

THE
Natural History
OF
SUPERSTITION.

By John Trenchard.

*Sic plerumq; agitatur stultos inscitia veri, &
Palantes error certo de tramite pellit:
Ille sinistrorsum, hic deorsum abit, unus utriq;
Error, sed variis illudit partibus omnes.*

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T H E
Natural History
O F
SUPERSTITION.

IF any Man surveys and contemplates the Visible World, the great and glorious body of the Sun, many thousand times bigger than the Earth, its immense distance from us, this Globe on which we live, and numerous other Planets moving about it, and receiving Vital warmth and Nourishment from its Beams; if he pursues and agrandizes this Idea, by considering the much greater Distance and Magnitude of the Fixt-Stars, in all probability so many Suns, with each their particular system of Worlds, and Inhabitants, and the frequent discovery of new ones, by the Invention of better

Glasses and Telescopes; how must he admire and adore the Power of God, who has given being and motion to such vast Machines, created them of such figure and magnitude, disposed them in such order, placed them at such distances, gave them such proper and suitable motions, as oblige them to perform the regular and ordinary purposes of his Providence, without the constant and momentary interposition of his Power.

Nor is it less conspicuous in the formation of inferiour Animals, in this little part of the World in which we live, whose parts are so adapted and disposed by his all-wise Providence, as by the necessity of their own Natures to perform the functions and operations of their Beings: Hence we see that universal Harmony in all Creatures of the same Species; they have the same hopes and desires, the same fears and aversions; some kinds have intrepid Courage, others Pannick Fears; Nature directs some to force and violence, others to flight and cunning; some prey upon Flesh, some live upon Fruits and Seeds, others upon Grass and Vegetables; Birds of the same kind build their Nests with the same Contrivance, and the same Materials; all Creatures of the same kind defend themselves with the
same

same Address and Cunning, and are caught and trapan'd by the same Wiles and Artifices, and generate others like them as naturally and necessarily as a Tree or Vegetable is produced from its Seed, with some little difference in individuals, owing probably to the circumstance of soil, food, peculiar accidents, or something perhaps particular in the formation of each System.

His partiality to Mankind has not hindred him from forming our Bodies in the same manner and of the same Materials; he has given us the same Springs of Vital Motion, the same Nerves, Tendons, Veins and Arteries, the like disposition and organization of our Brains, and consequently the like faculties of Seeing, Feeling, Hearing, Tasting and Smelling, the same sensations of Pleasure and Pain, alike Desires and Aversions, alike Hopes and Fears; we have the same way of coming into the World, and the same ways of going out of it. Nor can it be denied that in many respects we are excelled by inferiour Creatures in the organization of our Bodies, as some are Stronger, others more Active, some Bolder, others of longer Continuance; most kinds surpass us in the Acuteness of one or more of our Senses, and some in all of them.

But we have ample amends made us in the Faculties of our Souls, which makes it evident we were designed for nobler Uses; for whereas other Animals appear to have no thoughts or desires above their quotidian Food, Ease, Diversions, or Lusts, Men have visibly larger and more extensive views, as not only from the ordinary and regular System of the Universe to carry their Minds to the great Creator, but to infer from thence the Duty and Obedience owing to him, and the Justice, Compassion, Love and Assistance owing to one another. And since the defect and narrowness of our natural Capacities has left us in the Dark about a Future State, his abundant goodness has amply supplied the shortness of our knowledge with Divine Revelation, and has discovered and annex'd a state of immortal Happiness to the natural rewards attending a Just and Virtuous Life.

But as there is no perfection in this frail State, nor any excellency without some defect accompanying it, so these noble faculties of the Mind have misled and betrayed us into Superstition, as appears in that notwithstanding we are abundantly cautioned not to mistake the Impostures of pretended Prophets, the Frauds of Priests, and the Dreams and Visions of Enthusiasts
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for Heavenly Revelations, and our own infirmities and pannick fears for Divine Impulses, yet the Fables of the Heathens, the Alchoran of *Mahomet*, the more gross and impious Forgeries of the Papists, and the Frauds and Follies of some who call themselves Protestants, have so far prevailed over genuine Christianity, that the Righteous and Faithful are but like *the Gold to the Earth*, which could not have thus happened in all Ages, unless something innate in our Constitutions made us easily to be susceptible of wrong Impressions, subject to Pannick Fears, and prone to Superstition and Error, and therefore it is incumbent upon us, first of all to examine into the frame and constitution of our own Bodies, and search into the causes of our Passions and Infirmities, for till we know from what Source or Principle we are so apt to be deceived by others, and by our selves, we can never be capable of true Knowledge, much less of true Religion, which is the perfection of it.

I take this wholly to proceed from our ignorance of Causes, and yet curiosity to know them, it being impossible for any Man so far to divest himself of concern for his own Happiness, as not to endeavour to promote it, and consequently to avoid what he thinks may hurt him; and since there

there must be causes in Nature for every thing that does or will happen, either here or hereafter, it is hard to avoid sollicitude till we think we know them, and therefore since the Divine Providence has for the most part hid the Causes of Things which chiefly concern us from our View, we must either entirely abandon the enquiry, or substitute such in their room, as our own Imaginations or Prejudices suggest to us, or take the Words of others whom we think Wiser than our selves, and as we believe have no intent to deceive us.

To these Weaknesses of our own, and Frauds of others, we owe the Heathen Gods and Goddesses, Oracles and Prophets, Nymphs and Satyrs, Fawns and Tritons, Furies and Demons, most of the Stories of Conjurers and Witches, Spirits and Apparitions, Fairies and Hobgoblins, the Doctrine of Prognosticks, the numerous ways of Divination, *viz.* Oniromancy, Sideromancy, Tephromancy, Botanomancy, Crommyomancy, Cleromancy, Aeromancy, Onomatomancy, Arithmomancy, Geomancy, Alectryomancy, Cephalomancy, Axinomancy, Coscinomancy, Hydromancy, Onychomancy, Dactylomancy, Christallomancy, Cataptromancy, Gastromancy, Lecanomancy, Alphetomancy, Chiromancy, Orneomancy and Necro-

Necromancy, Horoscopy, Astrology and Augury, Metoposcopy and Palmistry, the fear of Eclipses, Comets, Meteors, Earthquakes, Inundations, and any uncommon Appearances, though ever so much depending upon Natural and Necessary Causes, nor are there wanting People otherwise of good understanding, who are affected with the falling of a Salt-Seller, crossing of a Hare, croaking of a Raven, howling of Dogs, screeching of Owls, the motion of Worms in a Bedstead, mistaken for Death-Watches, and other as senseless and trifling Accidents.

