Point *Jamin*, signifies also *contundere, comminuere*, likely a Military Term to denote *Fighting to the utmost*, and *without Mercy*; and reducing the Adversary, as it were, *into Dust*.

This seems to be the Case of E S A U ; J A C O B having had the good Luck to overcome the C H A M P I O N, and to force him to cry for *Quarter*, E S A U thought that G O D had actually decided the Quarrel, and pronounced a final Sentence, from which there was no Appeal, and that it was his Duty to acquiesce.

Besides, there's no Doubt, but the B R A V A D O, the better to recommend his Services to his Master, gave him a *Romantical* Account of the Engagement, which made E S A U despair of any Success for the Time to come.

C H A P. IX.

Second Objection relating to the Luxation of the Femur.

TH E second Objection comes to this ;
 “ How can you suppose, that an ordinary Man could with a T O U C H make a
 “ L U X A T I O N of the F E M U R ? *He TOUCHED*
 “ *the Hollow of his Thigh, &c.* Pray, good
 “ Sir, mind the Structure of the Part affected.

“ The Articulation of the H I P is a Connexion of the large and round Head of the
 “ F E M U R, to a very deep Cavity of the O s

“ *Ischion*, commonly called the *Acetabulum*
 “ *Coxendicis*.

“ This is done by two strong *Ligaments*,
 “ one outward and membranous, encompass-
 “ ing the whole Head of the FEMUR from
 “ the Edges of the *Acetabulum*, to the far-
 “ ther end of the Neck, where it touches
 “ the great *Trochanter*, the other inward, of
 “ a round Figure, like a Cord tying the ut-
 “ most *Apex* of the *Caput Femoris*, to the
 “ inner Side of the *Acetabulum* near the
 “ Center.

“ This Articulation is confirmed and
 “ strengthened by strong Muscles, viz. On
 “ the Outside by the GLUTÆI, on the In-
 “ side by the TRIPLEX, together with the
 “ LIVIDUS and the ROTATOIRES: All
 “ which being duly considered, it must needs
 “ follow, that Force must be very great, that
 “ can drive the CAPUT out of its Place.
 “ Once more I ask, How it was possible for the
 “ WRESTLER with a TOUCH, to cause
 “ a LUXATION of that Part so well
 “ fortified, except his Power was Divine and
 “ Supernatural?

A great Noise for nothing! and don't Sur-
 geons find by a frequent Experience, that
 without any considerable Force from with-
 out, the undue Position of the Thigh join-
 ed with the Weight of the Body is sufficient
 to produce the Effect in question?

2. I think, before People speak, and start Difficulties, they should first take care to be sure of the Matter of Fact, *viz.* that the Scripture makes any mention of JACOB's *Thigh* being out of *Joint*, which I utterly deny.

I own, that JACOB in the Morning did *halt*, or was lame; but however he did walk, tho', it may be, with some Difficulty; now I appeal to all the Surgeons of *London* and *Westminster*, whether it is possible, immediately after such an Accident, for a Man to stand upon his Legs, and to go abroad, and whether he be not necessitated to keep his Bed for a considerable Time. * *If the FEMUR is not reduced*, says WISEMAN, *it will be subject to great Pain and Fluxion from the overstretching of the Muscles, and Pressure upon them with its great Head, yet, after some Months, those Muscles become callous, and having yielded to the Extension, the Patient makes a shift to go upon it, tho' lamely, but the Member suffereth an Atrophia, and is shorter than the other.*

The very same Author †, who believes, that GOD permitted JACOB to be wounded, *lest the Flesh should be proud*, is nevertheless of Opinion, that the PATRIARCH had not the least Sensation of Pains, *that the Miracle*, says he, *might be the more evident.* This

* Wiseman's Surgery.

† Calvin in *Genesis*.

Prodigy is but a Trifle in comparison of another, relating to *Jacob*, which he has also discovered, and of which I'll take notice in a proper Place. Something, I own, ought to be done in favour of an ELECT of such a Rank, and Quality, yet I wish that good Man had been so kind, as to let us know where he took all these fine Things.

As for me, I cannot go so far, as to say, that JACOB, who was *Flesh* and *Blood* as other Men, did not feel the Smart of the Blow which he receiv'd; however, I conceive it was only a slight Sprain, or Contusion of no Consequence, which was easily cured; for afterwards, in the whole remaining part of his Life, no mention is made of it, tho' I make no manner of doubt that JACOB was so *politick* as to humour it, when he came in fight of his Brother.

3. The Translation is very singular, *and the HOLLOW of Jacob's Thigh was out of JOINT*: Who has ever heard the like, a CAVITY out of its SOCKET? a very proper Expression indeed!

4. But to put this Text in a true Light, and rectify the Mistakes of the Interpreters, we must be contented to advance slowly, and to enquire carefully into the Meaning of the original Words, and so come gradually to the true Sense of this Place.

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The first Word which presents itself is *נגע*: It does not only signify *tangere to touch*, but also to *molest*, to *wound*, to *strike violently*, as appears by *Gen. xxvi. 29. Let us make a Covenant with thee, that thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not TOUCHED [abused] thee. Psal. lxxiii. 14. For all the Day long have I been [touched] PLAGUED, and chastened every Morning. Isai. liii. 4. We did esteem him stricken, smitten of GOD and afflicted.*

כך, which is translated *hollow*, comes next: The radical word *כבה* does nowhere in Scripture signify *to make a Cavity, a Socket, or a Hollow*. If we believe the *LEXICONS*, 'tis *curvare, incurvare, to bend, to bow*; but if we consider the Use that is made of it, we shall be convinced, that the primary and direct meaning of the Word is *to cast down, to lay flat, or almost flat*, without excluding, I own, an inconsiderable bending.

Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow [prostrate] myself before the High GOD? Mic. vi. 6. Now, 'tis well known, that amongst the oriental Nations, the Posture used in worshipping was to *ly flat* upon the Ground, and not barely to bow the Head.

