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RIDICULE AND IRONY IN WRITING (1729) ***

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ANTHONY COLLINS

A DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

Ridicule and Irony

IN WRITING

(1729)

Introduction by

EDWARD A. BLOOM AND LILLIAN D. BLOOM

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INTRODUCTION

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Between 1710 and 1729 Anthony Collins was lampooned, satirized, and gravely denounced from pulpit and press as England's most insidious defiler of church and state. Yet within a year of his death he became the model of a proper country gentleman,

... he had an opulent Fortune, descended to him from his Ancestors, which he left behind him unimpair'd: He lived on his own Estate in the Country, where his Tenants paid him moderate Rents, which he never enhanced on their making any Improvements; he always oblig'd his Family to a constant attendance on Publick Worship; as he was himself a Man of the strictest Morality, for he never suffer'd any Body about him who was deficient in that Point; he exercised a universal Charity to all Sorts of People, without any Regard either to Sect or Party; being in the Commission of the Peace, he administered Justice with such Impartiality and Incorruptness, that the most distant Part of the County flock'd to his Decisions; but the chief Use he made of his Authority was in accommodating Differences;...[1]

In a comparison which likens him to Sir Roger de Coverley, there is less truth than fiction. What they did share was a love of the countryside and a "universal Charity" towards its inhabitants. For the most part, however, we can approximate Collins's personality by reversing many of Sir Roger's traits. Often at war with his world, as the spectatorial character was not, he managed to maintain an intellectual rapport with it and even with those who sought his humiliation. He never—as an instance—disguised his philosophical distrust of Samuel Clarke; yet during any debate he planned "most certainly [to] outdo him in civility and good manners."^[2] This decorum in no way compromised his pursuit of what he considered objective truth or his denunciation of all "methods" or impositions of spiritual tyranny. Thus, during the virulent, uneven battle which followed upon the publication of the *Discourse of Free-Thinking*, he ignored his own wounds in order to applaud a critic's

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suspensions that there is a sophism in what he calls my *hypothesis*. That is a temper that ought to go thro' all our Inquiries, and especially before we have an opportunity of examining things to the bottom. It is safest at all times, and we are least likely to be mistaken, if we constantly suspect our selves to be under mistakes.... I have no system to defend or that I would seem to defend, and am unconcerned for the consequence that may be drawn from my opinion; and therefore stand clear of all difficultys w^{ch} others either by their opinion or caution are involved in.[3]

This is the statement of a man whose intellectual and religious commitment makes him see that his own fallibility is symptomatic of a human tendency to error. For himself, hence, he tries to avoid all manner of hard-voiced enthusiasm. Paradoxically, however, Collins searched with a zealot's avidity for any controversy which would either assert his faith or test his disbelief. When once he found his engagement, he revelled in it, whether as the aggressor or the harassed defendant. For example, in the "Preface" to the *Scheme of Literal Prophecy Considered* he boastfully enumerated all the works—some twenty-nine—which had repudiated his earlier *Discourse on the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion*. And in malicious fact he held up the publication of the *Scheme* for almost a year that he might add a "Postscript to the Preface" in which he identified six more pieces hostile to the *Grounds and Reasons*.^[4]

By May of 1727 and with no visible sign of fatigue he took on a new contender; this time it was John Rogers, canon in ordinary to the Prince of Wales. At the height of their debate, in late summer, Collins made practical enquiries about methods to prolong and intensify its give-and-take. Thus, in a note to his friend Pierre Des Maizeaux, he said: "But I would be particularly informed of the success and sale of the Letter to D^r Rogers; because, if it could be, I would add to a new edition thereof two or three as sheets; which also might be sold separately to those who have already that Letter." For all his militant polemic, he asked only that his "Adversaries" observe with him a single rule of fair play; namely, that they refrain from name-calling and petty sniping. "Personal matters," he asserted, "tho they may some times afford useful remarks, are little regarded by Readers, who are very seldom mistaken in judging that the most impertinent subject a man can talk of is himself," particularly when he inveighs against another.^[5]

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If Collins had been made to look back over the years 1676-1729, he probably would have summarized the last twenty with a paraphrase of the Popean line, "This long controversy, my life." For several years and in such works as *Priestcraft in Perfection* (1710) and *A Discourse of Free-Thinking* (1713), he was a flailing polemicist against the entire Anglican hierarchy. Not until 1724 did he become a polished debater, when he initiated a controversy which for the next five years made a "very great noise" and which ended only with his death. The loudest shot in the persistent barrage was sounded by the *Grounds and Reasons*, and its last fusillade by the *Discourse concerning Ridicule and Irony in Writing*.^[6]

During those five years Collins concentrated upon a single opponent in each work and made it a rhetorical practice to change his "Adversary" in successive essays. He created in this way a composite victim whose strength was lessened by deindividualization; in this way too he ran no risk of being labelled a hobbyhorse rider or, more seriously, a persecutor. Throughout the *Grounds and Reasons* he laughed at, reasoned against, and satirized William Whiston's assumption that messianic prophecies in the Old Testament were literally fulfilled in the figure and mission of Jesus. Within two years and in a new work, he substituted Edward Chandler, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, for the mathematician. It need not have been the Bishop; any one of thirty-four others could have qualified for the role of opponent, among them people like Clarke, and Sykes, and Sherwood, and even the ubiquitous Whiston. Collins rejected them, however, to debate in the *Scheme* with Bishop Chandler, the author of *A Defence of Christianity from the Prophecies of the old Testament*, with one who was, in short, the least controversial and yet the most orthodox of his many assailants.

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Early in 1727 the Anglican establishment came to the abrupt realization that the subject of the continuing debate—the reliability of the argument from prophecy—was inconclusive, that it could lead only to pedantic wrangling and hair-splitting with each side vainly clutching victory. Certainly the devotion of many clergymen to biblical criticism was secondary to their interest in orthodoxy as a functional adjunct of government, both civil and canonical. It was against this interest, as it was enunciated in Rogers's *Eight Sermons concerning the Necessity of Revelation* (1727) and particularly in its vindictive preface, that Collins chose to fight.^[7] The debate had now taken a happy turn for him. As he saw it, the central issue devolved upon man's natural right to religious liberty. At least he made this the theme of his *Letter to Dr. Rogers*. In writing to Des Maizeaux about the success of this work, he obviously enjoyed his own profane irony:

I have had particular compliments made me by the B^p of Salisbury, and by D^r Clark, who among other things sayd, that the Archbp of Canterbury might have writ all that related to Toleration in it: to say nothing of what I hear from others. D^r Rogers himself has acknowledg[ed] to his Bookseller who sent it to him into the Country, that he has receivd it; but says that he is so engaged in other affairs, that he has no thought at present of answering it; tho he may perhaps in time do so.^[8]

In time Rogers did. He counterattacked on 2 February 1728 with a *Vindication of the Civil Establishment of Religion*.^[9] For Collins this work was a dogged repetition of what had gone before, and so it could be ignored except for one of its appendices, *A Letter from the Rev. Dr. Marshall jun. To the Rev. Dr. Rogers, upon Occasion of his Preface to his Eight Sermons*. Its inclusion seemed an afterthought; yet it altered the dimensions of the debate by

narrowing and particularizing the areas of grievance which separated the debaters. Collins, therefore, rebutted it some fourteen months later in *A Discourse concerning Ridicule and Irony in Writing*. He had great hopes for this pamphlet, preparing carefully for its reception. He encouraged the republication of his three preceding works, which find their inevitable conclusion, even their exoneration, in this last performance, and he probably persuaded his bookseller to undertake an elaborate promotional campaign. For the new editions were advertised on seven different days between 10 January and 27 February 1729 in the *Daily Post*. He wanted no one to miss the relationship between the *Discourse concerning Ridicule and Irony* and these earlier pieces or to overlook its presence when it finally appeared in the pamphlet shops on 17 March.

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Collins was animated by his many debates. Indeed, “he sought the storms.” Otherwise he would not, could not, have participated in these many verbal contests. Throughout them all, his basic strategy—that of provocation—was determined by the very real fact that he had many more enemies than allies, among them, for instance, such formidable antagonists as Swift and Richard Bentley.^[10] To survive he had to acquire a tough resilience, a skill in fending off attacks or turning them to his own advantage. Nevertheless, he remained a ready target all his life. Understandably so: his radicalism was stubborn and his opinions predictable. Such firmness may of course indicate his aversion to trimming. Or it may reveal a lack of intellectual growth; what he believed as a young man, he perpetuated as a mature adult. Whether our answer is drawn from either possibility or, more realistically, from both, the fact remains that he never camouflaged the two principles by which he lived and fought:

1. That universal liberty be established in respect to opinions and practises not prejudicial to the peace and welfare of society: by which establishment, truth must needs have the advantages over *error* and *falsehood*, the *law of God* over the *will of man*, and *true Christianity tolerated*; private *judgment* would be really exercised; and men would be allowed to have suffered to follow their consciences, over which God only is supreme:...

2. Secondly, that nothing but the *law of nature*, (the observance whereof is absolutely necessary to society) and what can be built thereon, should be enforced by the civil sanctions of the magistrate:...^[11]

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II

There is very little in this statement to offend modern readers. Yet the orthodox in Collins’s own time had reason to be angry with him: his arguments were inflammatory and his rhetoric was devious, cheeky, and effective. Those contesting him underscored his negativism, imaging him as a destroyer of Christianity eager “to proselyte men, from the Christian to no religion at all.”^[12] Certainly it is true that he aimed to disprove a Christian revelation which he judged fraudulent and conspiratorial. In place of ecclesiastical authority he offered the rule of conscience. For *orthodoxy* he substituted “a Religion antecedent to Revelation, which is necessary to be known in order to *ascertain Revelation*; and by that Religion [he meant] *Natural Religion*, which is presupposed to Revelation, and is a Test by which Reveal’d Religion is to be tried, is a Bottom on which it must stand, and is a Rule to understand it by.”^[13] Categorical in tone, the statement frustrated the Anglican clergy by its very slipperiness; its generalities left little opportunity for decisive rebuttal. It provided no definition of natural religion beyond the predication of a body of unnamed moral law which is rational and original, the archetype of what is valid in the world’s religions.

His dismissal of revelation and his reduction of Christianity to what he called its “natural” and hence incontrovertible basis carried with it a corollary, that of man’s absolute right to religious enquiry and profession. Here he became specific, borrowing from Lockean empiricism his conditions of intellectual assent. “Evidence,” he said, “ought to be the sole ground of Assent, and Examination is the way to arrive at Evidence; and therefore rather than I wou’d have Examination, Arguing and Objecting laid aside, I wou’d chuse to say, That no Opinions whatever can be dangerous to a Man that impartially examines into the Truth of Things.”^[14] The church leadership saw in this statement and others like it not an epistemological premise but a deliberate subterfuge, an insidious blind to vindicate his attacks upon an organized priesthood. We can recognize now that his opponents oversimplified his intention, that they blackened it to make his villainy at once definitive and vulnerable. At the same time we must admit that he often equated the ideas of repression and clerical authority, even as he coupled those of freedom and the guide of private conscience.

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The Anglican church was infuriated by these correlations, angered as much by their manner of expression as by their substance. For the faithful were frequently thrown off balance by a strategy of ironical indirection. Sometimes this took the form of omission or the presentation of an argument in so fragmentary or slanted a fashion that Collins’s “Enemies” could debate neither his implications nor his conclusions. At other times he used this artful circumlocution to create his favorite mask, that of the pious Christian devoted to scripture or of the moralist perplexed by the divisions among the orthodox clergy. Finally, his rhetoric was shaped by deistic predecessors who used sarcasm and satire to mock the gravity of church authority. So much was their wit a trademark that as early as 1702 one commentator had noted, “when you expect an argument, they make a jest.”^[15] Collins himself resorted to

this practice with both instinctive skill and deliberate contrivance.

All these methods, though underhanded, he silently justified on the assumption that he was dealing with a conspiracy of priests: hence, he professed that he had to fight fraud and deception with their like, and that such craftiness, suitable “to his particular genius and temper,” was “serviceable to his cause.” For these reasons even William Warburton, who had vainly struggled to be judicious, described him as “a Writer, whose dexterity in the arts of Controversy was so remarkably contrasted by his abilities in reasoning and literature, as to be ever putting one in mind of what travellers tell us of the genius of the proper Indians, who, although the veriest bunglers in all the fine arts of manual operation, yet excel everybody in slight of hand and the delusive feats of activity.”^[16] Whatever may be said of Collins and his achievement, one fact remains constant. He was a brilliant and persistent trickster whose cunning in the techniques of polemic often silenced an opponent with every substantive right to win the debate.