'Tis this Ignorance of Causes, &c. subjects us to mistake the Phantasms and Images of our own Brains (which have no existence any where else) for real Beings, and subsisting without us, as in Dreams where we see Persons and Things, feel Pain and Pleasure, form Designs, hear and make Discourses, and sometimes the Objects are represented so Lively to our Fancies, and the Impressions so Strong, that it would be hard to distinguish them from Realities, if we did not find our selves in Bed.

But if a Melancholy Man sitting by himself in a doleful Mood, with his Brains brooding upon Visions and Revelations, should carelessly nod himself half a Sleep, and his Imagination having received a
vigorous

vigorous representation of an Angel delivering a Message to him, should Wake in a Surprize, without having observed his own Sleeping (as often happens) I cannot see how he should distinguish it from a Divine Vision.

There have been surprising Instances of this kind in extatick Fits and Trances, which are but Sounder Sleeps, that cause more lively and intense Dreams: some in these Delirium's have fancied their Souls to have been transported to Heaven or Hell, to have had personal Communication with God and the Holy Trinity, have given descriptions of the Angels and their Habitations, and brought back Messages, Prophecies and Instructions to Mankind, which Phœnomena's, however strange at first sight, are easily to be accounted for by natural causes, for the ideas and operations of our Minds being evidently produced, by the agitations and motions of the internal parts of our own Bodies, and impressions heretofore made on them, as well as the actions of Objects without us (which will be made appear in the sequel of this Discourse.) It must necessarily happen when the Organs of Sence (which are the Avenues and Doors to let in external Objects) are

are shut and locked up by Sleep, Distempers, or strong Prejudices, that the imaginations produced from inward Causes must reign without any Rival, for the Images within us striking strongly upon, and affecting the Brain, Spirits, or Organ, where the imaginative Faculty resides, and all Objects from without, being wholly, or in a great measure shut out and excluded, so as to give no information or assistance, we must unavoidably submit to an evidence which meets with no contradiction, and take things to be as they appear.

I conceive that *Ignis Fatuus* of the Mind, which the Visionaries in all Ages have called the Inward Light, and leads all that have followed it into Pools and Ditches, to be like what is before described: for by their own description it is only to be attained by renouncing the Senses, and all the Intellectual Faculties, and wholly sequestering their Thoughts from Worldly and material Objects, by which elevation of Mind, they arrive to a more close and intimate union with God, have internal communication with him, and by immediate Motions and Inspirations learn all Truths, and whatever is necessary to be done. This is what Men of vulgar Notions call *sending their Wits for a Venture,*

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Venture, and indeed is but a waking Dream, for they alike lock up all their outward Senses, which are the only Conduits of Knowledge, and deliver themselves up to the guidance of wild Fancy, and consequently must be actuated wholly by their several Complexions, Constitutions and Distempers, which often make them *Ixion* like, embrace their own Clouds and Foggs for Dieties.

The same Visions happen to us when our Organs are indisposed by Sicknes, and then according to the Nature of our Distempers, we see such appearances as our former Prejudices and Education have rendered most Dreadful or Delightful to us: Sometimes we see Angels and Beatifick Visions, sometimes Devils with Instruments of Fear and Horrour.

The like is common amongst Melancholy and Hypochondriack Men, who often act in the Government of themselves and Families with Prudence enough, and sometimes have excellent qualifications in other respects, and yet a particular Delusion has got such hold of their Fancies, that it is out of the Power of their Friends otherwise to Cure them, than by seeming to comply with their
Imagi-

Imaginations: One thought his Nose long enough to open Gates, another thought himself a Glass Bottle, and bid People stand out of his way lest they should Break Him; Even the Reverend Dr. *Pelling* believed himself with Child, and could not be convinced to the contrary, till a Midwife pretended to deliver him of a False Conception. Some have conceived themselves to be God the Father, the Messias, the Holy Ghost, the Angel *Gabriel*, to be Monarchs, Popes and Emperours, others have fancied themselves to be Dogs, Cats and Wolves:

A Gentleman now Living has given an account in Print of his Conversation with Spirits for several Years together, and closes his Account with a distrust of the reality of their Conversation with him, though he had said before *they appeared to him to be real*. Many instances of this kind are to be found in *Burtons Melancholy*, and more to be seen at *Bedlam*.

Beaumont
of *Spirits*, p.
396.

When the Delusions are thus apparent they serve others for Mirth and Diversion, and do no harm; but if they happen to Persons, of whose Godliness and Wisdom we have conceived an Opinion, they cannot fail of making strong

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impressions upon us, especially if their Visions concur with our Prejudices and natural Fears.

Though true Religion improves the Faculties, exhilarates the Spirits, makes the Mind calm and Serene, renders us useful to Society, and most active in the Affairs of the World, yet I dont know how it has happened, that in all Ages and Countries, Fanatical, Melancholly, Enthusiastick, Monkish, Recluse, Sequestred Persons have passed upon the World for Religious, such who lived in Cloisters and Caves or became Pilgrims and Hermits, who seeming not to mind the Affairs of this World, were believed to know the more of the next.