My Soul is bowed down, Psal. lvii. 6. that is, *dejected*.

The LORD raises those who are bowed down [cast down] Psal. cxlvi. 8.

From that radical Word is derived קָב, which is applied to Things that are flat, or almost flat; 'Tis indeed translated *Spoon*, Numb. vii. 14, 84, 86. and *Handle*, Cant. v. 5. But those Places must be laid aside as Neuters, since we don't know the Shape of those Utenfils.

It is undoubtedly applied to the *Sole* of the Foot, Josh. iii. 13. *And it shall come to pass, as soon as the Soles of the Feet of the Priest, that bear the Ark of the LORD*, Josh. iii. 13.

It is also taken for the *Hand*, when it is open and straight. *Son of Man, prophesy, and smite thine Hands together*, Ezek. xxi. 14. *Let us lift up our Hands unto GOD in the Heavens*, Lament. iii. 41. *When you spread forth your Hands, I will hide my Eyes from you*, Est. i. 15. Now observe, that here is represented a decent Action of one, who offers his Prayers to GOD ALMIGHTY, in which he does not clinch his Fists, but he does keep his Hands open and straight towards Heaven.

From these several Authorities, I draw this Conclusion, that since it appears, that when קָב is spoken of the Hands or Feet, it signifies the *flat* part of those Limbs, viz. the *Sole* of the Foot, and the *Palm* of the Hand: We ought, by *Analogy* of Speech, when it respects the *Femur*, to understand it of that part in the inside, and near the *Inguen*, which is the flattest of the whole Thigh. This was
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the Opinion of a learned Jew, according to
CASTALIO.

No doubt the Septuagint Interpreters were of that Mind, since they have translated that Place, τοῦ πλατοῦς τοῦ μηροῦ, *the flat of the Thigh*, πλάτος *latitudo*, says ROB. CONSTANTINUS, *differt a profunditate; Proprie est planum, quod, quia etiam latum est, vulgo PLAT. Gallice dicimus, ἀπὸ τοῦ πλάτος, Nimirum ductâ Origine, quod & τὸ πλατὺ dicitur.*

I come next to *יָרַח*, which declares the sad Effect of the Blow JACOB did receive upon his Thigh.

1. There's not one single Place of Scripture to authorize the arbitrary Translation of the Interpreters, who have been so unmerciful as to dislocate the FEMUR of the good PATRIARCH; but I hope to make him come off with a Bruise, or at the utmost with a Wound.

2. That *Verb* taken metaphorically signifies, to have a Hatred and Aversion for some Body. *Be thou instructed, O Jerusalem, lest my Soul depart from thee*, Jerem. vi. 8. *Then my Mind was alienated from her*, Ezech. xxiii. 18.

3. As for the literal Meaning of the Word, we find it in so few Places of Scripture, that, what we can say is only by Conjecture. It

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seems

seems to import a *Dilaceration*, a *Solutio continui*; as for Instance, *Take the Heads of the People, and hang them up*, Numb. xxv. 4. *Let seven Men of his Sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up*, 2 Sam. xxi. 6. It should rather have been, *take the chief of the People, and beat them, or wound them to death, &c.* For, as GROTIUS has well observed, “ *Suspensio ex more Hebræo requirit,*
“ *ut supplicium præcedat— fiebat id ostentui,*
“ *non enim pœna erat suspensio; de Ustione,*
“ *Gladio, lapidibus satis apparet pœnas has*
“ *remotas a suspendio.*

4. I conclude by observing, that the *Septuagint Interpreters*, who lived in such a Time, that they might know the Opinion of the antient *Jews*, and consequently have all the Help that can be desired in their Translation, take no manner of Notice of a *Luxation*, but make use of the Word *ἐναρκήσε*, which implies only a *Numness* and a *Difficulty of Motion*.

¶ Sinew now presents itself, upon which I'll be very short. I think it would be very ridiculous to believe, that the holy Writer of *Genesis* did take that Word in the strictest Sense for the *Nervus Cruralis*, or for *Ligaments*.

BULL-PIZZLES are not such a delicious Meat as to make it very meritorious, or

a Self-denial in the Children of ISRAEL to forbear from a Dish which is fit for *Hogs* only; a tolerable good Palate was sufficient to make the Law, tho' JACOB never had had the Misfortune to be wounded.

'Tis more probable, that this must be understood, in general, of Organs of Motion, that is of the Muscles with their *Sinews* and *Tendons*, in short, of the Flesh about the Thigh.

The last Word to be consider'd is נָשָׂא, which, in several Places, is also writ נָשָׂא, no doubt by the Carelessness of the Copists: It is in our Translation rendred by *Sbrinking*, without the least Authority.

The *Septuagint* have made it synonymous to קָע, using the same Verb ἐναγκήσε, which is proper enough.

The first and literal Meaning is to *lend* out upon *Usury*, Exod. xxii. 25. Deut. xxiv. 10, 11. 2 Kings iv. 1, 7. Psal. cix. 11. Eccl. xxiv. 2.—l. 1.— Jer. xv. 10.

From this Signification another is derived; for as Extortioners are selfish, covetous, tricking, unmerciful, and like Leeches sucking the Blood and Substance of the Poor and Needy; so from thence this Verb has been metaphorically taken for *to oppress*, *to vex*, *to use roughly*, and *with Barbarities*, *to destroy and ruin*, as you may see by the following Examples.

Their Might hath failed, [is ruin'd] Jer. li. 30.

Thou hast forgot [hast vexed] the Rock that begot thee, Deut. xxxii. 18.

G O D exacteth of thee [punisheth thee] less than thine Iniquity, Job xi. 6.

The Land of Forgetfulness [Affliction] Psal. lxxxviii. 12.

The Enemy shall not exact upon, [torment him] Psal. lxxxix. 22.

Thou shalt not be forgotten of me [used unmercifully] Es. xliv. 21.

I forgot Prosperity [I am depriv'd of Felicity] Lament. iii. 17.