He seized any opportunity to expose the diversity of ethical and theological opinion which set one Anglican divine against another, “to observe”—as Jenkin put it—“how the gladiators in dispute murder the cause between them, while they so fiercely cut and wound one another.” For Collins such observation was more than oratorical artifice; it was one of the dogmas of his near-nihilism. He commented once to Des Maizeaux upon the flurry of critics who replied to his statement of necessitarianism in the *Philosophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty*:

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I was extreamly pleasd with B^P Hoadley, ... as it was upon the true and only point worth disputing with y^e Preists, viz whether we the laity are the Calves and Sheep of the Preist. And I am not less pleasd to see them manage this controversy with y^e same vile arts against one another, as they always use towards the laity. It must open the eyes of a few and convince them, that the Preists mean nothing but wealth and power, and have not the least ... of those qualitys for w^{ch} the superstitious world admires them.^[17]

He applied this principle of divisive attack in *A Discourse of Free-Thinking*. There in fifty-three pages he transparently ridiculed contradictions which hedged three areas of fundamental religious belief: “*The Nature and Attributes of the Eternal Being or God, ... the Authority of Scriptures, and ... the Sense of Scripture.*” In accordance with one of his favorite tricks—the massing of eminent authority—his exposition rings with hallowed Anglican names: South, Bull, Taylor, Wallis, Carlton, Davenant, Edwards, More, Tillotson, Fowler, Sherlock, Stillingfleet, Sacheverell, Beveridge, Grabe, Hickes, Lesley.^[18] What united these men, he insinuated, was not a Christian commitment but a talent to disagree with one another and even to repudiate themselves—as in the case of Stillingfleet. In effect, the entire *Discourse* bubbles with a carelessly suppressed snicker.

The clergy could not readily reply to this kind of incriminating exposure or deny its reality. They therefore overreacted to other judgments that Collins made, particularly to his attacks upon Christian revelation. These they denigrated as misleading, guileful, sinister, contrived, deceitful, insidious, shuffling, covert, subversive. What they objected to was, first, the way in which he reduced the demonstration of Christian revelation to only the “puzzling and perplexing” argument from prophecy, the casual ease with which he ignored or dismissed those other “clear” proofs derived from the miracles of Jesus and the resurrection itself.^[19] But even more the orthodox resented the masked point of view from which Collins presented his disbelief.

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For example, the *Grounds and Reasons* is the deist’s first extended attack upon revelation. Ostensibly it is, as we have seen, an answer to Whiston’s *Essay Towards Restoring the True Text of the Old Testament; and for Vindicating the Citations Made Thence in the New Testament* (1722). In it the mathematician argued that the Hebraic prophecies relating to the messiah had been literally fulfilled in Jesus. But this truth, he admitted, had been obscured “in the latter Ages,” only because of those “Difficulties” which “have [almost wholly] arisen from the Corruptions, the unbelieving *Jews* introduc’d into the Hebrew and Greek copies of the Old Testament, [soon after] the Beginning of the Second Century.” These conspiratorial corruptions he single-handedly planned to remove, returning the Old Testament to a state of textual purity with emendations drawn from sources as varied as the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Greek Psalms, the Antiquities of Josephus, the Chaldee Paraphrases, the books of Philo. His pragmatic purpose was to nullify the biblical criticism of historical minded scholars as reputable as Grotius, to render useless the allegorical interpretation of messianic prophecies. That is, he saw in the latter a “pernicious” absence of fact, a “weak and enthusiastical” whimsy, unchristian adjustments to the exigencies of the moment.^[20]

Collins fought not to destroy Whiston’s position, which was all too easily destructible, but to undermine the structure, the very “grounds and reasons” with which orthodoxy supported the mysteries of its faith. To do so, he spun a gigantic web of irony controlled by a persona whose complex purpose was concealed by a mien of hyper-righteousness. Here then was one motivated by a fair-mindedness which allowed him to defend his opponent’s right of scriptural exegesis even while disagreeing with its approach and its conclusions. Here too

was a conservative Christian different from Whiston “and many other great divines; who seem to pay little deference to the books of the New Testament, the text whereof they are perpetually mending in their sermons, commentaries, and writings, to serve purposes; who pretend *we should have more of the true text by being less tenacious of the printed one*, and in consequence thereof, presume to correct by critical *emendations*, serve *capital places* in the *sacred writers*; and who ... do virtually set aside the authority of the scripture, and place those compositions in its stead.” Finally, here was one who, obedient to the spirit of God’s revealed word, rejected the fallacy that messianic prophecy had been fulfilled in Christ in any “literal, obvious and primary sense.”[21]

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But though the persona could not accept Whiston’s program, he was not a mere negativist. With growing excitement he argued for allegorical interpretation. At this point the reader discerns that he has been duped, that nowhere has there been a denial of Whiston’s charge that the reading of messianic prophecy in a typical or allegorical or secondary sense is “weak and enthusiastical.” On the contrary, the reader finds only the damning innuendo that the two methods—the allegorical and the literal—differ from one another not in kind but in degree of absurdity. After being protected for a long time by all the twists and turns of his creator’s irony, the persona finally reveals himself for what he is, a man totally insolent and totally without remorse. Never for one moment did he wish to defend the scheme of allegorical prophecy but to attack it. His argument, stripped of its convolutions and pseudo-piety, moves inexorably to a single, negative conclusion. “Christianity pretends to derive itself from Judaism. JESUS appeals to the religious books of the Jews as prophesying of his Mission. None of these Prophecies can be understood of him but in a *typical allegoric* sense. Now that sense is absurd, and contrary to all scholastic rules of interpretation. Christianity, therefore, not being really predicted in the Jewish Writings, is consequently false.”[22]

Collins continued his attack upon Christian revelation in the *Scheme*. In the two years which separated this work from the earlier *Grounds and Reasons*, there occurred no change in the author’s argument. What does occur, however, is a perceptive if snide elaboration upon the mask. This is in many ways the same persona who barely suppressed his guffaws in the earlier work. Now he is given an added dimension; he is made more decisively rational than his predecessor and therefore more insightful in his knowledge of rhetorical method. As a disciple of certain Protestant polemicists and particularly of Grotius, whose “integrity,” “honor,” and biblical criticism he supports, he is the empirical-minded Christian who knows exactly why the literalists have failed to persuade the free-thinkers or even to have damaged their arguments. “For if you begin with Infidels by denying to them, what is evident and agreeable to common sense, I think there can be no reasonable hopes of converting or convincing them.”[23] The irony is abrasive simply because it unanswerably singles out the great rhetorical failure of orthodoxy, its inability to argue from a set of principles as acceptable to the deists as to themselves.

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Many of the clergy chafed against Collins’s manipulation of this tongue-in-cheek persona. They resented his irreverent wit which projected, for example, the image of an Anglican God who “talks to all mankind from corners” and who shows his back parts to Moses. They were irritated by his jesting parables, as in “The Case of Free-Seeing,” and by the impertinence of labelling Archbishop Tillotson as the man “whom all *English Free-Thinkers* own as their Head.”[24]

But most of all they gagged upon Collins’s use of satire in religious controversy. As we have already seen, there were complex reasons for his choice of technique. He was a naturally witty man who, sometimes out of fear and sometimes out of malice, expressed himself best through circuitous irony. In 1724, when he himself considered his oratorical practice, he argued that his matter determined his style, that the targets of his belittling wit were the “saint-errants.” We can only imagine the exasperation of Collins’s Anglican enemies when they found their orthodoxy thus slyly lumped with the eccentricities of Samuel Butler’s “true blew” Presbyterians. It would be hard to live down the associations of those facetious lines which made the Augustan divines, like their unwelcome forebear Hudibras, members

Of that stubborn Crew
Of Errant Saints, whom all men grant
To be the true Church Militant.

Those dignified Anglican exteriors were further punctured by Collins’s irreverent attack upon their cry of religious uniformity, a cry which was “ridiculous, romantick, and impossible to succeed.” He saw himself, in short, as an emancipated Butler or even Cervantes; and like his famous predecessors he too would laugh quite out of countenance the fool and the hypocrite, the pretender and the enthusiast, the knave and the persecuter, all those who would create a god in their own sour and puny image.

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III

By 1727 several of the orthodox felt that they could take no more of Collins’s laughter, his sneering invectives against the clergy, or his designs to make religion “a Matter purely personal; and the Knowledge of it to be obtain’d by personal Consideration, *independently of any Guides, Teachers, or Authority.*” In the forefront of this group was John Rogers, whose hostility to the deist was articulate and compulsive. At least it drove him into a position seemingly at odds with the spirit if not the law of English toleration. He urged, for example,

that those like Collins be prosecuted in a civil court for a persuasion “which is manifestly subversive of all Order and Polity, and can no more consist with civil, than with religious, Society.”[25]

Thereupon followed charge and countercharge. New gladiators, as different from each other as the nonconformist divine Samuel Chandler and the deist Thomas Chubb, entered the arena on behalf of Collins. For all the dogmatic volubility of Rogers, orthodoxy appeared beleaguered. The moderate clergy, who witnessed this exchange, became alarmed; they feared that in the melee the very heart of English toleration would be threatened by the contenders, all of whom spoke as its champion. Representative of such moderation was Nathanael Marshall, who wished if not to end the debate, then at least to contain its ardor. As canon of Windsor, he supported the condition of a state religion protected by the magistrate but he worried over the extent of the latter’s prerogative and power. Certainly he was more liberal than Rogers in his willingness to entertain professions of religious diversity. Yet he straitjacketed his liberalism when he denied responsible men the right to attack laws, both civil and canonical, with “ludicrous Insult” or “with Buffoonery and Banter, Ridicule or Sarcastick Irony.”[26]

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Once again Collins met the challenge. In *A Discourse concerning Ridicule and Irony* he devoted himself to undermining the moral, the intellectual, and practical foundations of that one restraint which Marshall would impose upon the conduct of any religious quarrel. He had little difficulty in achieving his objective. His adversary’s stand was visibly vulnerable and for several reasons. It was too conscious of the tug-of-war between the deist and Rogers, too arbitrary in its choice of prohibition. It was, in truth, strained by a choice between offending the establishment and yet rejecting clerical extremism.[27] Moreover, Collins had this time an invisible partner, a superior thinker against whom he could test his own ideas and from whom he could borrow others. For the *Discourse concerning Ridicule and Irony* is largely a particularization, a crude but powerful reworking of Shaftesbury’s *Sensus Communis: An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour*.

Supported by Shaftesbury’s urbane generalization, Collins laughed openly at the egocentricity and blindness of Marshall’s timid zealotry. Indeed, he wryly found his orthodox opponent guilty of the very crime with which he, as a subversive, was charged. It seemed to him, he said,

a most prodigious Banter upon [mankind], for Men to talk in general of the *Immorality of Ridicule and Irony*, and of *punishing* Men for those Matters, when their own Practice is *universal Irony and Ridicule* of all those who go not with them, and *universal Applause and Encouragement* for such *Ridicule and Irony*, and distinguishing by all the honourable ways imaginable such *drolling* Authors for their *Drollery*; and when Punishment for *Drollery* is never call’d for, but when *Drollery* is used or employ’d against them!

(p. 29)

Collins’s technique continued its ironic ambiguity, reversal, and obliquity. Under a tone of seeming innocence and good will, he credited his adversaries with an enviable capacity for satiric argument. In comradely fashion, he found precedent for his own rhetorical practice through a variety of historical and biblical analogies. But even more important for a contemporary audience, he again resorted to the device of invoking the authority provided by some of the most respected names in the Anglican Establishment. The use of satire in religious topics, hence, was manifest in “the Writings of our most eminent Divines,” especially those of Stillingfleet, “our greatest controversial Writer” (pp. 4-5).