As nothing but disappointed Pride, indisposition of Body, disturbance of Mind, or dejection of Spirit, can work about this Strange Metamorphosis, so it is impossible when Men have abandoned the natural calm and serenity of their Minds, and disturbed their Organs with wild imaginations, but they must see Visions both Sleeping and Waking; and when they have thus thoroughly imposed upon themselves, it will not be difficult to deceive others, for there are so many in all Countries, whom Ignorance, Pride, Conceit,

ceit, ill habit of Body, Melancholly and Splenatick Tempers, unfortunate Circumstances, causeless and secret Fears, and a pannick disposition of Mind have prepared for such Impressions, that they can never want followers enough; not to mention such who embrace their Opinions Fraudulently, and to serve their own Ambition and Profit.

Which of our Senses does not often deceive us? Our Tasts and Smell will be quite Vitiated; strong pressures of the Ears make us hear Noises, of the Eyes, see Fire; Strangling makes the whole World appear in Flames; the *Faundies* make every thing seem Yellow; *Calentures* make the Sea look like a Delightful Green Medow; things strait in the Water will appear crooked; Mirrours will make Bodies appear where they are not, and magnifie, multiply, or lessen them; Bodies by Refraction will seem otherwise then they are, and by the Reflection, and due position of Glasses, may be made to appear in different Places.

It's evident the Divine Wisdom hath so formed and united our Souls and Bodies, that they mutually act upon
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one another, insomuch that there is no action of the Mind that does not cause a correspondent one in the Body; nor no motion of the Body, that does not produce a suitable affection in the Mind. The different Passions of Love, Hate, Contempt, Shame, Pity, Hope, Despair, Admiration, Fear, Courage, Anger, Lust, &c. not only cause different Lineaments and Features in the Face, but give different motions to the Nerves, Muscles, and every part of the Body; nor on the other side, can the Body receive any impressions in which the Mind has not its share: Both come into the World together, and are afterwards joint Partners in all the emergencies of Life: Both encrease in Youth, decline in Age, are nourished with Food, enlivened with Wine, altered with Weather, refreshed with Sleep, improved by Exercise, fatigued with Labour, oppressed with Gluttony and Drunkenness, enervated with Sickness, and often all the Noble Faculties and Operations of the Mind, are quite destroyed by the accidental disturbance of the Organization of the Body, and sometimes set right again, and recovered by Phisick or Surgery. Be-

Besides every thing in Nature is in constant Motion, and perpetually emitting Effluvioms and minute Particles of its Substance, which operate upon, and strike other Bodies. How are we affected with Smells and imperceptible Vapours, which often cause Epidemical Distempers? Dogs will pursue their Masters Scent through crouds of People, and will trace their Steps through a Country, and find their way Home again at a great distance; some People will turn Pale, and even Sound at a Cats being in the Room; we are often infected with Distempers at a distance, the poisonous Particles floating in the Air are often carried about in the Cloths of Phisitians, Nurses and Visitants. And as Distempers are thus caused by Noxious Effluvioms, I see no reason why in some cases they may not be cured by such as are agreeable and Salutiferous; *Greatrix* is said to have cured many Distempers by his Touch; The *Kings-Evil* is often cured by the Stroaking of a King *rightly Anoynted*, together with the help of a vigorous Imagination, which is as unaccountable; some at the point of

Death have been cured by putting a Young Vigorous Person in the same Bed; and 'tis a common observation, if a Healthy and Diseased Person lye together, one grows better and the other worse.

Since therefore both Mind and Body are visibly affected with the Actions of other Beings, and of one another, and wherever we move we are surrounded with Bodies, all which in some degree operate upon us, it cannot happen in the variety of actions and events in the World, but some must appear very extraordinary, and will not fall within common Observation, which has given opportunity to Men of Fraudulent intention, to impose upon the Ignorance and Credulity of others.

How many Nations formerly, and even at this Day, believe Eclipses and Comets to be Supernatural, and to denounce the Anger of the Gods? How many mistake the Stagnation of their own Blood for being Hag-ridden? How many Enthusiasts take their own Prejudices and Whimseys for Divine Impulses, and the Struggels of their Reason for Temptations of the Devil? How many

many the Legerdemain and Tricks of Juglers for Conjuring and Witchcraft? What Frauds may be acted with Glasses, Speaking Trumpets, Ventriloquies, Echoes, Phosphorus, Magick Lanthorns, &c.? Mathematicians for many Ages were thought to deal with the Devil, and in our own a Dancing Mare was Burnt in the Inquisition of *Portugal*. Formerly Madmen were thought to be Demoniacs, and in some Countries at this Day, their Persons are esteemed Sacred, and their Raving to be Prophecy. The *Americans* take Paper and Letters to be Spirits which carry Mens Thoughts from one to another, and indeed 'tis hardly conceivable by Nations who have no Notion of Writing, how Men should converse at a distance, and know one anothers Thoughts, but by the mediation of visible or invisible Agents. If any one should have more exquisite Senses than other Men (which is not difficult to suppose) how many Discoveries would he make unaccountable to the rest of Mankind; If he could follow Men or Beasts by the Scent like Dogs, or See in the Dark like Cats: If he had the same Natural Prefage of Tempests, Thunder

and Lightning, Fair and Foul Weather, as some Animals both at Sea and Land seem to have, how many People might be deceive by seeming Wonders and Miracles? We naturally admire what we cannot apprehend, and seem to do some sort of credit to our Understandings, in believing whatever is out of our reach to be Supernatural.

Many in other respects prudent enough, give too much countenance to these Follies, in conceiving they attribute more Honour to the Divine Omnipotence, when they suppose he acts *pro re natâ*, and accommodates his Providence to each single Action and Emergency, then in believing that his Eternal Wisdom hath so contrived and framed the whole System of Nature, and in its Original Constitution implanted such Causes, as by their own energy shall produce all the Events in the World, (unless for some particular Reasons he thinks fit to interpose his immediate Providence) than which nothing seems to be more derogatory to his Power, or more contrary to the Nature of Things, which in many instances we all allow.