All this being considered, I see no Reason why the Word which is translated by *Shrinking*, and of which we have no Instance, should not be understood in the Sense which is supported by so many Places of Scripture.

Now let us put together all these several Explanations, and see how they sound.

And when the Man perceived that he could not prevail, he did furiously strike J A C O B upon the flat part of the Thigh near the Inguen, and the flat part of J A C O B's Thigh was bruised—therefore to this Day the Children of I S R A E L eat of no Flesh which is about the flat of the Thigh, in Remembrance of J A C O B being treacherously wounded on the like part of his Body.

Now we have an additional Proof, that the W R E S T L E R was a Rogue, and a great Villain, who plaid F O U L; for at all Times, and in all Places, there have been certain Rules

Rules for WRESTLING, which Antagonists cannot break through without committing an *unpardonable* Crime.

In the publick Games of Greece, Judges were appointed to keep the Combatants within certain Bounds of Decency *. *Wrestlers* never struck, nor *Boxers* did never attempt to throw down; and here in *England* a Kick above the Knee is an *unwarrantable* Assault.

But to judge better of those Things, 'tis necessary not to stop there, but to go up as far as remote Antiquity, and examine how these Exercises were performed; *Homer* is accounted, next to the Bible, the oldest Author we can have recourse to: Now this is the Description he gives, *Il.* 23. of the Engagement between AJAX and ULYSSES, of which I chose rather to make a plain and literal Translation, than to use the Verses of a famous Poet, who, by several Additions of his own, has strangely misrepresented the Action.

Then arose the great AJAX Son of TELAMON, and the prudent ULYSSES, in Hopes of the Prize; covered only with a Girdle, they come into the Middle of the Ring, and with their stiff Arms embrace one another, as close as the Rafters of a high Building are by a skilful Workman firmly tied together, to sustain the Violence of the most stormy Winds; their Backs crack by the frequent Concussions and jerking

* *Potter's Archaeolog. Græc.*

their Robust Hands do cause: Their Sides and Shoulders are so squeezed, that they are covered with black and blue Spots of extravasated Blood; so eager of Victory they seem to be. ULYSSES cannot move AJAX, nor throw him down, AJAX also is not able to overcome the Resistance of ULYSSES. The Spectators begin to be impatient. Then AJAX spoke; Divine ULYSSES, who are so industrious, either lift me up, or I shall lift you; let us leave the rest to Jupiter. In saying so, he does lift up ULYSSES, who not forgetting his Shifts, struck him behind upon the Ham: [took the In-lock.] AJAX falls to the Ground upon his Back, and ULYSSES forward upon AJAX's Breast: The People are in a great Admiration. The divine ULYSSES, who has so much Experience, does in his turn endeavour to lift up AJAX, but he heaves him but little from the Ground, and his Knee bending [under the Burden] they both fall near to one another, and are covered with Sand, they rose and were going to wrestle a third time, when &c.

In this Order of *Wrestling*, there's neither striking nor kicking, but only grasping, heaving, taking the *In*, or *out-lock*, and endeavouring to throw down the Antagonist.

I own, that this is no Demonstration that the same Practice was in use in JACOB's Time; but if we consider not only the Antiquity of HOMER, and that Divines do grant, that he has borrowed from the Customs of
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the *Jews*, this must be a very great Suspicion, that our *WRESTLER* did not play fair.

This barbarous Assault in striking *above the Knee* was no doubt the chief Instrument of *JACOB*'s Victory; for let the *Wrestler* do it either with his Fist, or with his Foot, the *PATRIARCH*, who like a Rock was immoveable, might easily throw the Fellow upon his Back, and fall immediately upon him, where I'll leave him, with his Knees fix'd in the Pit of his Stomach, holding him by the Throat with one Hand, and thumping of him with the other, till he is forced to submit and to beg Pardon, which I design to consider in the next Chapter.

C H A P. X.

The Titles of the Wrestler, and the Nature of the Blessing he gave to Jacob.

THERE'S an Objection raised from the *Titles* of *EL*, and *ELOHIM* the *Wrestler* did assume, but it is of no great Weight: The Mistake is in the Translation of those Terms, which are not synonymous to the Word *GOD*, having no direct reference to the most perfect

perfect and divine Nature. 'Tis a Title of Honour given commonly to Persons of different Conditions, as, *Sir, Master, Monsieur, Signior, &c.*

It denotes in general a Degree of Superiority either in Power, Strength and Knowledge; upon that Account GOD is called ELOHIM, because he is strong, and the Master of the whole Creation, but Judges and Magistrates, Noblemen; in short, whosoever was eminent in his respective Station, had that Title; and there's no manner of Doubt, but *Doctors* of all Denominations, and great *Virtuosos* were honoured with that Name; for when the *Serpent* tempted *Eve* to eat of the forbidden Fruit, he told her, *Ye shall be as Elohim, knowing Good and Evil*; that is, you shall be great *Virtuosos*, and thoroughly acquainted with all the intrinsick Qualities, Good or Bad of the three Kingdoms, of Animals, Vegetables and Minerals.

EL and ELOHIM seem to answer to the *Latin* Word DOMINUS, which was such a high Title, that the first *Roman* Emperors refused to take it, and yet SENECA, *Epist.* 3. saith, that this Name was given to Strangers, *Quo modo obvios, si nomen non succurrit, Dominos salutamus*; it was even given to *Slaves*, or *Servants*, as appears by MARTIAL'S Epigram.

*Quum voco te Dominum nolo tibi, Cinna, placere
Sæpe etiam servum sic resaluto meum.*

Now, where's the Wonder, that the *Wrestler* ESAU's *Champion*, should have the Vanity to assume the Name of ELOHIM, (for he was his own *Godfather*) when the *Coxcomb* thought himself above others, remarkable and famous for his Strength, and his surprising Skill in fighting; in short, when he was MASTER of the noble Art of DEFENCE? And who does not know, that most of the greatest HEROES of Antiquity have been so much cried up, and look'd upon as *Semigods*, for no other Reason, than that they were PRIZE-FIGHTERS, and had been SUCCESSFUL?