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With all the outrageous assurance of a self-invited guest, the deist had seated himself at the table of his vainly protesting Christian hosts (whom he insisted on identifying as brethren). “In a word,” he said so as to obviate debate, “the Opinions and Practices of Men in all Matters, and especially in Matters of Religion, are generally so absurd and ridiculous that it is impossible for them not to be the Subjects of Ridicule” (p. 19). Thus adopting Juvenal’s concept of satiric necessity (“difficile est saturam non scribere”), Collins here set forth the thesis and rationale of his enemy. There was a kind of impudent virtuosity in his “proofs,” in his manner of drawing a large, impressive cluster of names into his ironic net and making all of them appear to be credible witnesses in his defense. Even Swift, amusingly compromised as “one of the greatest *Droles* that ever appear’d upon the Stage of the World” (p. 39), was brought to the witness box as evidence of the privileged status to which satiric writing was entitled. Collins enforced erudition with cool intelligence so that contemptuous amusement is present on every page of his *Discourse*.

Beneath his jeers and his laughter there was a serious denunciation of any kind of intellectual restraint, however mild-seeming; beneath his verbal pin-pricking there was conversely an exoneration of man’s right to inquire, to profess, and to persuade. Beneath his jests and sarcasms there was further a firm philosophical commitment that informed the rhetoric of all his earlier work. Ridicule, he asserted in 1729, “is both a proper and necessary Method of Discourse in many Cases, and especially in the Case of *Gravity*, when that is attended with Hypocrisy or Imposture, or with Ignorance, or with soureiness of Temper and Persecution: all which ought to draw after them the *Ridicule* and *Contempt* of the Society, which has no other effectual Remedy against such Methods of Imposition” (p. 22).

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For the modern reader the *Discourse concerning Ridicule and Irony* is the most satisfactory of Collins's many pamphlets and books. It lacks the pretentiousness of the *Scheme*, the snide convolutions of the *Grounds and Reasons*, the argument by half-truths of the *Discourse of Free-Thinking*. His last work is free of the curious ambivalence which marked so many of his earlier pieces, a visible uncertainty which made him fear repression and yet court it. On the contrary, his last work is in fact a justification of his rhetorical mode and religious beliefs; it is an *apologia pro vita sua* written with all the intensity and decisiveness that such a justification demands. To be sure, it takes passing shots at old enemies like Swift, but never with rancor. And while its language is frequently ironical, its thinking makes an earnest defense of wit as a weapon of truth. The essay sets forth its author as an *animal ridens*, a creature that through laughter and affable cynicism worships a universal God and respects a rational mankind.

Brown University

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

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1. *Universal Spectator, and Weekly Journal*, No. 98 (22 August 1730).
2. To Des Maizeaux (5 May 1717): B. M. Sloane MSS. 4282, ff. 129-130.
3. To Des Maizeaux (9 February 1716): B. M. Sloane MSS. 4282, f. 123.
4. The title page of the *Scheme* is dated 1726. It was not advertised in the newspapers or journals of that year—a strange silence for any of Collins's work. Its first notice appeared in the *Monthly Catalogue: Being a General Register of Books, Sermons, Plays, Poetry, Pamphlets, &c. Printed and Publish'd in London, or the Universities, during the Month of May, 1727* (see No. 49). Yet we know that the *Scheme* had been remarked upon as early as March when on the 10th of that month Samuel Chandler published his *Reflections on the Conduct of the Modern Deists in their late Writings against Christianity*. (For the dating of Chandler's work, see the *Daily Courant* [10 March 1727].) We know also that the *Scheme* went to a second edition late in 1727 and was frequently advertised in the *Daily Post* between 2 January and 20 January 1728.
5. For the statement about the *Letter to Dr. Rogers*, see B. M. Sloane MSS. 4282, f. 220 (15 August 1727). For that on the use of "personal matters" in controversy, see B. M. Sloane MSS. 4282, f. 170 (27 December 1719); cf. *The Scheme of Literal Prophecy Considered* (London, 1726), pp. 422-438.
6. *The Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* was published in London within the first four days of January 1724; see the advertisement in the *Daily Post* (4 January 1724). *A Discourse concerning Ridicule and Irony in Writing* was published on or close to 17 March 1729; see the advertisement in the *Daily Journal* for that date.
7. We can generally fix the date of Rogers's *Eight Sermons* within the first two months of 1727 because it was answered early by Samuel Chandler's *Reflections on the Conduct of the Modern Deists*. (See note 4.) For the dating of Collins's rebuttal, see the *Monthly Catalogue*, No. 49 (May 1727).
8. To Des Maizeaux (24 June 1727): B. M. Sloane MSS. 4282, ff. 218-219.
9. For the dating of this work, see the *Daily Post* (31 January 1728).
10. For Swift's satire, see *Mr. C---ns's Discourse of Free-Thinking, Put into plain English, by way of Abstract, for the Use of the Poor*. For Bentley's devastating probe of Collins's scholarly inadequacies, see his *Remarks on the Discourse of Free-Thinking. By Phileleutherus Lipsiensis*. Both works appeared in 1713.
11. *Scheme*, pp. 432-433.
12. Edward Chandler, *A Defence of Christianity from the Prophecies of the Old Testament* (London, 1725), p. ii.
13. *A Letter to Dr. Rogers*, p. 89.
14. *A Vindication of the Divine Attributes* (London, 1710), p. 24.
15. Robert Jenkin, *A Brief Confutation of the Pretences against Natural and Revealed Religion* (London, 1702), p. 40.
16. For Collins on his own rhetorical skills, see *Scheme*, p. 402; William Warburton, *Divine Legation of Moses, Demonstrated* (London, 1846), III, 199.
17. Jenkin, *Brief Confutation*, p. 51; for the letter (1 July 1717), see B. M. Sloane MSS. 4282,

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f. 137.

18. Pp. 46-99.

19. See, for example, the statement of John Conybeare, Bishop of Bristol, in Joseph Spence, *Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men*, ed. James M. Osborn (Oxford, 1966), I, sect. 992.

20. *Essay*, pp. 329-333 (for Whiston's statement of sources); pp. 334-335 (for his defense of literal interpretation). The bracketed material indicates Whiston's manuscript emendations of his own printed text; see the British Museum's copy of the *Essay* (873. 1. 10) which originally belonged to the mathematician. See Collins, *Grounds and Reasons*, pp. 98-99, for the summary of Whiston's attack upon allegorical interpretation.

21. *Grounds and Reasons*, pp. 20, 48-50.

22. This terse summary of the persona's argument was correctly made by Warburton, III, 232.

23. *Scheme*, p. 391.

24. *Discourse of Free-Thinking*, pp. 15-17, 38, 171.

25. *Eight Sermons*, pp. 1, lxi.

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26. Marshall, pp. 301, 337. For Samuel Chandler's contribution, see his *Reflections on the Conduct of the Modern Deists* (London, 1727); for Chubb's contribution see *Some Short Reflections on the Grounds and Extent of Authority and Liberty, With respect to the Civil Government* (London, 1728).

27. Marshall's reluctance to support Rogers's extremism is seen in the funeral sermon he preached at the latter's death (*A Sermon Delivered in the Parish Church of St. Giles Cripplegate, May 18, 1729. Upon Occasion of the Much Lamented Death of the Rev^d. John Rogers* [London, 1729]). He made only the most casual and indifferent reference to Rogers's work. So obvious was this slight that it called for a rebuttal; see Philalethes (A. A. Sykes [?]), *Some Remarks Upon the Reverend Dr. Marshall's Sermon on Occasion of the Death of the Rev^d D^r Rogers* (London, 1729).

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

This facsimile of *A Discourse concerning Ridicule and Irony in Writing* (1729) is reproduced from a copy in the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library.

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

Ridicule and Irony

IN

WRITING,

IN A

LETTER

To the Reverend

Dr. NATHANAEL MARSHALL.

———— *Ridiculum acri
Fortius & melius magnas plerumq; secat res.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for J. BROTHERTON in *Cornhill* and sold
by T. WARNER in *Pater-noster-Row*, and
A. DODD without *Temple-Bar*. 1729.

A

[Pg 3]

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

Ridicule and Irony, &c.

REVEREND SIR,

I N your *Letter* to Dr. *Rogers*, which he has publish'd at the End of his *Vindication of the Civil Establishment of Religion*, I find a Notion advanc'd by you: which as it is a common and plausible Topick for Persecution, and a Topick by which you, and many others, urge the Magistrate to punish [or, as you phrase it, *to pinch*] [28] Men for controversial Writings, is particularly proper at this time to be fully consider'd; and I hope to treat it in such manner as to make you your self, and every fair Reader, sensible of the Weakness thereof.

You profess to “vindicate [29] a sober, serious, and modest Inquiry into the Reasons of any Establishment.”

And you add, that you “have not ordinarily found it judg'd inconsistent with the Duty of a *private Subject*, to propose his Doubts or his Reasons to the Publick in a *modest* way, concerning the *Repeal* of any Law which he may think of ill Consequence by its Continuance. If he be a Man of Ability, and well vers'd in the Argument, he will deserve some Attention; but if he mistakes his Talent, and will be busy with what he very little understands, Contempt and Odium will be his unavoidable and just Allotment.” And you say, that “Religion is more a personal Affair, in which every Man has a peculiar Right and Interest, and a Concern that he be not mistaken, than in any other Case or Instance which can fall under the Cognizance of the Magistrate; and that greater Allowances seem due to each private Person for Examination and Inquiry in this, than in any other Example.”

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And herein I must do you the Justice to acknowledge, that you speak like a Christian, like a Protestant, like an *Englishman*, and a reasonable Man; like a Man concerned for Truth, like a Man of Conscience; like a Man concern'd for the Consciences of others; like a Man concern'd to have some Sense, Learning, and Virtue in the World; and, in a word, like a Man who is not for abandoning all the valuable Things in Life to the Tyranny, Ambition, and Covetousness of Magistrates and Ecclesiasticks.

But you observe, that “municipal Laws[30], how trivial soever in their intrinsick Value, are never to be *insulted*; never to be treated with *Buffoonery* and *Banter*, *Ridicule* and *Sarcastick Irony*. So that Dr. *Rogers's* grand Adversary will have from you no measure of Encouragement to his manner of Writing.” Again, you “never [31] desire to see the Magistrate fencing in the publick Religion with so thick a Hedge as shall exclude all Light, and shall tear out the Eyes of all such as endeavour to see thro' it. *Sober arguing* you never fear: *Mockery* and *bitter Railing*, if you could help it, you would never bear, either *for the Truth or against it*.”

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Upon which I offer these following Considerations.

I. *First*, If what you call *Insult*, *Buffoonery*, *Banter*, *Ridicule* and *Irony*, *Mockery* and *bitter Railing*, be Crimes in Disputation, you will find none more deeply involv'd in it than our most famous Writers, in their controversial Treatises about *serious* Matters; as all Notions and Practices in Religion, whether reasonable or absurd, may be equally and justly deem'd: the Notions and Practices of Papists, Presbyterians, Quakers, and all other Sects, being no less *serious* to their respective Sects than ridiculous to one another. Let any Man read the Writings of our most eminent Divines against the *Papists*, *Puritans*, *Dissenters*, and *Hereticks*, and against one another, and particularly the Writings of *Alexander Cook*, *Hales*, *Chillingworth*, *Patrick*, *Tillotson*, *Stillingfleet*, *Burnet*, *South*, *Hickes*, *Sherlock* and *Edwards*, and he will find them to abound with *Banter*, *Ridicule*, and *Irony*. *Stillingfleet* in particular, our greatest controversial Writer, who passes for *grave* and *solemn*, is so conscious of his use thereof, that he confesses that Charge of the Papists against him, saying[32], “But I forget my Adversary's grave admonition, that I *would treat these Matters seriously, and lay*

aside Drollery." And again, after a *Banter* of near a Page, he says[33], "But I forget I am so near my Adversary's Conclusion, wherein he so *gravely* advises me, that I *would be pleas'd for once to write Controversy, and not Play-Books.*" Nor did I ever hear the Divines of the Church condemn the Doctor for his sarcastical Method of writing Controversy. On the contrary, I remember at the University, that he used to be applauded no less for his Wit than for his Learning. And to exalt his Character as a Wit, his *Conferences between a Romish Priest, a Fanatick Chaplain, and a Divine of the Church of England, &c.* were spoken of as an excellent *Comedy*, and especially for that Part which the *Fanatick Chaplain* acts therein, who makes as comical and as ridiculous a Figure as he does in any of the *Plays* acted on the Stage. And in his *Controversy* with *Dryden* about the *Royal Papers*, and those of the *Duchess of York*, he was deem'd to have out-done that famous *Satirist* in tart Repartees and Reflections; and to have attack'd the Character of the *Poet* with more severity, than that *Poet*, who was so remarkable for his satirical Reflections on the holy Order, did the Character of the *Divine*: As for example, he says to *Dryden*[34], "Could nothing be said by you of Bishop *Morley*, but that *Prelate of rich Memory*? Or had you a mind to tell us he was no *Poet*? Or that he was out of the Temptation of changing his Religion for Bread?" And many Citations us'd to be produc'd out of his Writings, as Specimens of his ironical Talent; among which I particularly remember his *Ridicule* of his Adversary Mr. *Alsop*, a famous Presbyterian Wit and Divine; whose Book, which was full of low Raillery and Ridicule, he resembles [35] to *the Bird of Athens*, as *made up of Face and Feathers*. And the Doctor himself adds, in Justification of the polite Method of Raillery in Controversy, that *there is a pleasantness of Wit, which serves to entertain the Reader in the rough and deep way of Controversy*. Nor did Mr. *Alsop* want Approvers of his Raillery in his own Party. Mr. *Gilbert Rule*[36], a great *Scotch* Presbyterian Divine, who defended him against *Stillingfleet*, contends in behalf of his Raillery, "That the Facetiousness of Mr. *Alsop's* Strain needed to have bred no Disgust, being as a Condiment to prevent *Tædium* and Nauseousness." And he adds, "That he knows none that blame the excellent Writings of Mr. *Fuller*, which have a Pleasantness not unlike that of Mr. *Alsop*."