Who

Who is there that does not perceive that in Dreams, our Thoughts and Desires are the natural and necessary productions of the affections of our Bodies? If we lye Hot, we are subject to Angry and Passionate Dreams, if Cold, to Fearful ones; A Loaded Stomach raises up Apparitions of Devils, Terrors and Death; *Opium* gives to many the most agreeable Sensations; Dreaming upon our Backs inclines us to Lascivious and Wanton Thoughts, and a due temperament of Body gives Sound Sleep without any Dreams at all; and yet how few are there, that do not believe their Wakeing Thoughts are altogether in their Power, without being able to give any Reason for the difference?

Who is there that does not see that the Raving of a Man in a Feavour, the wild Discourse of one in *Bedlam*, the Extravagancies of Drunken Men, and the Visions of Distracted, are the necessary effects of Distemper, and a disordered Brain? and yet how few believe the same of the other Follies and Impertinencies of their Lives, though but lesser degrees of the same Passions?

much more if we meet with any uncommon Appearances or Phœnomena's of Nature, we immediately solve all our Doubts in recurring to the Divine Omnipotence.

Nature in many circumstances seems to work by a sort of secret Magick, and by ways unaccountable to us, and yet produces as certain, and regular events as the most obviously Mechanical Operations. Passions of the Mind, as well as Actions of the Body, are not only communicated by all the Senses, but probably by other ways indiscernable to us: Musick not only works us into variety of Passions, but is said to cure the Bite of a *Tarantula*, and makes the Person Affected Skip and Dance in spite of his raging Pain: How many can avoid being affected with the Groans or Sight of one in Misery, any unusual Tone of the Voice, the Solemnity of a Coronation, the Pomp of a Funeral, the Farce of a Procession, the Power of Eloquence, the Charms of Poetry, the rich and splended Equipage of Great Men, or the solemn Dump of an Enthusiast? Sudden good or ill News give such violent
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lent agitations to the Spirits, as sometimes kills the Patient; many are frightened into Convulsive Fits, and even into Distraction; the sight of our Friends in Joy or in Grief produce the same affections in us, before we know the cause of it in them; the Passion of Love is conveyed by wanton Glances, by the Touch, the Motion, and the Ear; and as far as appears to us, all other Passions are communicated by like means; The Frights and Longings of Women with Child stamp Images and Impressions, of the things feared or desired, on the Fætus's, which last after they are Born, and sometimes as long as they live; There was once a remarkable accident happened at the Acting of *Andromeda*, at *Abdera* a Greek City, upon an extream hot Day, that many of the Spectators fell into *Feavours*, and had this accident from the Heat and Tragedy together, that they did nothing but pronounce *Jambiques*, with the Names of *Perseus* and *Andromeda*; The Yawning of one Person infects a whole Company; the Tone, the Motions, the Gestures, and Grimaces of those we converse with steal insensibly upon us,
even

even when we endeavour to avoid them ; Not only Nations and Sects, but Professions, and particular Societies of Men for the most part contract peculiar Airs, and Features, which are easily distinguishable to a nice observer, and one but of moderate skill in Physiognomy will discover a Parson, a Quaker, or a Taylor, dress them how you please.

There is a certain Sympathy and Antypathy in Nature, or to express myself otherwise, so agreeable or contrary contexture of different Bodies, as by a sort of natural Mechanism do incline to, or avoid another, this appears not only in Phisical and Philosophical Experiments, but by many vulgar and common Observations; some bodies cannot be made to unite, others will not separate; The Loadstone draws Iron to it, Gold Quicksilver; The Sensitive Plant shrinks from your Touch; Some sorts of Vegetables, though set at a distance, attract one another and twine together, others grow farther apart; Turkicocks fly at Red; Pheasants will stare upon the Eyes of a Fox till they fall upon him; a Rattlesnake fixing his
Eyes

Eyes upon a Squerril, will make him run into his Mouth.

All sorts of Animals have their inclinations and disgusts to others, and we our selves have secret affections and aversions to Persons, and Things, that we can no otherwise give an account of, then that Effluxes of Volatile Animal Spirits flow constantly from us, of such form and configuration as easily permeate and penetrate some Bodies, and are resisted by others of different textures and composition, and when entered, communicate the same passions and dispositions to Bodies suitably disposed, as they caused in the Body from whence they came, and in Bodies otherwise formed different Operations, as the same Wind or Breath blown into different Instruments causes various Musick.

This may help to unriddle many Phænomena's and appearances of Nature, vulgarly ascribed to Fascination and Witchcraft; for why may not the disagreeable effluvioms of a Diseased Old Woman give a Child Convulsive Fits, as well as the *Meazels* and the *Small Pox*, and the poisonous and melancholy
Vapours

Vapours steaming from an Enthusiast, cause Distraction and Raving as well as the Bite of a Mad Dog?

We perceive in a thousand instances, the actions of others by an undesigned imitation produce the like in our selves; No Man is surprized to hear of one thrown into Convulsive Fits, with distorted Limbs and Countenance, at the sight of another in the same condition, and yet if a poor Enthusiast with his Brains intoxicated with reading the Revelations, who has made a lucky discovery that the last Day is at hand, when the rest of Mankind are to be destroyed, that he and his acquaintance may enjoy Dominions, Principalities, and Powers; I say if such uncommon agitations of the Mind should produce as uncommon agitations of the Body, and cause the same in others, whose Intellects and Organs are wound up to the same pitch (as when two Violins are tuned alike, if you strike upon one, the other Sounds) immediately half the World is in an uproar: Some will have these Fanatical Throws and Convulsions to be the workings and flowings of the Holy Ghost; the

the Parsons will have them to be some of the Devils Tricks to dumfound the Church; and even Men of good Sense are not without apprehensions, that they may be Jugling and confederate Knavery in order to some dangerous design, whereas they are as natural as Agues, Apoplexies, Epilepsies, or Fits of the Mother, which were formerly thought to be supernatural, and the Persons affected to be possessed with Spirits and Demons. Sir *Richard Buckley* has endeavoured to prove these agitations always attended the true Prophets, and *the Letter of Enthusiasm* has fully shewn they always accompanied the false ones.