As for the Name of *Jehovah* suppos'd to belong to the *Wrestler*, it shall be examin'd in a proper Place.

The second Objection, which makes a great Shew, is the Blessing JACOB seems earnestly to exact of the WRESTLER: *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me*, Gen. xxxii. 26. And say the Opponents with an Air of Assurance, *Without Contradiction, the less is blessed of the better.*

Ans. And what's all this to the Purpose? does this prove in the least the grand Point
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in Question, that the WRESTLER had any thing in him above his human Nature? Did not the *Man* ISAAC bless the *Man* JACOB? and why then must the WRESTLER be an ANGEL, or a GOD to bless the PATRIARCH?

2. The Blessings, which in those Days People gave one another, were commonly but little more than *worldly* Compliments, which entirely related to their *temporal* Interest upon Earth.

ISAAC does not pray that his Son should be an honest Man, *fear* GOD, and *love* his Neighbours; his only Desires for him are, *The Dew of Heaven, the Fatness of the Land, and plenty of Corn, and that Nations, and in particular REBECCA's Sons be his Slaves.* There's in all this, not one single Word about the spiritual Welfare of his Soul. But why ISAAC does say, *thy* Mother's Sons, and not *thy* Father's, is a Mystery, which he understood better than I can do at this Time.

JACOB himself, in a Bargain of his own indicting, has nothing in view but his Ease and Grandeur in this Life; if GOD ALMIGHTY is willing to bless him, he is also, on his Side, willing to allow his MAKER, out of the Profits, ten *per Cent.* for Brokeridge, and which is more engaging, to choose him for GOD, but yet, PLENTY of all Things is the *Conditio sine quâ non.* No PENCE, no PATER NOSTER. I

I humbly desire the Gentleman, who has taken so much Pains to persuade us, that *Christianity is as old as the Creation*, to let us know in what Corner of the *Christian Church* he places those, who look no farther than this miserable World.

3. The Word *Blessing* is very equivocal ; for instance, God does *bless* us, when he is pleas'd to pour his Favours upon us ; but we also on our Side do *bless* him, when we worship him, acknowledge him for our Creator and Preserver, and beg Pardon for our Sins, &c.

So that there are two sorts of *Blessings*, one from a *Superior* to an *Inferior* ; and the other in a *low* Sense, from an *Inferior* to a *Superior*.

This last *Blessing* does seem in Scripture to consist in doing Obeisance, in humble Prostrations to the Ground, in paying Homage, in submitting and suing for Peace and Friendship.

JACOB being introduc'd to PHARAOH, did *bless* him, *Gen. xlvii. 8, 10.* that is, he prostrated himself *flat* upon the Ground, and, no doubt, return'd Thanks to the KING for the Honour he had bestowed upon his Son JOSEPH, acknowledged PHARAOH for his Sovereign and Benefactor, and desired his Protection,

TOY sent Joram his Son unto King DAVID *
to sue for Peace, and to bless him, 2 Sam.
viii. 10.

And Joab fell to the Ground on his Face,
and bowed himself, and * blessed the King,
2 Sam. xiv. 22.

He sent Hadoram his Son to King DAVID
* to demand Peace, and to bless him.

But what Necessity of so many Proofs? I
appeal to the PATRIARCH himself, whe-
ther he has not sometimes understood *Bles-*
sing in that Sense; for we read, Gen. xxxiii.
3, 10, 11. that JACOB bowed himself to
the Ground seven times— therefore I have
seen thy Face— and thou wast pleased with
me.— Take, I pray thee, my BLESSING that
is brought to thee. This is as much as to
say, I desire you to accept this Present in token
of my Submission, and in Acknowledgment of
your Goodness to forgive me.

'Tis in that Sense that JACOB requires a
Blessing from the WRESTLER; I will not
let thee go, except thou bless me, that is, I will
keep thee in Custody, till thou dost † submit,
and pay me HOMAGE as VICTORIOUS,
which the Fellow does perform in the sub-
lime Stile of those Bills, that come from
FIG's Theatre.

* According to the Hebrew.

† In the publick Games of Greece, it was lawful for the
Conqueror to keep his Antagonist under, till he had fairly
yielded either by lifting up his Finger, or, speaking certain
Words.

I desire the Reader to remember in what Posture I have left JACOB and his Adversary at the end of the last Chapter; I now fancy to hear the Threatnings of the PATRIARCH, and the Groans and Supplications of the other, [*flevit & rogavit*] and the whole Dialogue betwixt them.

J. Villain, *How darest thou strike me? Verily, thou deservest to die.*

W. *Ab! ab! pray, ab! pray, good Sir, don't kill me; Ab! ab!*

J. *No Pity, nor Mercy for such a Rascal; Who art thou?*

W. *Ab! Pray don't enquire who I am.*

J. *I'll beat thee to Dust, except I know it; Who art thou?*

W. *I belong to I was to have done the Job in the Obscurity OF THE Night; now the Sun is arising, MY Master shall be very angry, that I don't bring him an Answer, pray let me go.*

J. *I'll teach thee to tell Lies, Sirrah! ESAU is an Honourable Gentleman, who would not be guilty of such foul Play.*

W. *Ab! pray Sir, ab! pray.*

J. *I shall beat thee, till thou dost make Submission, and acknowledge me for Victorious.*

W. *I crave your Honour's Name.*

J. *Forsooth the Rascal does not know my Name; I am JACOB, dost thou feel it?*

W. *I*

W. *I submit, I submit; may it please your Lordship, the Name of JACOB was at your Birth, an Omen of your future Prosperity, but since your illustrious Actions, and Atchievements so famous all over the World, make your HONOUR worthy of the most NOBLE Titles; you have mastered both Heroes, and valiant Men; you have now overcome the CONQUEROR of the CONQUERORS: Assume the Name of ISRAEL.*

A very poor Satisfaction (shall the Readers say) for the great Danger JACOB did run of being *murder'd*! and how can I help it, if he was contented with a *Feather*? Pray consider the Humour of those Days; did not all the Wit of the HE and SHE GOSSIPS intirely consist in wretched *Puns* and *Nick-names*, which they bestowed with great Ceremony upon their Friends or Foes, as something of very great Consequence, as appears by the very History of JACOB, who makes no Steps, but he has a new *Denomination* for Men, and Places at his Finger's end? To say that the Name of ISRAEL was *mystical*, and an assurance of his future Prosperity, 'tis a bold Addition to the History, which makes not the least mention of it.