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And this manner of writing is seldom complain'd of, as unfit to be allow'd, by any but those who feel themselves hurt by it. For the solemn and grave can bear a solemn and grave Attack: That gives them a sort of Credit in the World, and makes them appear considerable to themselves, as worthy of a serious Regard. But *Contempt* is what they, who commonly are the most contemptible and worthless of Men, cannot bear nor withstand, as setting them in their true Light, and being the most effectual Method to drive Imposture, the sole Foundation of their Credit, out of the World. Hence *Stillingfleet's* Popish Adversaries, more conscious perhaps of the Ridiculousness of Popery than the common People among Protestants themselves, fall upon him very furiously. One says[37], "That by the Phrases, which are the chief Ornaments that set off the Doctor's Works, we may easily guess in what Books he has spent his Time; and that he is well vers'd in *Don Quixot*, the *Seven Champions*, and other *Romantick Stories*. Sure the Doctor err'd in his Vocation: Had he quitted all serious Matters, and dedicated himself wholly to Drollery and Romance, with two or three Years under *Hudibras*, he might have been a Master in that Faculty; the Stage might have been a Gainer by it, and the Church of *England* would have been no Loser."

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Another of his Adversaries says, "[38]Peruse the Doctor Page after Page, you will find the Man all along in peevish Humour, when you see his Book brimfull of tart biting Ironies, Drolleries, comical Expressions, impertinent Demands, and idle Stories, &c. as if the discharging a little Gall were enough to disparage *the clearest Miracles* God ever wrought."

But what are these *clearest Miracles God ever wrought*? Why, the most extravagant, whimsical, absurd, and ridiculous Legends and Stories imaginable; such as that of *St. Dominick*[39], who when the Devil came to him in the Shape of a *Monkey*, made him hold a Candle to him while he wrote, and keep it so long between his Toes, till it burnt them; and his keeping the Devil, who sometimes came to him in the Shape of a *Flea*, and by skipping on the Leaves of his Book disturb'd his Reading, in that Shape, and using him for a Mark to know where he left off reading: Such as *St. Patrick's* heating an Oven with Snow, and turning a Pound of Honey into a Pound of Butter: Such as *Christ's* marrying Nuns, and playing at Cards with them; and Nuns living on the Milk of the blessed Virgin *Mary*; and that of divers Orders, and especially the *Benedictine*, being so dear to the blessed Virgin, that in Heaven she lodges them under her Petticoats: Such as making broken Eggs whole; and of People, who had their Heads cut off, walking with their Heads in their Hands, which were sometimes set on again: Such as Failing for a hundred Years; and raising Cows, Calves, and Birds from the Dead, after they had been chopt to Pieces and eaten, and putting on their Heads after they had been pull'd or cut off; and turning a Pound of Butter into a Bell; and making a Bull give Milk; and raising a King's Daughter from the Dead, and turning her into a Son; and the several Translations thro' the Air of the Virgin *Mary's* House from *Palestine* to *Loretto*, and the Miracles wrote there; and more of the like Kind.

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Are these, or such as these the *clearest Miracles God ever wrought*? Do such Miracles deserve a serious Regard? And shall the *Gravity* with which Mankind is thus banter'd out of their common Sense, excuse these Matters from *Ridicule*?

It will be difficult to find any Writers who have exceeded the Doctors, *South* and [40] *Edwards*, in *Banter, Irony, Satire* and *Sarcasms*: The last of whom has written a Discourse in *Defence of sharp Reflections on Authors and their Opinions*; wherein he enumerates, as

Examples for his Purpose, almost all the eminent Divines of the Church of *England*. And Mr. [41] *Collier*, speaking of a Letter of the Venerable *Bede* to *Egbert* Bishop of *York*, says, "The Satire and Declamation in this *Epistle* shews the *pious Zeal* and *Integrity* of the Author;" which seems to imply, that *Satire* and *Declamation* is the orthodox and most pious Method of writing in behalf of *Orthodoxy*.

Dr. *Rogers*, to whom you write, falls into the Method of Buffoonery, Banter, Satire, Drollery, Ridicule, and Irony, even in the Treatise to which your Letter is subjoined, and against that *Person* whom you would have punish'd for that Method: When he says to him, [42] "Religion then, it seems, must be left to the Scholars and Gentlefolks, and to them 'tis to be of no other use, but as a Subject of Disputation to improve their Parts and Learning; but methinks the Vulgar might be indulg'd a little of it now and then, upon Sundays and Holidays, instead of Bull-baiting and Foot-ball." And this insipid Piece of Drollery and false Wit [which is design'd to ridicule his Adversary for asserting, that *What Men understand nothing of, they have no Concern about*; which is a Proposition that will stand the Test of *Ridicule*, which will be found wholly to lie against the Doctor, for asserting the Reasonableness of imposing Things on the People which they do not understand] is the more remarkable, as it proceeds from one, who is at the same time for using the Sword of the Magistrate against his Adversary. One would think the [43] *Inquisitor* should banish the *Droll*, and the *Droll* the *Inquisitor*.

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One of the greatest and best Authorities for the *pleasant* and *ironical* manner of treating *serious* Matters, is that eminent Divine at the Time of the Reformation, the great *Erasmus*, who has written two Books in this way with great Applause of Protestants, and without subjecting himself to any Persecution of Papists: which makes it highly proper to propose them to the Consideration of the Reader, that he may regulate his Notions, by what, it may be presum'd, he approves of in that Author. These two Books of *Erasmus* are his *Colloquies*, and his *Praise of Folly*.

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His *Colloquies* were wrote in imitation of *Lucian's Dialogues*; and I think with equal, if not superior, Success.

Both these Authors had an Aversion to sullen, austere, designing Knaves; and both of them being Men of Wit and Satire, employ'd their Talents against *Superstition* and *Hypocrisy*. *Lucian* liv'd in an Age when *Fiction* and *Fable* had usurp'd the Name of *Religion*, and *Morality* was corrupted by *Men of Beard* and *Grimace*, but scandalously *Leud* and *Ignorant*; who yet had the Impudence to preach up *Virtue*, and style themselves *Philosophers*, perpetually clashing with one another about the Precedence of their several Founders, the Merits of their different Sects, and if 'tis possible, about Trifles of less Importance: yet all agreeing in a different way to dupe and amuse the poor People, by the *fantastick* Singularity of their Habits, the unintelligible Jargon of their Schools, and their Pretensions to a severe and mortify'd Life.

These Jugglers and Impostors *Lucian* in great measure help'd to chase out of the World, by exposing them in their proper Colours, and by representing them as ridiculous as they were. But in a few Generations after him, a new Race of Men sprung up in the World, well known by the Name of *Monks* and *Fryars*, different indeed from the former in Religion, Garb, and a few other Circumstances; but in the main, the same sort of Impostors, the same ever-lasting Cobweb-Spinners, as to their nonsensical Controversies, the same abandon'd *Wretches*, as to their Morals; but as to the mysterious Arts of heaping up Wealth, and picking the People's Pockets, infinitely superior to the *Pagan Philosophers* and *Priests*. These were the sanctify'd Cheats, whose Folly and Vices *Erasmus* has so effectually lash'd, that some Countries have entirely turn'd these Drones out of their Cells; and in other Places, where they are still kept up, they are in some measure become contemptible, and obliged to be always on their Guard.

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The Papists say, that these "[44] *Colloquies*, by turning into *Ridicule* the Devotion to the holy Virgin and Saints, the Worship of Relicks and Images, religious Vows and Pilgrimages, have made more Hereticks than the Works of *Luther* and *Calvin*." And I find the reverend Mr. *Trapp* [after calling [45] *Reliques*, FOOLISH] celebrates *Erasmus* for *having abundantly* RIDICUL'D *them*.

His *Praise of Folly* treats of *serious* Matters, in such a gay, familiar, ingenious and pleasant manner, as makes it a Work proper to be read by intelligent People, to remove out of their Minds all Bigotry contracted by Ignorance and an evil Education, all Peevishness, Hatred, and Ill-nature towards one another, on account of different Sentiments in Religion; and to form in them the natural Principles of Moderation, Humanity, Affection and Friendship. Our learned and ingenious Bishop *Kennet* could not do a more signal Piece of Service to our Country, than by translating into *English* this Book, which the Ladies have now an Opportunity of understanding no less than the Men; and from whence they may see the pleasant, amiable, and just Disposition of Mind of one of the most learned and ingenious Men that ever liv'd, as well as Author of a great Number of religious and devotional Books; nor could the Bishop well give a heartier Stroke at Popery, than by approving of *Erasmus's* [46] *laughing* at it, and applauding his numberless *Taunts on its Impostures, Cheats, and Delusions*.

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Our Clergy have ever treated Mr. *Hobbes* with the greatest Mockery, Ridicule and Raillery: As for example, *Ward* Bishop of *Sarum*, *Brambal* Bishop of *Derry*, *Parker* Bishop of *Oxford*,

Dr. *Wallis* in his several bantering Treatises against him, *Lucy Bishop of St. Davids, Shafto*, and particularly the Reverend *Droll*, Dr. *Eachard*, in two *Dialogues*, which, it is well known, have been universally well receiv'd by the Clergy, and that for their Treatment of Mr. *Hobbes* in the ridiculing Way; for which the Author himself makes the following just Apology, in his *Dedication* of his *Second Dialogue* to Archbishop *Sheldon*, "That of all Triflers, 'tis the *Set*, the *Grave*, the *Philosophical*, and the *Mathematical Trifler*, to which he has the greatest Aversion; whom when he meets, very gravely making out all Men to be rational Beasts both in Nature and Conversation, and every Man, he pleases, a rational Rebel; and upon any Fright or Pinch a rational Atheist and Anti-Christian; and all this perform'd with all DEMURENESS, SOLEMNITY, QUOTATION of SCRIPTURE, APPEALS to CONSCIENCE and CHURCH-HISTORY; he must humbly beg his *Grace's* Pardon, if then he has endeavour'd to SMILE a little, and to get as much out of his Road and way of Writing as possible." These *Dialogues* used to be much recommended to the Youth to make them laugh at Mr *Hobbes*, who was constantly represented as provok'd and put out of all Temper by them, and was said to have vented this strange and impious Expression, upon its being told him, that *the Clergy said Eachard had crucify'd Hobbes*; "Why then don't they fall down and worship me?"