To stop the natural course of our Spirits, collect them all together, and endeavour to keep them fixt upon one single Object or Opinion, is like damming up the Current of a River, and leaving part of its Channel dry, that it may overflow the adjacent Countrey. The Beams of the Sun whilst dispersed give vital warmth, and nourishment to Men, Beasts, and Vegetables, but if contracted to one point would set the World on Fire; so the Spirits of Man, whilst

whilst diffused through the Body, give proper and futable Motions and Vigour to the whole Machine, but if collect-ed all together must either burst the Veins, or cause excessive Pains, Con-vulsions, Agitations, fits of Quaking and Trembling. A violent intention of Mind, long fixt upon the same Object, never fails giving Convulsive Distempers, or making the Person Di-stracted.

Some of the Quakers (if we may believe the Reverend Mr. *George Keith* in his *Magick of Quakerism*) have ar-rived to a great proficiency in this na-tural Magnetism, or Magick, having by a watchful and accurate observation of these mutual Effluxes and Emanations, which flow from one to another, at-taind to a discernment of Spirits, that is by the Eye, the Touch, and even by being in the same Room, to the know-ledge of their Friends from their Ene-mies, or those of the same Party, Inte-rest and Faction, from those of another: He speaks of it as an undoubted mat-ter of Fact known amongst them, that as betwixt the former there is an op-position of Spirit to Spirit, that may
be

be felt, so between the latter there is an Unity, Amity or Friendship of Spirit to Spirit, that is so discernable, that they rarely mistake their Foe for their Friend, though all his Words, Carriage and Actions pretend it: They feel some secret Effluvioms go forth from their Hearts mutually from one another, and to one another, which are received by those of the same Spirit, like a pleasant Oyl or Cordial that doth sensibly gratifie them, but by those of another Spirit (if they can find room to enter) like so many Pinns and Needles that wound them, and penetrate the very Heart and Vital parts; and when the Patient hath strength enough to resist their impressions, he perceives only some small impulse or touch which is ungrateful to him.

He farther tells us, this Spirit of Quakerism is not only communicated by the Sight, the Touch, by Melodious and Musical Sounds, as well without Words as with them, but sometimes only by the simple feeling of a mighty Power that exerts it self in their Silent Meetings, which not only overcomes little Children, but Persons at
Age,

Age, and he gives an instance of many Boys and Girls at a Quakers Meeting at *Waltham*, seized with shivering Fits like an Ague, which went off and returned for several Weeks together.

This Author who was formerly one of them, and is now a Minister of the Church of *England*, would never in a Book written against the Delusions of Quakerism confess these Facts, and endeavour to solve them by Natural causes, if he had not thought them to be undeniable, and though 'tis not easie for others to give intire credit to such uncommon Relations, yet we may be sure the first Propagators of this Fanaticism must have hit upon some secret in Nature to strike the Passions, or so considerable a Sect could not on a suddain start up from so inconsiderable a Founder as a poor *Shoemaker*, without Articles or Priests, though excluded from Honours and Offices, Reproached, Contemn'd, their Estates Confiscated, their Persons Banished or thrown into noisom Goals and Dungeons, and what is more, they continue to encrease though they are let alone.

Its a severe circumstance which attends those who oppose received Opinions, that in Argument they must admit every thing supposed by their Adversaries to be true, if it be possible, and often what is not so, if the impossibility be not very apparent; When once Men have imbibed strong Prejudices, which serve their present Interest, or strike forcibly upon their Hopes and Fears, every thing in Nature shall be made to contribute to their System; Misfortunes to their Enemies are God's Judgments for their Sins, and so are their Successes too, because they become thereby confirmed in their Errors; Good Fortune to themselves, is God's Reward for their Piety, ill Success is his Correction for their Amendment; every Thought which confirms their Opinion is a Divine Impulse, which contradicts them, a Suggestion of the Devil; every accident that attends them, every good or ill Season, every common as well as uncommon appearance in Nature, is made an immediate Act of God, and either a Blessing or Judgment; any unusual Operation of their own Minds or Bodies is imputed to
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the Holy Ghost, of others that are of different Sects to the Devil, so that 'tis impossible to Convert a well settled Enthusiast; you will in vain deny any thing to be supernatural which he thinks so, unless you can shew a visible connexion between the Cause and the Effect, and often that will not do neither, because the weak efforts of Carnal Reason, are unable to search into the hidden Mysterics of God.

Who would undertake to convince one of the Sect just before mentioned, that his Transports, and his Pannick Fears, his Tremblings and his Quakings are owing to Natural Causes, and not the immediate Spirit of God? 'Twill be in vain to tell him that the same were common to an Infamous Sect in Old Rome, to the *Pythian* Prophetess, the *Sybills*, the *Allumbrati* in Spain, the Fanaticks in Germany, are now Acted over again by a new whimsical Sect in England, and indeed have accompanied almost every Fanaticism that ever appeared in the World; He has an Answer ready, which is proof against all Objections, that himself and those of his Party are Inspired by the Holy-Ghost,

Ghost, but all others are Actuated by the Devil, in order to promote Heresy: It requires less pains to believe a Miracle, than to discover it to be an Imposture, or account for it by the Powers of Nature, which notwithstanding I think may be shewn to have produced and set at work most of the Enthusiasms that ever happened, and particularly our Illuminated Sects here at Home, with all their Convulsions, Tremblings and Quakings.