2. It may be also, that JACOB acted here *politically*, and seeming satisfied with the Advantage he had obtain'd, he thought fit not to make the *Champion* desperate, and oblige him *imprudently* to exert his Strength to the utmost, and recover the Day.

I hope, the Account I have given of the Nature of the *Blessing* JACOB exacts of his Enemy, is so natural, that most of the Readers shall be of my Mind, except such as are never pleas'd without something extraordinary and mysterious.

There remain two Objections from *Genesis* of no great Force, which I'm very willing to take notice of, before I make an end of this Chapter.

1. GOD *himself* gave the Name of ISRAEL to JACOB, *Gen. xxxv. 10.* Ergo 'twas he who did it the first time. This Argument is very weak; don't we see amongst us very often, that Persons assume a new Name without any Authority, and that afterwards they have Liberty to do it by an Act of Parliament?

It does not appear, that JACOB was very fond, at first, of this Title, but, no doubt, GOD thought fit to confirm it with a Design of putting him continually in remembrance of his great Deliverance.

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2. The other Objection is from these Words, JACOB called the Name of the Place Peniel, for I have seen GOD [Elohim] Face to Face, and my Life is preserv'd: And what then? must we invent Miracles in explaining the Scripture in Things that are done by the Course of Nature? Did not JACOB see the strong and the mighty Champion Face to Face, in a literal Sense, whereas seeing GOD Face to Face, is a figurative Expression? What the Patriarch did mean, was only to express his Joy for his wonderful Escape, and the Victory he had obtain'd unexpectedly.

CHAP.

C H A P. XI.

*Objections from the Prophet HOSEA,
examin'd, and answer'd.*

NOW, now, I am come to the Prophet HOSEA, where a *Reverend Divine* expects me with the utmost *Impatience*, as he did publicly declare.

I can, out of Civility, do no less than meet the Gentleman, and give him full Satisfaction. If I have not done it sooner, the true Reason is, that I was afraid to put my Arguments in a Confusion.

I design to go on in the same way as before, and examine the true Meaning of the original Words, and the real Import of the Phrases: for as the Objections, which are drawn from this Book, are reputed to be the strongest of them all, and a plain Decision of the Controversy, they deserve consequently to be examin'd with Care, seriously, and with Calmness and Impartiality: However, if contrary to my Will, any of my Expressions, either in this Chapter, or in the next, should accidentally displease the Reader, I hope, that my plain Dealing, the hearty and sincere Endeavours I make to discover the Truth, and the Probability of my Arguments, shall be a sufficient Apology for my Behaviour.

After this Declaration, I begin by *Hof. xii. 3, 4. By his Strength he had Power over the Elohim, yea he had Power over the Angel [Messenger] and prevailed: He wept and made Supplications unto him.* Now 'tis absurd, not to say impious, to pretend, that this Victory of JACOB was over the Supreme Being, as if it was possible for a Creature to be stronger than the Creator.

1. the Verb שרה, or שור, the Prophet makes use of, does no where in Scripture signify, *to obtain a Grant, to persuade, to prevail by humble Remonstrances,* but *to overcome by Force, to get a true and real SUPERIORITY, to master an Enemy;* as much as the DUKE of MARLBOROUGH did the FRENCH at the Battle of BLENHEIM *.

2. JACOB had the Advantage by his *natural* Strength; does not this demonstrate, that if the PATRIARCH did triumph over his Adversary, he had certainly to do with a much weaker Being than GOD? I think People should be so prudent, as not to start Difficulties, which betray the *Foible* of their Cause.

Several learned Divines taking notice of the scandalous Idea [*by his Strength he had*

† I Challenge all my Opponents to prove any thing to the contrary.

Power with G O D] the Translation does convey to the Mind, have been so kind, as to come to the Help of the *Holy Ghost*, by rectifying the Absurdity in their charitable Notes, which seem to say, *Dele* by his own Strength, *Read* by a special Grace of G O D.

But I am apt to believe they are too officious, and that the *Holy Spirit* does not want such busy Correctors, who pretend to model, not their SYSTEM by the *Scripture*, but the *Scripture* by their SYSTEM: *Neque enim* says CALVIN, *adversus eum pugnamus, nisi & ejus virtute & armis, nos enim ad luctam provocans simul ad resistendum instruit, ut contra nos pro nobis pugnet: We fight against GOD, but by his Strength, and with his Arms, for at the same time, that he challenges us to wrestle, he instructs us to resist, so that he fights against us for us.* I beg the Reader's Pardon, but 'tis impossible to withstand the Temptation I am in, to call his reasoning by the Name it deserves, viz. CANTING.

3. *He wept and made Supplications.* And who, pray? Not JACOB, for there's no such thing mention'd in *Genesis*. The PATRIARCH, as I have prov'd, was without Contradiction, and in the strictest Sense, the Conqueror; and consequently, if any body made Supplications, it must be naturally understood of him who had the *worst* of the Day, of the Wrestler, who did beg heartily

for his Liberty, *let me go, for the Day is a coming*: Words, which sound well from the Mouth of a *Man*, but appear nonsensical, when they are pretended to come from **G O D**.