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Mr. *Selden* has been the constant Subject of Clergy-banter, for his *History of Tythes*; in the *Preface* to which, "He reproaches the Clergy with Ignorance and Laziness, and upbraids them with having nothing to keep up their Credit but *Beard, Title, and Habit*; and their Studies reach'd no farther than the *Breviary, the Postils, and Polyanthea*." For this Work he was attack'd more particularly by three Divines, *Tillesly, Mountagu, and Nettles*. And their Success was thus originally represented^[47], "That he was so gall'd by *Tillesly*, so gagg'd by *Mountagu*, and so stung by *Nettles*, that he never came off in any of his Undertakings with more loss of Credit." And this Jest has pass'd much upon the World, and been continued down in many Books, where Mr. *Selden* is mention'd, to his Discredit with ignorant Readers, but not with the Knowing and Learned; who, as Dr. *Wotton* tells us^[48], *have, now Party-heats are over, acquiesced in what Mr. Selden advanc'd; who first, OF ALL CHRISTIANS, set the Affair of Tythes in a clear Light.*

It is usually said the Comedy called *Ignoramus*, which is a Clergy-banter upon the *Law*, was a design'd Return for Mr. *Selden's History of Tythes*.

The Reverend Dr. *Beaumont*, late Master of *St. Peter's College* and King's Professor of Divinity, has given us a Book, entitled, "Some Observations upon the Apology of Dr. *Henry More* for his *Mystery of Godliness*;" which endeavours to render the said Doctor *ridiculous*, and set People a *laughing* at him, (p. 9. &c. 64.) and used to be applauded as a complete Performance in the way of Raillery and Irony, and was well receiv'd for being directed against a Person esteem'd Heterodox.

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Many Clergymen have written Books to banter the Works of Mr. *Locke*, among whom Dr. *Edwards* must have the first Place; whose *Brief Vindication of the fundamental Articles of the Christian Faith*, which has the *Imprimatur* before it of *James, Beaumont, Covel, and Balderston*, four *Cambridge Heads*, was never exceeded by the most licentious *Droll*.

When *Sorbier's Voyage to England*, which was a pert and insolent Abuse and Satire on the Nation, and written in the *French* manner of contemptuously treating all Countries and Men but *France* and *Frenchmen*, was publish'd, it was deem'd proper that a drolling and satirical Answer should be given to it, and that the Reverend Dr. *Sprat* should be the *Droll* employ'd; who perform'd his Part according to the Expectation of the Drolling Court of King *Charles II.* and as the ingenious Mr. *Addison* tells us, ^[49] *Vindicated the Honour of his Country, in a Book full of Satire and Ingenuity.*

Bishop *Beveridge* ever pass'd for a serious and profound Divine; and his Writings have fix'd that Character upon him among the Religious of the High Church, who have receiv'd his *Private Thoughts* and his Volumes of *Sermons*, like *Manna* from Heaven. And yet possibly never Man had two more severe Attacks made upon him than he had; one by Bishop *Stillingfleet*, who in *A Vindication of their Majesties Authority to fill the Sees of the depriv'd Bishops, &c.* occasion'd by Dr. *Beveridge's* Refusal of the Bishoprick of *Bath and Wells*, satirizes both his *Prudence* and his *Sincerity*; and another, by an ingenious Bishop also, who in *A short View of Dr. Beveridge's Writings*, has in a most refin'd drolling manner represented those Writings as abounding in most absurd and ridiculous Divinity.

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But one of the justest and finest Pieces of *Irony*, and the most timely and seasonably vented, and that deserves perpetual Remembrance, is, *Andrews* the grave Bishop of *Winchester's* Irony, on *Neal* the grave Bishop of *Durham*; of which we have the following Relation in the Poet *Waller's Life*, prefix'd before his Works: "On the Day of the Dissolution of the last Parliament of King *James* the First, Mr. *Waller*, out of Curiosity or Respect, went to see the King at Dinner; with whom were Dr. *Andrews* the Bishop of *Winchester*, and Dr. *Neal* Bishop of *Durham*, standing behind his Majesty's Chair. There happen'd something very extraordinary in the Conversation those Prelates had with the King, on which Mr. *Waller* did often reflect. His Majesty ask'd the Bishops, *My Lords, cannot I take my Subjects Money when I want it, without all this Formality in Parliament?* The Bishop of *Durham* readily answer'd, *God forbid, Sir, but you should; you are the Breath of our Nostrils.* Whereupon the King turn'd and said to the Bishop of *Winchester*, *Well, my Lord, what say you?* *Sir*, replied the Bishop, *I have no Skill to judge of Parliamentary Cases.* The King answer'd, *No Put-offs, my Lord; answer me presently. Then, Sir,* said he, *I think it is lawful for you to take my*

Brother Neal's Money, for he offers it. Mr. Waller said the Company was pleas'd with this Answer, and the Wit of it seem'd to affect the King." Which shews the exceeding Aptness and Usefulness of a good *Irony*; that can convey an Instruction to a vicious, evil, and tyrannical Prince, highly reflecting on his Conduct, without drawing on his Resentment.

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To these famous Divines I might add the most eminent and renowned Philosophers of Antiquity, who, either out of a Contempt of Mankind, or to gratify their peculiar Tempers, or to correct the Vices and Follies of Men, and to instil virtuous Maxims in those who would only receive them in some pleasant way, set up for good Humour, Mirth, and Drollery, as their standing Method of Life, and of Conversation with the World; and have left behind them some of their occasional Sayings upon record, which do more Honour to their Memories than the most elaborate Treatises would have done, and more Good to Men; upon whom a Jest, or witty Saying, is more fitted to operate and make Impression than long Deductions and Reasonings, and particularly on Princes and great Men, who will receive no Instruction but in some very artful and short Way: whereof even the rude *Diogenes*, the *Cynick*, has given us a most incomparable Example, in his occasional Conference with *Alexander the Great*, who was put into such Temper by the mere Freedom and Raillery of the Philosopher, as to take every thing in good part he said to him, and consequently be dispos'd to reflect upon it, and to act with Discretion. At the Head of these Philosophers I place *SOCRATES*, who has very generally in all Ages pass'd for the *wisest of Men*, and was declared so by an *Oracle*; which, at least, was therein directed and influenc'd by some considerable human Authority, or by the common Sentiments of Men at that time. His Character I shall give you in the words of the most ingenious *Addison*, who was himself a Master of *Humour* and *Drollery*, and practis'd them in Perfection, and with great Success in almost all his Prose-writings. "*Socrates*, says he[50], who was the greatest Propagator of Morality in the Heathen World, and a Martyr for the Unity of the Godhead, was so famous for the exercise of the Talent [of Raillery and Humour] among the politest People of Antiquity, that he gain'd the Name of *THE DROLE*.[51]" A Character that intitled him to the greatest Merit, as it most of all enabled him to promote Virtue.

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I might also offer to your Confederation the Affair of *Comedies*; which all polite Governments have permitted, or establish'd, in their several populous and wealthy Cities, as the necessary and proper means to encounter Vice and recommend Virtue, and to employ innocently and usefully the vacant Hours of many, who know not how to employ their Time, or would employ it amiss, by entering into [52] Factions and Cabals to disturb the State; or by Gaming, or by backbiting Conversations about their Neighbours. And as *Comedies*, which were originally very gross, grew by Use more polite and refin'd in *Satire* and *Raillery*: so the most celebrated Wits and Statesmen, and Persons of the greatest Quality, have engag'd and join'd with others in them, and performed with the greatest Success and Reputation to themselves; and have been valu'd, not only for their Talents of *Irony* and *Drollery*, which were essential to the Credit of such Performances; but applauded, as acting the virtuous Part of *Droles*.

In fine, Books of *Satire*, *Wit*, *Humour*, *Ridicule*, *Drollery*, and *Irony*, are the most read and applauded of all Books, in all Ages, Languages, and Countries. And as those which are exquisite in their kinds, are the standing Entertainment of the Ingenious and Learned; so others, of a lower kind, are to be found among the lower Readers, who sleep under all Works which do not make them merry.

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In a word, the Opinions and Practices of Men in all Matters, and especially in Matters of Religion, are generally so absurd and ridiculous that it is impossible for them not to be the Subjects of *Ridicule*.

For what else can be expected from Men who generally take up their Opinions without any Inquiry into their Reasonableness or Truth, and upon the most incompetent Grounds? I cannot be supposed to injure Mankind, if I consider them under the Character which the very ingenious Sir *Richard Steele* gives of himself; who *acknowledges* [53] that (even while he took upon himself the Title of the *Censor of Great Britain*, and in so many fine Papers corrects his Countrymen, and particularly *the Freethinkers*, whom he directs the Magistrate to punish with Death) *it had been with him, as it is with too many others, that a [53] sort of an implicit Religion seem'd the most easy and most comfortable; and that a blind Veneration for he knew not what, and he knew not whom, stood for every thing important. And he confesses he was not enough aware, that this Implicitness of Conduct is the great Engine of Popery, fram'd for the Destruction of good Nature, as well as good Sense. If so great a Man could take up with such a Method, and act the Part of a Censor and Director of others, in a Matter which he had not at all consider'd, what can be expected else from others, but absurd and ridiculous Opinions and Practices?*

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And if some Men will fall into absurd and ridiculous Opinions, Habits, Forms, Figures and Grimaces; there will be those who will *laugh*, nay, cannot help *laughing* at them. Hence most Parties laugh at one another, without the least Scruple, and with great Applause of their own Parties; and the Leaders of the same Party laugh with one another, when they consider the absurd and ridiculous Opinions they profess, and how they cheat and govern their Followers; agreeably to what *Cicero* reports of *Cato*[54], "*Vetus autem illud Catonis admodum scitum est, qui mirari se aiebat, quod non rideret haruspex cum haruspicem vidisset.*"

I think it may be justly suppos'd, that Pope *Alexander* and *Thomas Becket* could not but laugh together at the Simplicity and Weakness of their Followers, the Papists, who receiv'd for truth the following Story. It was told as a Fact^[55], "that when *Thomas Becket*, who never drank any thing but Water, sat at Table with *Pope Alexander*, and that his Holiness would needs taste of his Cup; lest his abstemiousness should be known, God turn'd the Water into Wine: so that the *Pope* found nothing but Wine in the Cup. But when *Becket* pledg'd him, it was turn'd into Water again."

Laughing therefore, and *Ridicule* in serious Matters, go round the World with no inconsiderable Applause, and seem highly proper for this World of Nonsense and Folly. To hinder *laughing* upon such just Occasions as are given, is almost all one as to hinder *breathing*. A very witty, drolling, Dramatick Poet, and of the first Rank for Quality, says in a *Prologue* to his Auditors.

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"Suppose now, at this Instant, one of you
"Were tickled by a Fool, what would you do?
"Tis ten to one you'd laugh: here's just the Case.
"For there are Fools that tickle with their Face.
"Your gay Fool tickles with his Dress and Motions;
"But your grave Fool of Fools with silly Notions.
"Is it not then unjust that Fops should still
"Force one to laugh, and then take laughing ill?"