It has been already observed, that many of our Passions will not only cause agitations of the Body, Convulsive Fits and Trances, but even Kill us; great excesses of Love, Fear or Joy, will make us Shake and Quiver, great veneration for the Person or Assembly we Speak before, will make many Tremble and Quake like an *Aspen Leaf*, some have been struck Silent, and others have fallen to the Ground; How then must an Enthusiast be surprized, who believes himself honoured with the extraordinary Visits of a Deity, and the Illapses of the Holy-Ghost into his Soul? What Motions, Agitations, Convulsions, Tremblings and Quakings must be caus'd

by the co-operation of the Passions of Love, Devout Fear and Awe, Joy and Veneration in so high and transcendent a degree? What agreeable Sensations must he feel? How Ravishing Joys and Transporting Raptures? Sure whoever goes about to undeceive him, would deserve the same Thanks as those who Cured the Madman in *Horace*, that before thought himself a Prince, and when he found his Mistake, cryed out in a Rage;

*Pol me occidistis, Amici,
Non servatis ait, cui sic extorta voluptas,
Et demptus per vim mentis gratissimus Error.*

As these and many other surprizing Appearances, are only the co-operations and united force of different, and sometimes contrary Passions, so our Passions are the Mechanical and necessary Effects of the Complexion, Constitution, and Distempers of our Bodies, which take their rise, and receive constant alteration from the Accidents of Diet, Climate, Air, Education, Phisick, Exercise, and the perpetual Actions of external Objects encompassing us on every side.

Phisi-

Philifians have discovered certain Mixtures of the Elements, and first Principles of the Bodies of Animals, which they have distinguished by the Names of Sanguine, Phleme, Yellow Choler, and Black, which is also called Melancholy, and common experience proves that from the different mixture, a vain and variation of these Humours, or some other compounds, are owing all the Dispositions and Distempers of the Mind and Body.

Sanguine, is a composition of Hot and Moist, and flourishes most in Youth, gives a vigorous motion to the Limbs, a Purple, Rosy, and florid Complexion to the Face, white and soft Skin, shining and reddish Hair on the Head, and little on the Body: It Ferments like New Wine just put into the Cask, makes us Thoughtless, Brisk and Airy, Bold, Insolent and Wanton, Extravagant, Luxurious, and immoderately given to Mirth and Pleasure, which *Horace* well describes in the following Verses,

*Imberbis Juvenis tandem, Custode remoto,
Gandet equis, canibusq; & aprici gramine
no: campi.*

*Cereus in vitium flecti, monitoribus asper,
 Utilium tardus provisor, prodigus æris,
 Sublimis cupidusque, & amata relinquere per-
 nix.*

It causes in Sleep soft and gentle Va-
 pours to rise to the Brain, which in-
 spire agreeable and pleasant Dreams,
 and chiefly of such Subjects as the Mind
 is conversant with in the Day, as is well
 expressed by *Claudian*.

*Omnia que sensu voluntur vota diurno
 Pectore sopito reddit amica quies.
 Venator defessa toro jam membra reponit,
 Mens tamen ad sylvas & sua lustra redit ;
 Judicibus lites, aurigæ somnia currus
 Vanaq; nocturnis meta cavetur equis ;
 Furto gaudet amans, permutat navita merces,
 Et vigil elapsus quærit avarus opes,
 Blandaq; largitur frustra sitientibus agris
 Irriguus gelido pocula fonte sopor :
 Me quoq; musarum studium sub nocte silenti,
 Artibus assuetis sollicitare solet.*

Lib. 3. Præ.

Fleme is a mixture of Cold and Moist,
 and abounds in Winter, when the Jui-
 ces for want of due Warmth and Mo-
 tion

tion are Crude and Indigested, like Wine in the Press before it has Fermented. The Complexion is white, the Skin soft, the Urine pale, the Body inclinable to be gross, the Muscles and Veins sunk and hid, the Hair lank and thin, and for want of Nourishment quickly grows grey; the native Heat being overcome with Moisture, the Senses become less quick, the Powers of the Mind dull, sluggish and stupid, the Speech slow, and the Memory loses its retentive Faculty, but People of this Complexion are Steady, Good-natured, hard to be Provoked, and free from all Guile, Fraud and Treachery.

In Sleep moist Vapours ascending to the Brain, make them Dream of Hail, Snow, Ice and Rain, of Rivers and Baths, and sometimes they mistake their Bed for an Urinal. This Constitution causes heaviness, stuffings in the Head, running and dimness in the Eyes, noises and ringing in the Ears, Distillations, Coughs, Catarrs, intense Pains, if the Humour settle in particular parts, as also Scabs, Tetter, Scurvies, Leprosies, and some sorts of Feavours.

Choler is a composition of Hot and Dry, of a fiery Colour and Effect, and abounds most in the Summer Months: It makes the Complexion pale, the Body lean, slender and musculous, the Skin hot and Hairy, the Hair curled, the Water high colour'd, the Pulse swift and strong, and the Veins prominent. People of this Complexion are Cheerful, Forward and Active, have a great command of Thoughts and Words, and flowing and ready Eloquence, but are Busy, Imperious, Passionate, Variable, Uncertain, Crafty, Designing and Treacherous.

————— *cui Tristia bella,
Fraq; insidiae; & noxia crimina cordi.*

In Sleep, burning Vapours flying up to the Brain, cause tumultuous and angry Dreams, Fury and Slaughter raging on every side, and Towns, Cities and Woods in Flames.

*Exagitant vesana quies, somnique furentes
Atq; aliena premit vani terroris imago.*

Lucan. l. 5.

This

This Complexion inclines to the Jaundies; to Twistings of the Guts, with intollerable Pains and Tortures, to Tertian and Burning Feavers, which cause Raving and Frenzies.

The Atra-bilis or Melancholy, is a compound of Cold and Dry, and abounds most in Spring and Autumn: Its a Viscous and Sour Juice, and consists of the thicker Parts and Dregs of the Blood, which 'tis the Duty of the Liver to Separate, and as it were to Scum and Clarify; and if this Office be duly performed the Spirits are Pure and Clear, and give an active Motion to the Brain, which causes profuse Joy and Mirth; otherwise the Spleen and Ventricle become Obstructed, and then sour and poisonous Vapours ascending to the Brain, as it were from corrupt and stinking Pools, the Animal Spirits are Vitiated, from whence arise Swimmings in the Head, Tremblings and Palpitations of the Heart, deep Sighs, Inquietude and alienation of the Mind, Grief, Anxiety, Dejection, Absurd Thoughts, Anxious and Pannick Fears, and a desire of Solitude.