Now, let us only change Names, and, instead of **J A C O B**, put the **D U K E** of **M A R L B O R O U G H**, and for the *Emissary*, the *French*, and *Tallard*, and then let any body judge of the Sense. *The Duke of Marlborough by his Strength had Power over the French; yea, his Grace pushed Marshal Villars into the Danube; he cried bitterly, and begged for Quarter.* What Man in his Senses would pretend, that the last Words, *he cried bitterly*, are to be understood of the **C O N Q U E R O R**?

The Case is so plain, that **D R U S I U S** **V A T A B L U S**, and several other learned Men, have ingenuously confessed, that it was not **J A C O B**, but the **M E S S E N G E R**, who made Supplications.

So far as this I am very safe, having visibly the Protection of the Prophet; I proceed to the last and grand Objection, which is supposed to be unanswerable from these Words, *H E found him in Beth-el, and there he spake with us [with him] even J E H O V A H the Lord of Hosts, J E H O V A H his Memorial.* “ Who should **H E** refer to, “ but to the Person, which before is mentioned, *viz. to the Angel, or Messenger,* “ who

“ who is also called J E H O V A H, the *incom-*
 “ *municable* Name of G O D, with a strong
 “ Emphasis, [E V E N] and can any thing be
 “ plainer than this?”

’Tis very plain indeed in the Translation, only it wants to be so in the *Original*; but to decide this Controversy, ’tis just and equitable to make H O S E A himself the U M P I R E, and to chuse him *sole Judge* in this Case, I mean ’tis necessary to examine his Expressions and his Stile, without which we run the Risk of making a false Judgment.

I. I observe, that the Book of H O S E A is a Collection of several loose and separate Sentences, which are independent on one another, and which were probably not delivered at the same time, as a careful Reader may observe in many Places; as for Instance, Chap. xi. 12. J U D A H *ruleth with* G O D, *and is faithful with the* S A I N T S; but few Lines after, Chap. xii. 2. he seems not to be as good as he should be, G O D *hath a Controversy with him.*

In this Case the Axiom of the J E W S is true, that in Scripture there’s neither *Prius* nor *Posterius*; how then can it be prov’d, that *Hos. xii. 3, 4, 5.* is one and the same continued Discourse? Had it not been very proper to put a full *Comma* after these Words [*Yea he prevailed over the Angel*] and then to have begun

a new Verse, which in Part would have prevented the Mistake?

2. I am at a great Loss where to find the Emphasis *EVEN*, for in the *Hebrew*, there's no more than the Letter ו [et] and *JEHOVAH the Lord of Hosts, JEHOVAH his Memorial.*

3. *HE found him in Beth-el:* The Pronoun *HE* is not in the Original *expresly*, and imposes upon the Reader, as if it did refer to an antecedent, viz. to the *MESSENGER.* *This very same spoke to him, &c.*

4. 'Tis the Disadvantage of modern Languages, that every Verb (not in *imperative* or *infinite* Moods) must have always before them a *Noun*, or a *Pronoun* for a *Nominative*, but 'tis so neither in *Latin*, *Greek*, or *Hebrew.*

5. Here the Objection does immediately drop, if we put the Words in a dead Language, instead of *English*, *Prævaluit* Angelo, & *superior fuit, flevit & precatus est eum.* *In Beth-el invenit eum, ibique locutus est nobiscum* [cum illo] & *Dominus Deus exercituum, Dominus memoriale ejus.* So that there's no Necessity to go up to *the Angel*, to find out the *Nominative* of *invenit*, we have it afterwards at the end of the Phrase, viz. *DOMINUS.*

6. In

6. In *Hebrew*, when the *Nominative* is expressed, 'tis generally placed immediately before or after the *Verb*; but in the Prophets, where the *Stile* is pompous and sublime, and seems to partake of *Poetical Expressions*; the *Nominative* is very often postponed at a great Distance.

I could give many Instances of it, but 'tis enough to observe, that this is the very *Stile* of *H O S E A*, who puts the *Nominative* in the second Member of a whole and long Period. *H E is a Merchant, the Balances of Deceit are in his Hand: He loveth to oppress; and E P H R A I M said, yet I am become rich.* 'Tis plain that *E P H R A I M*, which is placed at the latter end, is the *Nominative*, and that it should have been translated, *E P H R A I M is a Merchant, the Balances of Deceit are in his Hand, &c.*

7. I observe, that such is the *Stile* of *H O S E A*, that when he is speaking of *G O D*, he does not always expressly mention that holy Name, either out of Respect, or for other Reasons unknown to us, and depending, it may be, on the custom of his Time; so that the Interpreters, for clearness sake, are now and then necessitated to supply the Word *G O D*.

Few Examples will be sufficient to make good my Allegations, *Hof. i. 6, 9.* *She conceived again and bare a Daughter, and [GOD] said unto him, Call her Name Lo-rubamah.*

She conceived, and bare a Son, then [GOD] said, call his Name, &c.

Their Heart is divided: Now shall they be found faulty: [GOD] shall break down their Altars; [GOD] shall break their Images, Hof. x. 2.

From these several Observations I conclude, that the Words of HOSEA may very well (and I dare say ought to) be translated in these Terms, or any that be equivalent.

By his Strength, he mastered the Strong, yea, he mastered the Emissary, who wept, and made Supplications unto him: GOD found him in BETHEL, and there he spake with him, and JEHOVAH, the Lord of Hosts, JEHOVAH is his Memorial. Which being once granted, the Objection does entirely fall to the Ground.

C H A P. XII.

Farther Remarks upon HOSEA, wherein the Birth of JACOB and ESAU are occasionally CONSIDERED.

BUT to give no Time to the Enemy to rally, I design in this Chapter to go the shortest way to Work, and to cut at once the Gordian Knot. I desire a favourable Construction upon my Undertaking, tho', I hope, my Credit is, by this Time, so well established, that the Reader, no doubt, shall think this Application superfluous.

To explain my Meaning I must repeat the Words, as they are found in HOSEA, according to the common Translation.