II. *Secondly*, If it be a Fault in those reverend Divines, mention'd in the foregoing Article, to use *Irony*, *Drollery*, *Ridicule*, and *Satire*, in any Case; or if the Fault lies in an exorbitant Use thereof, or in any particular Species of *Drollery*; as, for example, such *Drollery* as is to be found in the polemical Writings and Sermons of Dr. *South*; it is fit some Remedy should be employ'd for the Cure of this Evil. And the Remedy I would propose, should not be to have the Authors punish'd by the Magistrate, any more than for any other Faults in writing; but either to neglect and despise it, as Rage and Scolding, which drop into Oblivion with the Sound, and would have a Life given it by Resentment: or to allow Men to *criticize* and *ridicule* one another for their *Ironies* and *Drollery*, and to exercise their Wit and Parts against each other; that being the true Method to bring Things to a Standard, to fix the Decency and Propriety of Writing, to teach Men how to write to the Satisfaction of the ingenious, polite, and sensible Part of Mankind: for Decency and Propriety will stand the Test of Ridicule, and triumph over all the false Pretences to Wit; and Indecency and Impropriety will sink under the Trial of Ridicule, as being capable of being baffled by Reason, and justly ridicul'd. And if any kind or degree of *Ridicule* be absurd or *ridiculous*, that will appear so upon Trial, no less than the low and gross *Ridicule* prevalent among the unpolite Part of the World: But that will never appear. On the contrary, *Ridicule* of certain kinds, and under reasonable Directions and Rules, and used in proper Time, Place, and Manner, (all which also are only to be found out and fix'd by Trial and Experience) is both a proper and necessary Method of Discourse in many Cases, and especially in the Case of *Gravity*, when that is attended with Hypocrisy or Imposture, or with Ignorance, or with soureiness of Temper and Persecution; all which ought to draw after them the *Ridicule* and *Contempt* of the Society, which has no other effectual Remedy against such Methods of Imposition. And to determine in some measure the Nature and Extent of the *Irony* I contend for, as *Just*, I profess to approve the noble *Sarcasm* of *Elijah*^[56]; wherein he thus mocks the *Priests* of *Baal*, saying in effect to them, "*Cry aloud, for your Baal is a fine God: He is either talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a Journey; or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked.*" And I concur with the *Psalmist*^[57], who thought it no Indecency to say, that *he that sits in Heaven shall laugh them* (that is, certain Kings, who were *David's* Enemies) *to scorn; the Lord shall have them in Derision*: and must judge, that *laughing to scorn*, and *deriding* the greatest Men upon Earth, even Kings and Princes, to be a laudable and divine Method of dealing with them, who are only to be taught or rebuk'd in some artful way. I also approve of the following *Sarcasm* or *Irony*, which has a better Authority for it than *Elijah* or the *Psalmist*. *Moses* introduces God speaking thus after the *Fall*^[58], *Behold the Man is become like one of us, to know Good and Evil!* And I think this Passage shews, that the whole Affair of the *Fall*, of which we have so very brief an Account, was a very entertaining Scene; and would have appear'd so, if set forth at large; as indeed it does under the Hands of our Divines, who have supplied that short Narration by various Additions, founded on Conjectures, and particularly under the fine Hand of Dr. *Tho. Burnet*, who has made a most ingenious Dialogue of what he suppos'd pass'd between *Eve* and the *Serpent*^[59]. To say nothing of *Milton's* famous *Paradise Lost*.

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In fine, ever since I could read the *Bible*, I was particularly pleas'd with the *History* of *Jonas*, where such a Representation is made of that *Prophet's* Ignorance, Folly, and Peevishness, as exposes him to the utmost Contempt and Scorn, and fixes a perpetual *Ridicule* on his Character. And let me here observe, that this *History* has had ample Justice done it, in an Explication thereof by two ^[60] very ingenious Authors, who, by most penetrating and happy Criticisms and Reflections, have drawn the Character of *Jonas* in a more open manner.

III. But, *Thirdly*, I wave my *Remedy*, and am ready to come into any Law that shall be made

to rectify this suppos'd Fault of *Irony*, by punishing those who are guilty of it.

The great Concern is and ought to be, that *the Liberty of examining into the Truth of Things should be kept up*, that Men may have some Sense and Knowledge, and not be the *Dupes of Cheats and Impostors*, or of those who would keep them in the dark, and let them receive nothing but thro' their Hands. If that be secur'd to us by Authority, I, for my part, am very ready to sacrifice the Privilege of *Irony*, tho so much in fashion among all Men; being persuaded, that a great Part of the *Irony* complain'd of, has its rise from the *want of Liberty to examine into the Truth of Things*; and that if that *Liberty* was prevalent, it would, without a Law, prevent all that *Irony* which Men are driven into for want of Liberty to speak plainly, and to protect themselves from the Attacks of those who would take the Advantage to ruin them for direct Assertions; and that such Authors as *Rabelais, Saint Aldegonde, Blount, Marvel, Thekeringil*, and many others, would never have run into that Excess of *Burlesque*, for which they are all so famous, had not the Restraint from writing *seriously* been so great.

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"If [61] Men are forbid to speak their Minds *seriously* on certain Subjects, they will do it *ironically*. If they are forbid at all upon such Subjects, or if they find it dangerous to do so, they will then redouble their Disguise, involve themselves in mysteriousness, and talk so as hardly to be understood, or at least not plainly interpreted by those who are dispos'd to do them a Mischief. And thus *Raillery* is brought more in fashion, and runs into an Extreme. 'Tis the persecuting Spirit has rais'd the *bantering* one: And want of Liberty may account for want of a true Politeness, and for the Corruption or wrong Use of Pleasantry and Humour.

"If in this respect we strain the just Measure of what we call *Urbanity*, and are apt sometimes to take a buffooning rustick Air, we may thank the ridiculous Solemnity and sour Humour of our *Pedagogues*: or rather they may thank themselves, if they in particular meet with the heaviest of this kind of Treatment. For it will naturally fall heaviest, where the Constraint has been the severest. The greater the Weight is, the bitterer will be the Satire. The higher the Slavery, the more exquisite the Buffoonery.

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"That this is really so, may appear by looking on those Countries where the spiritual Tyranny is highest. For the greatest of *Buffoons* are the *Italians*: and in their Writings, in their freer sort of Conversations, on their Theatres, and in their *Streets, Buffoonery* and *Burlesque* are in the highest Vogue. 'Tis the only manner in which the poor cramp'd Wretches can discharge a free Thought. We must yield to 'em the Superiority in this sort of Wit. For what wonder is it if we, who have more Liberty, have less Dexterity in that egregious way of *Raillery* and *Ridicule*?"

Liberty of *grave* Examination being fix'd by Law, I am, I say, ready to sacrifice the Privilege of *Irony*, and yield to have a Law enacted to prevent it. I am, moreover, willing to leave the drawing up such a Law to your self; who honestly and impartially say[62], that all who *droll*, let them be of any Party, let them *droll for the Truth or against it*, should be equally punish'd.

Thus this grand Affair of *Irony, Banter, and Ridicule*; this last persecuting Pretence, upon which you would set the Humours and Passions of People, who are all at quiet, on float, and make a Fermentation, and raise a Persecution against particular People, seems perfectly settled, by yielding to your own Terms.

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IV. Let me here add, that I am apt to think, that when you draw up your Law, you will find it so very difficult to settle the Point of *Decency* in Writing, in respect to all the various kinds of *Irony* and *Ridicule*, that you will be ready to lay aside your Project; and that you will be no more able to settle that *Point of Decency*, than you would be to settle by Law, that *Cleanliness* in Clothes, and that Politeness in Dress, Behaviour, and Conversation, which become Men of Quality and Fortune in the World, and should be habitual to them: And that, if you are able to do that to your own Satisfaction, you will find it very difficult to engage the Lawmakers in your Project. For I am persuaded, that if our Lawmakers were, out of a rational Principle, disposed to give Liberty by Law to *serious* Opposition to publicly receiv'd Notions, they would not think it of much Importance to make a *Law* about a Method of *Irony*. They will naturally conclude, that if Men may and ought to be allow'd to write *seriously* in Opposition to publicly receiv'd Doctrines, they should be allow'd to write in their own way; and will be unwilling to be depriv'd of ingenious and witty Discourses, or such as some of them will judge so, about a Subject wherein *serious free* Discourse is allow'd. Besides, I am apt to think, that you, upon consideration of the Advantages which the Church has receiv'd from the *Berkenheads, the Heylins, the Ryves's, the Needhams, the Lestranges, the Nalsons, the Lesleys, the Oldesworths*, and others, in their *Mercurius Aulicus's, their Mercurius Pragmaticus's, their Mercurius Rusticus's, their Observators*[63], their *Heraclitus Ridens's, Rehearsals, their Examiners*[64], and the three Volumes against the *Rights of the Church*; from the *Butlers* in their *Hudibras's*, and other *Burlesque* Works upon the Religion and Religious Conduct of the Dissenters; or from the *Eachards, the Tom Browns, and Swifts*; or from the *Parkers*[65], *Patricks*[66], *Souths*[67], *Sherlocks*[68], *Atterburys*[69], and *Sacheverels*[70]; in their Discourses, and Tracts against the Nonconformists, Whigs, Low-Church-men, and Latitudinarians; and other such ironical, satirical, and polemical Divines; and from such *drolling* Judges as *Howel, Recorder* of London, and the Chief Justice *Jefferys*, who, in all Causes, where *Whigs* or Dissenters were the Persons accus'd and try'd before them, carried on the Trial by a [71] Train of ridicule on them, their Witnesses and Counsel: I

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say, I am apt to think, that you would be unwilling to be depriv'd of what has been and may be again so serviceable.

I am dispos'd to think that Dr. *Snape*, who is notoriously known to have gone into the greatest Lengths of Calumny and Satire against Bishop *Hoadley*[72], to have fall'n upon the dissenting Clergy in a burlesque and bantering Address to the *Peirces*, the *Calamys*, and the *Bradburys*, and to have written a long *ironical Letter* in the Name of the *Jesuits* to Mr. *de la Pilloniere*[73], will be thought a very improper Object of Censure for such Employment of his Pen. On the contrary, such sort of Attacks upon such Persons are the most meritorious Parts of a Man's Life, recommend him as a Person of true and sincere Religion, much more than the strongest Reasoning, and the most regular Life; and pave the way to all the Riches, and Pleasures and Advantages or Life; not only among those, who, under the Colour of Religion, are carrying on a common *Corporation Cause* of Wealth, Power, and Authority, but among many well-meaning People, who allow of all Practices, which they suppose help out the *Truth!* It seems to me a most prodigious Banter upon us, for Men to talk in general of the *Immorality* of *Ridicule* and *Irony*, and of *punishing* Men for those Matters, when their own Practice is *universal Irony* and *Ridicule* of all those who go not with them, and *universal Applause* and *Encouragement* for such *Ridicule* and *Irony*, and distinguishing by all the honourable ways imaginable such *drolling* Authors for their *Drollery*; and when Punishment for *Drollery* is never call'd for, but when *Drollery* is used or employ'd against them!

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I don't know whether you would be willing, if you consider of it, to limit the Stage it self, which has with great Applause and Success, from Queen *Elizabeth's* Time downwards, ridicul'd the serious *Puritans* and *Dissenters*, and that without any Complaints from *good Churchmen*, that *serious* Persons and Things were *banter'd* and *droll'd* upon; and has triumph'd over its fanatical Adversaries in the Person of *Pryn*, who sufficiently suffer'd for his *Histrion-Mastix*, and has been approv'd of as an innocent Diversion by the religious Dr. *Patrick* in his *Friendly Debate*, in the Reign of King *Charles II.* when the Stage was in a very immoral State. I don't know whether you would be willing even to restrain *Bartholomew Fair*, where the Sect of the *New Prophets* was the Subject of a *Droll* or *Puppet-Show*, to the great Satisfaction of the Auditors, who, it may be presum'd, were all good Churchmen, *Puritans* and *Dissenters* usually declining such Entertainments out of *real* or *pretended* Seriousness. ("A certain Clergyman thought fit to remark, that King *William* could be no good Churchman, because of his not frequenting the *Play-House*." [74])

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V. It will probably be a Motive with you to be against abolishing *Drollery*, when you reflect that the Men of *Irony*, the *Droles* and *Satirists*, have been and always will be very numerous on your side, where they have been and are so much encourag'd for acting that Part, and that they have always been and always will be very few on the side of *Heterodoxy*; a Cause wherein an Author by engaging, may hurt his Reputation and Fortune, and can propose nothing to himself but Poverty and Disgrace. I doubt whether you would be for punishing your Friend Dr. *Rogers*, from whom I just now quoted an *Irony* on the Author of *The Scheme of Literal Prophecy* consider'd, or any one else, for *laughing* at and making sport with him; or whether you would be for punishing the Reverend Mr. *Trapp*, who implies the *Justness* and *Propriety* of *ridiculing Popery*; when he says[75], that *Popery is so foolish and absurd, that every body of common Sense must LAUGH at it*; and when he refers to *Erasmus* for having *abundantly* RIDICUL'D their *Reliques*; and himself puts *Ridicule* in Practice against them, by representing their Doctrines and Practices as *ridiculously foolish*, as *despicably childish*, and *Matter of mere Scorn*; as *monstrous*; as *Spells, juggling Tricks, gross Cheats, Impostures*[76], and *wretched Shifts*; and in fine, in representing by way of *Specimen*, all their *Miracles* as *Legends*; of which he says, *These and a thousand more such like unreasonable Lies, which a Child of common Sense would laugh at, are impos'd upon and swallow'd by the ignorant People, and make a VERY GREAT Part of the Popish Religion.*

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And this, in concurrence with Mr. *Trapp*, I also take to be the Case of *Popery*, that it must make Men *laugh*; and that it is much easier to be gravely disposed in reading a *Stage-Comedy* or *Farce*, than in considering and reflecting on the *Comedy* and *Farce* of *Popery*; than which, Wit and Folly, and Madness in conjunction, cannot invent or make a thing more ridiculous, according to that Light in which I see their Doctrines, Ceremonies and Worship, the Histories and Legends of their Saints, and the pretended Miracles wrought in their Church; which has hardly any thing *serious* in it but its Persecutions, its Murders, its Massacres; all employ'd against the most innocent and virtuous, and the most sensible and learned Men, because they will not be *Tools* to support Villany and Ignorance.