*Miser in silvis mærens errabat opacis
Per campos solus latos atque avia regna,
Ipse suum cor edens, hominum vestigia vi-
tans.*

Every Noise frightens them, they distrust every body, fear Friends and Enemies alike, are haunted with vain and causeless Terrors of Conscience, and both sleeping and waking see dreadful Images and Apparitions of Devils and Chains before their Eyes.

*Perpetua anxietas, nec mensæ tempore cessat,
Noctæ brevam si forte indulset cura soporem,
Et toto versata toro jam membra quiescunt,
Continuo templum & violati nuptialis aras
Conspicit in somno, ac mentem sudoribus ur-
get :*

*Hi sunt qui trepidant & ad omnia fulgura
pallent,
Cum tonat, examines primo quoque tempore
cæli.*

Juven. Satyr. 13.

In Dreams they try to run away from these frightful Images, but in the Attempt their Strength fails them, their Knees sink
under

under them, and their Limbs will not support the Weight of their Bodies, which *Virgil* well describes in the following Verses.

*Ac velut in somnis oculos ubi languida
pressit*

*Nocte quies, nequicquam avidos extendere
cursus*

*Velle videmur, & in mediis conatibus ægri
Succidimus, non lingua valet, non corpore
notæ*

*Sufficient vires, nec vox nec verba sequun-
tur.*

Virg. Lib. 12.

Though this sort of Cholar is in its own Nature cold, yet being very dry takes Fire like Tinder. *Aristotle* observes, when Melancholy is once heated, it is like Boiling Water, and transcends the Flame of Fire, and then Sulphurious Exhalations flying up to the Brain, fill the Mind with lively Imaginations, quicken and enlarge the Wit and Invention, and make the Tongue to Admiration fluent and eloquent, and when heated to a great degree cause Raving, Frenzy, and Madness.

Problems.
Sect. 30.

This

This will account for the sudden changes in Persons of this Complexion: When the Humour is in its Natural State they are heavy, grave, anxious, fearful, dejected and oppress'd with Grief and Despair; talk of nothing but Humility, Mortification, Disconsolation and Desertion; but if heated with Exercise, Wine, the Conversation of agreeable Men and Women, or any other accidental Cause on a sudden, they will be surprizingly joyful, gay and wanton, full of Laughter and pleasant Conceits, bright, and sometimes extravagant thoughts and Expressions. Melancholy partakes much of the Nature of Wine, which makes some Men pleasant, others quarrelsome, some silent, others noisie, some lascivious, others impotent, some crying, others laughing.

*Quid non ebrietas designat? aperta recludit,
Spes jubet esse ratas in praelia trudit inermem,
Sollicitis animis onus eximit, & docet artes
Fecundi calices quem non fecere disertum?
Contractâ quem non in paupertate solutum?*

Hor. Lib. 1. Ep. 5.

There are particular Features, Visages, Habits and Distempers incident to both these

these Conditions of Melancholy, which for brevity sake I omit; nor do I pretend to have given an exact Physical Account of the other Phœnomena's above mentioned, much less to discover the inward Frame and Constitution of Substances; which can be known to no Man till God Almighty in another State has given us new Senses and Faculties; (all the Knowledge we have in this, being some few obvious Effects and Operations Bodies have upon one another;) nor is such exactness necessary, my Purpose being only to shew in general, that the Passions and other qualities of the Mind, are the necessary Productions of these, or some other unknown Mixtures and Compositions of the Body, which as they are infinitely variable in Degree and Proportion, and receive perpetual Alteration by the Bodies emitting and receiving new Particles, as well as different Modifications of those it had before by the Actions of external Objects; so our Features, Complexions, Constitutions, Distempers, Senses, Passions, and other Affections of the Mind; must be vastly different, and probably two Men never had exactly the same, or the same Man at different times.

A cer:

A certain Organization of the Body, and Mixture of Juices in the Blood, concurring with suitable and correspondent Actions of other Beings without us, produce Prudence, Temperance, Moderation, Humanity, Indolence and Complacency of Mind; different Constitutions produce violent and unruly Appetites: Our Virtues as well as Health consist in having moderate Desires and Aversions, or which is all one, Hopes and Fears to which all our Passions are reducible; in a certain degree they are necessary to the Preservation of our Beings, and all the Duties of Life, in a greater, they become Vices, and at last Raving and Madness, Courage soon grows into Anger, and then Rage; Frugality makes an easy Progression to Covetousness, then Miserableness, and that Want it wou'd avoid; there is a ready transition from Benevolence into Generosity Profuseness and Extravagance; from Religion not conducted by Reason, into Superstition and Fanaticism; and of Hope into Confidence, Pride, Conceit, and Vain-Glory. All these in their Excesses are several kinds of Madness, which is but violent Passion that produces strange and unusual Behaviour, of the numerous sorts whereof one might unroll a Legion, and perhaps no one is without

out a Tincture of one kind or other, which I am perswaded the most Sober Man will acknowledge true of himself, if he reflects upon the vanity and extravagance of his Secret Thoughts, when he sits or walks Musing alone.

The Mind in its natural State is contented with common Thoughts and Conceptions, but when the Spirits are raised above their proper Pitch, like fermented Liquor, they endanger the Vessel, and when elevated to a very high degree, are Fired like Gunpowder, which blows up it self, and every thing else about it: Some Indispositions make the Body many times Stronger than in full Health, others produce a strange and uncommon Energy in the Brain, which causes surprizing Discourses, and Rapsodies of lofty Words and Thoughts, and a strength of Imagination which is inconceivable, that can bring and cure Distempers, carry People in Sleep out of their Beds, and conduct them safe over Bridges and Precipices, where they durst not venture when Awake, but it is in nothing more surprizing then in the Power it has over the Mind, to make it mistake it self, and its own Infirmities,

ties, for the Spirit of God ; This is what is called Enthusiasm, by which word is meant a strong and impetuous Motion, or extraordinary and transcendent Ardor, Fervency or Pregnancy of the Soul, Spirits or Brain, which is vulgarly thought to be Supernatural.