The Lord hath also a Controversy with Judah, and will punish JACOB, according to his Ways, according to his Doings will he recompense him.

[He took his Brother by the Heel in the Womb, and by his Strength he had Power over GOD, yea he had Power over the ANGEL, and prevailed; he wept and made Supplications unto him.] *He found him in BETH-EL, and there he spake with us, and EVEN the LORD of Hosts, the LORD is his Memorial: Therefore turn to thy GOD, keep Mercy*
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and Judgment, and wait on thy GOD continually.

My Opinion is, that all the Words included between the *Crotchets*, were never in the *Original* of the *Prophet*, but rather look like a Piece of a Ballad sung among the *Jews* in their Assemblies of Pleasure, in Honour of their Predecessors, which being accidentally put only in the Margin, has insensibly crept into the Text by the *Ignorance* or *Malice* of the Copists: My Reasons are these.

1. The Words have no manner of Coherence with the preceding or succeeding Verses, and that *EVEN* they spoil and embroil the Sense and Intention of the Prophet, who preached Amendment of Life. *JACOB* took his Brother by the Heel *IN UTERO*, he overcame the *HELOHIM*, he prevailed over the *MESSENGER*, ergo, his wicked Posterity must repent. This Reasoning is not only flat and insipid, but also not safe, for it might as well be concluded, *ERGO* Judah ought to fear nothing; who can hurt him in the *World*?

2. These particular Points of History seem to be brought in by way of Bragging and Ostentation, and for nothing else but the Honour and Glory of the *PATRIARCH*.

3. There's a very bold Addition to the Account MOSES gives of JACOB taking his Brother *by the Heel*, that is, *in the Womb*; as if the two Babes had unrespectfully made a *Bear-Garden* of their Mother's Womb, and that ESAU having the worst of the Fight, and leaving the Field of Battle, JACOB took hold of him *by the Foot*, to give him a *parting* Blow.

This betrays the *Stupidity* of the *Jester*, for there's an absolute Impossibility for *Twins* to meddle with one another *in Utero*, They have indeed commonly (tho' not always) but one and the same *Placenta*, to which they adhere by the *Navel-strings*, but they have each of them, (Monsters excepted) distinct *umbilical Vessels*, distinct *Membranes*, and distinct *Waters*, in which they swim; in short, they are close confin'd in *separate Chambers*, or *Apartments*, and so strongly intrenched by Nature, that they cannot *directly* neither touch nor hurt one another.

'Tis true, that JACOB and ESAU did struggle *in Utero*, but they did not struggle TOGETHER, as 'tis translated, the Verb of the Original implying no more than a quick and frequent Motion; 'tis, no doubt, upon that Account, that the *Septuagint* Interpreters have wisely rendered it by ἐσχιόρων, *sali-bant*; they were *stirring*, *leaping*; the very

same Expression we have in *Luke i. 41.* in respect of *JOHN the Baptist.*

I own, that these frequent Motions of the Children were very troublesome to *REBECCA*, and might not only deprive her of rest, and even throw her into Fits, but also threatened a Miscarriage, to the utter Ruin of the *Fætus*, and the great Danger of the Mother's Life. But however, the Children were not *quarrelling* or *fighting* one with another.

I don't know any Place of Scripture, the Sense of which Interpreters have so much mistaken, as this of *Jacob* holding his Hand upon his Brother's *Heel*.

If *HOSEA's* *Interpolator* has made a Jest of it, *Mr. CALVIN* goes to another Extreme, 'Twas not, says he, by Judgment, or Industry, that *JACOB* took hold of *ESAU's* Heel in the Mother's Belly, but it was extraordinary, *GOD* then did direct the Hand of the Child, and by that SIGN declared his *GRATUIT* Adoption—By this *GOD* teaches, that Men don't acquire the Grace of *GOD* by their Wills, but that they are elected before they are born, by his wonderful Goodness. Who could ever have expected a Proof of *Predestination*, in a natural Accident, which besides is very melancholy, and which did put both *JACOB* and his Mother in the greatest Danger of their Lives?

Instead

Instead of advising with St. AUSTIN, who was a better *Metaphysician*, than a *Naturalist*, Mr. CALVIN had done prudently to consult any skilful MIDWIFE of *Geneva* upon this Case, for she would, or, at least, she should have told him, that JACOB holding his Brother by *the Heel*, is as much as to say, that the young PATRIARCH did not come forth in a *natural* posture, and consequently, that the *Labour* was very hard and difficult.

The Matter of Fact was this; the *Waters* of both Children being *broke* much about the same Time, ESAU was ushered into the Light in the most favourable way that can be desired, his *Head* being *foremost* in a *strait Line*, and free from any other part of the Body, the Arms couched along his Sides, and the Thighs and Feet stretched out; he might safely cry Victory, tho' his Brother seemingly desired to be towed out of the *Uterus*.

On the contrary, JACOB presented himself in a *wry* Situation, his Arm being forward, and intangled about ESAU's Foot, in danger of a Fracture or Dislocation, by which, part of the Passage was taken up, and the Head kept within the *Uterus*, and forced to lean on one Side.

This is * one of the worst and most dan-

* See Hugh Chamberlane's *Book, Diseases of Women with Child*.

gerous Postures a Child can come out, both for itself, and for the Mother, because of the violent Force, the Midwife is necessitated to use in searching for the Feet which are very far off; for generally in that Case the Child must be brought out by the Legs. The Reader may judge, by the *Travail* of TAMAR, of the Truth of this; for she could not be delivered of ZARAH, upon whom the Midwife tied a Scarlet Thread, till he had withdrawn his Hand, *Gen.* xxxviii. 28, 29.

In what lamentable Condition must poor REBECCA have been; for if the Child is pulled by the Arm, that Member will sooner be separated from the Body, than for the *Fœtus* to be so brought forth.

Pray, where's the grand Mystery of CALVIN? As for the INTERPOLATOR, is this Matter of Jest, when precious Lives are in imminent Danger, especially at the Time Ignorance did prevail, and that the Midwife could call no Body to her Help?