"Transubstantiation, says *Tillotson*[77], is not a Controversy of Scripture against Scripture, or of Reason against Reason, but of downright Impudence against the plain meaning of Scripture, and all the Sense and Reason of Mankind." And accordingly he scruples not to say, in a most *drolling* manner, that "Transubstantiation is one of the chief of the *Roman Church's legerdemain* and *juggling Tricks* of Falshood and Imposture; and that in all Probability those common juggling Words of *Hocus-pocus*, are nothing else but a Corruption of *hoc est corpus*, by way of ridiculous Imitation of the Church of *Rome* in their *Trick of Transubstantiation.*" And as he *archly* makes the Introduction of this monstrous Piece of *grave Nonsense* to be owing to its being at first preach'd by its Promoters with *convenient Gravity and Solemnity*[78], which is the common Method of imposing Absurdities on the World; so I think that Doctrine taught with such *convenient Gravity and Solemnity* should

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necessarily produce *Levity, Laughter and Ridicule*, in all intelligent People to whom it is propos'd, who must *smile*, if they can with safety, to see such Stuff vented with a grave Face.

In like manner many other Divines treat and laugh at *Popery*. Even the solemn and grave Dr. *Whitby* has written a Book against *Transubstantiation*, under the Title of "*Irrisio Dei Panarii, The Derision of the Breaden God,*" in Imitation of the primitive Fathers, who have written *Derisions* and *Mockeries* of the *Pagan Religion*.

And he takes the Materials whereof this drolling Performance of his consists, from the *holy Scriptures*, the *Apocryphal Books*, and *Writings* of the *holy Fathers*, as he tells us in his Title-Page; three inexhaustible Sources of Wit and Irony against the Corrupters of true and genuine Religion. In like manner he turns upon the Popish Clergy the several Arguments urg'd by the *Jewish Clergy* in the *New Testament*, for the Authority of the *Jewish Church*; and answers, under that *Irony*, all that the Popish Clergy offer in behalf of the *Authority* of their *Church*, in a *Sermon* at the End of his *Annotations* on *St. John's Gospel*.

Nor do our Divines confine their *Derisions, Ridicule* and *Irony* against *Popery* to their Treatises and Discourses, but fill their *Sermons*, and especially their *Sermons* on the *Fifth of November*, and other political *Days*, with infinite Reflections of that Kind. Of these *Reflections* a Popish Author publish'd a *Specimen*, in a Book intitled [79], *Good Advice to Pulpits*, in order to shame the Church out of their Method of *drolling* and *laughing* [80] at *Popery*. But this Book had no other effect, than to produce a *Defence* of those *Sermons* under the Title of *Pulpit Popery true Popery*, vindicating the several *Droll* Representations made of *Popery* in those *Sermons*.

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Of these *drolling* Reflections cited by the Popish Author out of our Church of *England Sermons*, take these following for a *Specimen* of what are to be met with in those *Sermons* [81].

"Pilgrimages, going Bare-foot, Hair-shirts, and Whips, with other such Gospel-artillery, are their only Helps to Devotion.—It seems that with them a Man sometimes cannot be a Penitent, unless he also turns Vagabond, and foots it to *Jerusalem*.—He that thinks to expiate a Sin by going bare-foot, does the Penance of a Goose, and only makes one Folly the Atonement of another. *Paul* indeed was scourg'd and beaten by the *Jews*; but we never read that he beat or scourg'd himself; and if they think his keeping under his Body imports so much, they must first prove that the Body cannot be kept under by a virtuous Mind, and that the Mind cannot be made virtuous but by a Scourge; and consequently, that Thongs and Whipcord are Means of Grace, and Things necessary to Salvation. The truth is, if Mens Religion lies no deeper than their Skin, it is possible they may scourge themselves into very great Improvements.—But they will find that bodily Exercise touches not the Soul; and consequently that in this whole Course they are like Men out of the way: let them flash on never so fast, they are not at all nearer their Journey's-end: And howsoever they deceive themselves and others, they may as well expect to bring a Cart, as a Soul, to Heaven.

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"What say you to the Popish Doctrine of the *Sacrifice of the Mass*.—According to this Doctrine, our blessed Saviour must still, to the end of the World, be laid hold on by Sinners, be ground with their Teeth, and sent down into their impure Paunches, as often as the Priest shall pronounce this Charm, *hoc est corpus meum*: and it seems that he was a false Prophet, when he said upon the Cross, *It is finish'd*, seeing there was such an infinite deal of *loathsom Drudgery* still to be undergone.

"For *Purgatory*, 'tis not material in it self, whether it be, or where it be, no more than the World in the Moon; but so long as that false Fire serves to maintain a true one, and his Holiness's Kitchen smokes with the Rents he receives for releasing Souls from thence, which never came there, it concerns him and his to see to it, that it be not suffer'd to go out."

An ingenious Author, Sir *Richard Steel*, has of late made a *Dedication* to his *Holiness* the *Pope* himself, before a Book entitled, *An Account of the State of the Roman Catholick Religion throughout the World, &c*. In which *Dedication*, that most exalted Clergyman the *Pope*, that [suppos'd] infallible Dictator in Religion, and most grave Person; who, if *serious* Matters and Persons were always to be treated *seriously*, may vie with any other Mortal for a Right to *serious* Treatment; is expos'd by incomparable *Drollery* and *Irony* to the utmost Contempt, to the universal Satisfaction of Protestant Readers, who have been pleas'd to see a gross Impostor, however respected and ador'd by godly and serious Papists, so treated.

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VI. In fine, it is suited to the common Practice of this Nation to ridicule *Popery* as well as *Nonconformity*; and tho several *grave* Books, written among us against *Popery*, in the Reign of King *James II*. (of which yet the *Romish* Priests complain'd, as treating the King's [82] *Religion* with Contempt) were then very well receiv'd and applauded for Learning and strength of Arguing; yet, I believe, it may with more Propriety be said, that King *James II*. and *Popery* were [83] *laugh'd* or *Lilli-bullero'd*, than that they were *argu'd* out of the Kingdom.

The reading the *King's Declaration of Indulgence* in Churches 1688, had this fatal *Jest* put upon it by a reverend Divine, "Who pleasantly told his People, *That tho he was obliged to read it, they were not obliged to hear it* [84]; and stop'd till they all went out, and then he

read it to the Walls." To which may be added, the famous Mr. *Wallop's* excellent Comparison of that *Declaration* upon the Instant of its Publication, to *the scaffolding of St. Paul's Church; which, as soon as the Building was finish'd, would be pull'd down.*

Bishop *Burnet* celebrates, with the greatest Justness, our Taste, and indeed the Taste of the World in this Respect, when he relates how *Popery* was then used among us; and he recites some of the *Jests* which passed and were received with universal Applause. He tells us^[85], "The Court was now (that is, in 1686,) much set on making Converts, which fail'd in most Instances, and produc'd *Repartees*; that whether true or false, were much repeated, and were heard with great Satisfaction. The Earl of *Mulgrave* (since Duke of *Buckinghamshire*) was Lord Chamberlain; he was apt to comply in every thing that he thought might be acceptable, for he went with the King to Mass, and kneeled at it; and being look'd on as indifferent to all Religions, the Priests made an Attack upon him: He heard them *gravely* arguing for *Transubstantiation*. He told them he was willing to receive Instruction; he had taken much Pains to bring himself to believe in God, who made the World and all Men in it: But it must not be an ordinary Force of Argument that could make him believe that Man was quits with God, and made God again. The Earl of *Middleton* had marry'd into a Popish Family, and was a Man of great Parts and a generous Temper, but of loose Principles in Religion; so a Priest was sent to instruct him. He began with *Transubstantiation*, of which he said he would convince him immediately: And began thus, You believe the *Trinity*. *Middleton* stop'd him, and said, who told you so? At which he seem'd amazed. So the Earl said, he expected he should convince him of his Belief, but not question him of his own: With this the Priest was so disorder'd, that he could proceed no farther. One Day the King gave the Duke of *Norfolk* the Sword of State to carry before him to the Chappel, and he stood at the Door. Upon which the King said to him, My Lord, your Father would have gone farther. To which the Duke answer'd, Your Majesty's Father was the better Man, and he would not have gone so far. *Kirk* was also spoken to, to change his Religion, and he reply'd briskly, that he was already pre-engag'd, for *he had promised the King of Morocco, that if ever he chang'd his Religion he would turn Mahometan.*" When K. *James* sent an *Irish* Priest to convert the D. of *Bucks* [*Villers*] the said Duke entertain'd the Priest with a Bottle, and engag'd him in a *Dialogue*, which the Duke afterwards caus'd to be printed, to the no small Mortification of all Papists, who were therein exceedingly ridicul'd, and to the Triumph of all good Churchmen, who are never better pleas'd, than when they have the *Laugh* on their side.

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At this time also were publish'd two merry Books, by a couple of our Divines, with express View to make Protestants laugh at *Popery*, as at a *Farce*; and they were, *The School of the Eucharist*, wherein is a Collection of ridiculous *Miracles*, pretended to be wrought to support the Truth of *Transubstantiation*, and *Purgatory prov'd by Miracles*.

I must not omit another incomparable Piece of Wit and Raillery against *Popery*, publish'd at that time. It seems the famous Poet, *Dryden*, thought fit to declare himself a *Roman Catholick*; and had, as 'tis said, a *Penance* injoyn'd him by his Confessor, for having formerly written *The Spanish Fryar*, of composing some *Treatise* in a *poetical way* for *Popery*, and against the *Reformation*. This he executed in a *Poem*, intituled, *The Hind and Panther*; which, setting aside the Absurdity of the Matters therein asserted, and of the several Arguments to maintain them, is, in other Respects, one of the most mean Compositions that ever the Press produc'd. Was it proper to pass over in silence such a Work, from whence probably the Popish Party expected great Matters, as knowing the Efficacy of Poetry, and being Witnesses of the Success the Author had had in his *Absalom* and *Achitophel* against the *Whigs*? Was it proper to write *seriously* and *gravely* against a Book, wherein the Author every where aims at Wit, Irony, and Burlesque, and does himself make so ridiculous a Figure, as to be a standing Jest throughout the whole? Was not the Convert himself, as such, a *Jest*, or as professing any Religion, a *Jest*; who argu'd for Pay, and spoke as he was brib'd, and would have profess'd any Opinions, as is the Mode and Practice of the World, to which Salary and Preferments are annexed? Some ingenious Persons of the Times took a better Method, and agreeably to the Temper and Disposition of our Countrymen, and to the nature of *Dryden's* Attack, and his interested Writing for Religion, made a Return in a Paper intituled, *The Hind and Panther transvers'd to the Story of the Country-Mouse and City-Mouse*: Out of which, for a Specimen of *just Irony*, and *fine Raillery*, I will give you the following Passage.

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"*Sirrah, says Brindle, thou hast brought us Wine,
"Sour to my Taste, and to my Eyes unfine.
"Says Will, All Gentlemen like it. Ah! says White,
"What is approved by them must needs be right.
"Tis true, I thought it bad, but if the House
"Commend it, I submit, a private Mouse.
"Nor to their Catholick Consent oppose
"My erring Judgment and reforming Nose.
"[86] Why, what a Devil, shan't I trust my Eyes,
"Must I drink Stum, because the Rascal lies,
"And palms upon us Catholick Consent,
"To give sophisticated Brewings Vent?
"Says White, what antient Evidence can sway,
"If you must argue thus and not obey?
"Drawers must be trusted, thro' whose hands convey'd*

"You take the Liquor, or you spoil the Trade.
 "For sure those honest Fellows have no Knack
 "Of putting off stum'd Claret for Pontack.
 "How long alas! would the poor Vintner last,
 "If all that drink must judge, and every Guest
 "Be allow'd to have an understanding Taste?