Mankind in their Ignorance of Causes, have been always prone to believe some special Presence of God, or a Supernatural Power to be in whatever is unusual Great or Vehement. This made the Ancients ascribe Thunder and Lightning to *Jupiter*, Wisdom to *Pallas*, Craft to *Mercury*, the lively Thoughts produced by Wine to *Bacchus*, Storms and Tempests to *Eolus*, the Rapsodies of Poetry to the Muses, Courage to *Mars*, Rage and Madness to the *Eumenides* or *Furies*, the Passions of Love to *Cupid*, the Productions of the Earth to *Ceres*, and things seemingly Accidental to *Fortune* ; To these Idols of their own Fancies they built Magnificent Temples, endowed them with Priests, Lands, Officers and Revenues ; and Worshipped them with Oblations, Prayers and Thanks ; this disposition gave rise to the Worshipping of Heroes, Legislators and Founders of new Sects and
Opini-

Opinions, for the People perceiving uncommon Wisdom, Eloquence, Resolution and Success to attend all their Words and Actions, believed them to be Inspired and Assisted by some Superiour Power; and so intirely abandoned themselves to their Conduct whilst Living, and Ador'd them when Dead.

'Tis this makes a Melancholy Man mistake the impetuous Transport, whereby he is Fervently and Zealously carried in Matters of Religion, for Divine Inspiration, and the Power of God in him; for feeling a storm of Devotion coming upon him, his Heart full of Godly affection, his Head in his own Opinion pregnant with clear and sensible Representations, his Mouth flowing with powerful Eloquence, and not being able to observe from what conduct of Reason or other causes in Nature this sudden Change proceeds, immediately concludes it to be the Power of God working Supernaturally in him; he thinks every sudden Help or Evasion, every lucky hint to avoid Dangers or compass Deliverances, to proceed immediately from God, every imagined discovery of an Error held by others, to be a Supernatural Revelation,

D

every

every fine and curious Thought that steals into his Mind, a pledge of the Divine Favour, and a singular Illumination, every staring and rampant Fancy, every unbridled bold and confident Obstruction of his own uncouth and supine Invention to be a special Truth, and the Power and Presence of God in his Soul: He esteems his Pride and Tumour of Mind, his stiff, inflexible and unyielding Temper, his steady and obstinate resolution to admit no demonstration against his Opinions, and to suffer Torture or Martyrdom, to be the special Support and Divine Assistance of God, and his ardent Zeal, and implacable desire of Revenge towards all who oppose him, to be the more than ordinary influence and impulse of the Holy Ghost, for the extirpation of Heresy, whereas the Enthusiast is only intoxicated with Vapours ascending from the lower Regions of his Body, as the *Pythian* Prophetess of old, in her Prophetick Trances, was by the power of certain Exhalations breathing from subterranean Caverns, for all these appearances are easily resolvible into the power of Melancholy, which is but a sort of natural Inebriation, the same effects being produced often by Wine,
and

and 'tis observable that such highflown and bloated Expressions, Rapsodies of flight and lofty Words, and rowling and and streaming Tautologies, which fall from Enthusiasts, generally happen to Persons before they are Stark Mad.

The particular disposition of the Blood, which produces this temper of the Mind, seems to be the predominance of Adust Melancholy, well impregnated with Gall, the first gives presumptuous Confidence, and the latter Insolence and Impatience of Contradiction, which if it prevails so much in speculative Questions, which regard no Mans Profit or Power, and that both sides agree, are to be determined by the rules of Reason (in so much that people of this Complexion can Converse with none but of their own Opinions) what havock must it make in matters of Religion? Upon which Subject almost all Mankind seem to have agreed by universal Consent to talk Unintelligibly, and by that means have endeavoured to destroy or take away the only criterion between Truth and Falshood, Religion and Superstition; Every side pretends to Visions, Revelations, Miracles and Mysteries, expect to be believed upon their

own Authority, and pursue all who dare oppose them, with Vengeance and Destruction, as perverse Unbelievers, Hereticks, Deist and Atheists, which charitable and polite Language is promiscuously given by and to all Parties and Factions in Religion.

Though at first sight it appears very absurd, that all Mankind should be concerned in the Visions and Revelations of two or three Men, when few of the same Nation or District can know their Persons, fewer their Sincerity, and whether they are Inspired by God, are Deceived themselves, or intend to Deceive others; It must be more so to expect Nations distant in Scituation, Language and Customs, to leave their Affairs and Habitations to hunt after Prophets, Miracles, and Revelation Mongers, or give credit to the fabulous or uncertain Stories or Legends of People they know nothing of, when we can hardly believe any thing said to be done in the same Town or Neighbourhood, and scarce in the same House, or tell a Story of ever so simple Particulars, that we can know again when we hear it; It is yet more ridiculous to oblige all the
World

world to rake into the Rubbish of Antiquity, to learn all Languages, examine all Systems, and thereby discover all Impostures, Forgeries, Interpolations, Errors and Mistakes, or else submit to the Guidance of others who are neither Honester nor Wiser than themselves, and besides have an Interest to Deceive them; Yet the true Enthusiast sees none of these Difficulties, stares at no Absurdities; very sure he is that he has received frequent Revelations, is thoroughly satisfied of his own Inspiration and Mission, and expects all Mankind, both now and hereafter, to be so to; He has given them sufficient notice, by promulgating his Doctrine amongst a few that he can perswade to Hear him, and condemns all the rest as Obstinate Contumacious Hereticks, and wilful Transgressors against Demonstration and evident Light: Aversion, Pride and Fury in the shape of Zeal, like a mighty Storm ruffles his Mind into Beating Billows, and Boisterous Fluctuations; At last he is all in a Rage, and no Church Buckets to quench his Fiery Religion, Religion and the Glory of God drives him on: The Holy Enthusiastick longs to Feast and Riot upon

upon humane Sacrifices; turn Cities and Nations into Shambles, and destroy with Fire and Sword such who dare thwart his Frenzy, and all the while like another *Nero*, Plays upon his Harpe, and Sings *Te Deum* at the Conflagration.

F I N I S.