4. But to convince the Reader, that the Words in question have been added to HOSEA, with a manifest Design to make a *Banter* of the History, as related in *Genesis*, is the strange Alteration, or rather Corruption of *Moses's* Expression; for, instead of saying, *He held with his Hand his Brother's Heel*, which can never be taken, but
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in a literal Sense, the verb *קָפַץ* is introduc'd, which signifies to trip up the Heels, to supplant, to cheat, and which gives a different Notion from MOSES's Account; for 'tis as much as to say, JACOB *was a Wag, fly, a Cheat, and deceitful from the very Beginning.*

From all these several Observations, which can hardly be contradicted, I draw this Inference, That as the Spirit of GOD can never have directed the *Prophet* to turn into an *insipid Pleasantry*, the dangerous Circumstances REBECCA and JACOB were in, it follows consequently, that the Words are an *Interpolation*, and the Work of a *prophane Jester*, and not to be minded.

Now, if we restore HOSEA to his primitive Simplicity, The Text shall run thus.

The Lord has also a Controversy with Judah, and will punish Jacob according to his Ways, according to his Doings will he recompense him. He found him in Beth-el, and there he spake with him, and even JEHOVAH the Lord of Hosts, JEHOVAH is his Memorial.

'Tis time to pause, and to desire the Reader to examine well the two different Solutions I have given to the Objection from the Prophet HOSEA: Let him chuse which he thinks fit, the WRESTLER is declared in both of them unworthy of the sublime Name of JEHOVAH. CON-

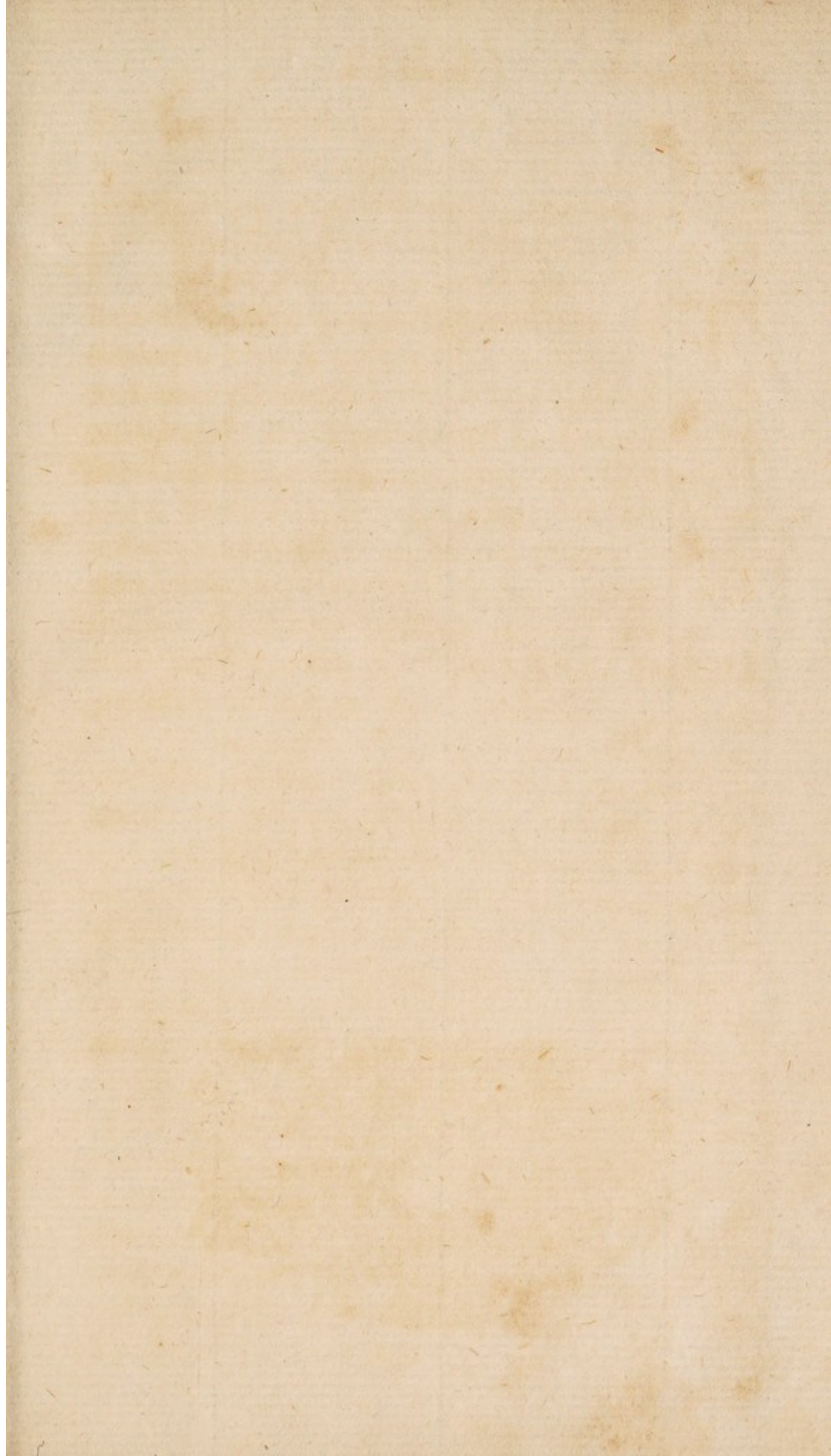
CONCLUSION.

TIS necessary to make an end of this Dissertation, in which I have proceeded gradually, and taken all possible Care to maintain my Hypothesis, *viz.* That the **WRESTLER** was but a *Man*, and also to answer all Objections.

To say more would be superfluous; whether I have or have not made good my Allegations, I must entirely leave it to the **IMPARTIAL Reader**.

F I N I S.





CONCLUSION

The object of this work is to show that the
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THE END