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VII. I question whether High-Church would be willing to have the reverend Author of the *Tale of a Tub*, one of the greatest *Droles* that ever appear'd upon the Stage of the World, punish'd for that or any other of his *drolling* Works: For tho' religious Matters, and all the various Forms of Christianity have therein a considerable Share of *Ridicule*; yet in regard of his *Drollery* upon the *Whigs*, *Dissenters*, and the *War with France* (things of as *serious* and weighty Consideration, and as much affecting the Peace of Society, as *Justification by Faith only*, *Predestination*, *Transubstantiation*, or *Constansubstantiation*, or *Questions* about *religious Ceremonies*, or any such interested Matters) the *Convocation* in their famous *Representation* of the *Profaneness* and *Blasphemy* of the Nation, took no notice of his *drolling* on Christianity: And his Usefulness in *Drollery* and *Ridicule* was deem'd sufficient by the *Pious Queen Anne*, and her *pious Ministry*, to intitle him to a Church Preferment of several hundred Pounds *per Ann.* [87] which she bestow'd upon him, notwithstanding a *fanatick High-Churchman*, who weakly thought *Seriousness* in Religion of more use to High-Church than *Drollery*, and attempted to hinder his Promotion, by representing to her Majesty, "What a Scandal it would be both to Church and State to bestow Preferment upon a Clergyman, who was hardly suspected of being a Christian." Besides, High-Church receives daily most signal Services from his *drolling* Capacity, which has of late exerted itself on the Jacobite Stage of *Mist's* and *Fogg's* Journal, and in other little Papers publish'd in *Ireland*; in which he endeavours to expose the present Administration of publick Affairs to contempt, to inflame the *Irish* Nation against the *English*, and to make them throw off all Subjection to the *English* Government, to satirize Bishop *Burnet* and other *Whig* Bishops; and, in fine, to pave the way for a new or Popish Revolution, as far as choosing the most proper Topicks of *Invective*, and treating of them in the way of *Drollery*, can do.

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VIII. It is well known, that Gravity, Preciseness, Solemnity, Sourness, formal Dress and Behaviour, Sobriety of Manners, keeping at a distance from the common Pastimes of the World, Aversion to Rites and Ceremonies in the publick Worship, and to Pictures, Images, and Musick in Churches; mixing Religion in common Conversation, using long Graces, practising Family-Worship, part of which was praying *ex tempore*; setting up and hearing Lectures, and a strict Observation of the Lord's Day, which was call'd the *Sabbath*, were the Parts of the Character of a *Puritan*; who, it is to be observ'd, usually had the Imputation of Hypocrisy for his great and extraordinary Pretences to Religion: He was also a great Opposer of the Court-Measures in the Reign of King *James* and King *Charles* I. and most zealous for Law, Liberty, and Property, when those two Princes set up for raising Money by their own Authority, and in consequence thereof, fell into numerous other Acts of Violence and Injustice. It is also well known, that to quell these Puritans, and lessen their Credit, and baffle all their Pretences, Gaiety, Mirth, Pastimes or Sports, were encourag'd and requir'd on *Sundays* of the People, that Churches were render'd gay, theatrical, and pleasant by the Decorations, Paintings, Musick, and Ceremonies therein perform'd [88]; and that the utmost *Ridicule* was employ'd against some of them, as *Enthusiasts*, and against others of them as *Hypocrites*, and against them all as factious and seditious, by their Adversaries; who were under no Restraints, but encourag'd to write with Scorn, Contempt, Raillery and Satire against these suppos'd Enemies of Church and State. Nor did the great Success of the *Puritans* in the Field of Battle suppress that *Vein* and *Humour* of *Ridicule* begun against them; but the *Laudean* Party still carry'd on a Paper War with innumerable Pamphlets, which all tended more or less to make the World *laugh* at and *ridicule* the *Puritans*. And I am verily persuaded, that no History of any other Country in the World can produce a Parallel, wherein the Principle and Practice of *Ridicule* were ever so strongly encourag'd, and so constantly pursu'd, fix'd and rooted in the Minds of Men, as it was and is in Churchmen against Puritans and Dissenters. Even at this Day the *Ridicule* is so strong against the present Dissenters, so promoted by Clergy and Laity, especially in Villages and small Country Towns, that they are unable to withstand its Force, but daily come over in Numbers to the Church to avoid being *laugh'd* at. It seems to me a Mark of Distinction more likely to last in the Church than any other Matter that I can observe. Passive Obedience, the divine Right of Kings, &c. rise and fall according to particular Occasions; but *Laughter* at *Dissenters* seems fixt for ever, if they should chance to last so long.

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South's Sermons, which now amount to *six Volumes*, make Reading *Jests* and *Banter* upon *Dissenters*, the religious Exercise of good Churchmen upon *Sundays*, who now can serve God (as many think they do by hearing or reading Sermons) and be as merry as at the Play-house. And *Hudibras*, which is a daily High-Church Entertainment, and a Pocket and Travelling High-Church Companion, must necessarily have a very considerable Effect, and cannot fail forming in Men that *Humour* and *Vein* of *Ridicule* upon *Dissenters* which runs thro' that Work. In a word, High-Church has constantly been an Enemy to, and a Ridiculer of the *Seriousness* of *Puritans* and *Dissenters*, whom they have ever charg'd with *Hypocrisy* for

their *Seriousness*.

"After [89] the Civil War had broke out in 1641, and the King and Court had settled at *Oxford*, one *Birkenhead*, who had liv'd in *Laud's* Family, and been made Fellow of *All Souls College* by *Laud's* Means, was appointed to write a Weekly Paper under the Title of *Mercurius Aulicus*; the first whereof was publish'd in 1642. In the Absence of the Author, *Birkenhead*, from *Oxford*, it was continued by *Heylin*. *Birkenhead* pleas'd the Generality of Readers with his *Waggeries* and *Buffooneries*; and the Royal Party were so taken with it, that the Author was recommended to be Reader of *Moral Philosophy* by his Majesty;" who, together with the religious Electors, it is justly to be presum'd, thought *Waggery* and *Buffoonery*, not only Political, but *Religious* and *Moral*, when employ'd against *Puritans* and *Dissenters*.

IX. King *Charles* the Second's Restoration brought along with it glorious *High-Church* Times; which were distinguish'd as much by *laughing* at *Dissenters*, as by persecuting them; which pass for a Pattern how *Dissenters* are to be treated; and which will never be given up, by *High-Church-men*, as faulty, for ridiculing *Dissenters*.

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The King himself, who had very good natural Parts, and a Disposition to banter and ridicule every Body, and especially the *Presbyterians*, whose Discipline he had felt for his Lewdness and Irreligion in *Scotland*, had in his *Exile* an Education, and liv'd, among some of the greatest *Droles* and *Wits* that any Age ever produc'd; who could not but form him in that way, who was so well fitted by Temper for it. The Duke of *Buckingham* was his constant Companion. And he had a [90] *great Liveliness of Wit, and a peculiar Faculty of turning all things into ridicule*. He was Author of the *Rehearsal*; which, as a most noble Author says, is [91] *a justly admir'd Piece of comick Wit, and has furnish'd our best Wits in all their Controversies, even in Religion and Politicks, as well as in the Affairs of Wit and Learning, with the most effectual and entertaining Method of exposing Folly, Pedantry, false Reason, and ill Writing*. The Duke of *Buckingham* [92] brought *Hobbes* to him to be his *Tutor*, who was a *Philosophical Drole*, and had a great deal of *Wit* of the *drolling* kind. *Sheldon*, who was afterwards Archbishop of *Canterbury*, and attended the King constantly in his *Exile* as his *Chaplain*, was an eminent *Drole*, as appears from Bishop *Burnet*, who says [93], that *he had a great Pleasantness of Conversation, perhaps too great*.

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And *Hide*, afterwards Earl of *Clarendon*, who attended the King in his *Exile*, seems also to have been a great *Drole*, by Bishop *Burnet's* representing him, as one, that *had too much Levity in his Wit, and that did not observe the Decorum of his Post* [94]. In a *Speech* to the Lords and Commons, *Hide* attack'd the Gravity of the *Puritans*, saying [95], "Very merry Men have been very godly Men; and if a good Conscience be a continued Feast, there is no reason but Men may be very merry at it." And upon Mr. *Baxter* and other *Presbyterian* Ministers waiting on him in relation to the *Savoy Conference*, he said to Mr. *Baxter* on the first Salute [96], that if "he were but as fat as Dr. *Manton*, we should all do well."

No wonder therefore, that *Ridicule*, and *Raillery*, and *Satire*, should prevail at Court after the *Restoration*; and that King *Charles* the Second, who was a *Wit* himself, and early taught to laugh at his *Father's Stiffness* [97], should be so great a Master of them, and bring them into play among his Subjects; and that he who had the most sovereign Contempt for all Mankind, and in particular for the People and Church of *England*, should use his Talent against them; and that his People in return should give him like for like.

It is well known how he banter'd the *Presbyterian* Ministers, who out of Interest came over to him at *Breda*; where they were placed in a Room next to his Majesty, and order'd to attend till his Majesty had done his Devotions; who, it seems, pray'd so artfully, and poured out so many of their Phrases, which he had learned when he was in *Scotland*, where he was forced to be present at religious Exercises of six or seven Hours a-day; and had practis'd among the *Huguenot* Ministers in *France* [98], who reported him to have a *sanctify'd Heart*, and to *speak the very Language of Canaan*. This *Ridicule* he cover'd with *Seriousness*; having at that time Occasion for those Ministers, who were then his great Instruments in reconciling the Nation to his *Restoration*. When he had no farther Occasion for them, he was open in his *Ridicule*, and would say, that [99] *Presbyterianism was not a Religion for a Gentleman*.

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X. Would you, who are a Man of Sense and Learning, and of some Moderation, be for punishing the Author of *The Difficulties and Discouragements which attend the Study of the Scriptures in the way of private Judgment, &c.* who is suppos'd to be a Prelate of the Church, for that Book, which is wholly an *Irony* about the most sacred Persons and Things? Must not the fine *Irony* it self, and the Execution of it, with so much Learning, Sense, and Wit, raise in you the highest Esteem and Admiration of the Author, instead of a Disposition to punish him? Would you appear to the intelligent Part of the World such an Enemy to Knowledge, and such a Friend to the Kingdom of Darkness, as such Punishment would imply? In fine, can you see and direct us to a better way, to make us inquire after and understand Matters of Religion, to make us get and keep a good temper of Mind, and to plant and cultivate in us the Virtues necessary to good Order and Peace in Society, and to eradicate the Vices that every where give Society so much Disturbance, than what is

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prescrib'd or imply'd in that Book? And can you think of a better *Form of Conveyance*, or *Vehicle* for Matters of such universal Concern to all intelligent People (if you consider the State of the World, and the infinite Variety of Understandings, Interests, and Designs of Men, who are all to be address'd to at the same Time) than his Method of *Irony*? And has not Success justify'd his Method? For the Book has had a free Vent in several Impressions; has been very generally read and applauded; has convinced Numbers, and has been no Occasion of trouble either to Bookseller or Author. It has also had the Advantage to have a most ingenious *Letter of John Hales of Eton* join'd to some Editions of it; who by this *Letter*, as well as by several others of his Pieces, shews himself to have been another *Socrates*, one of the greatest Masters of *true Wit* and *just Irony*, as well as Learning, which the World ever produc'd; and shews he could have writ such a Book as the *Difficulties*, &c. But if you are capable of coming into any Measures for punishing the Author of the *Difficulties*, &c. for his *Irony*, I conceive, that you may possibly hesitate a little in relation to the same Author, about his *New Defence of the Bishop of Bangor's Sermon of the Kingdom of Christ, consider'd as it is the Performance of a Man of Letters*; which, tho' far below *The Difficulties*, &c. is an ingenious *Irony* on that *Sermon*. You may probably, like many others of the Clergy, approve of Satire so well employ'd, as against that Bishop, who has succeeded Bishop *Burnet* in being the Subject of *Clergy-Ridicule*, as well as in his *Bishoprick*. The Bishop himself was very justly patient, under all Attacks by the Reverend *Trapp, Earbery, Snape, Law, and Luke Milbourne*, in his *Tom of Bedlam's Answer to his Brother Ben Hoadley, St. Peter's Poor Parson near the Exchange of Principles*; some of which were of a very abusive kind, and such as can hardly be parallel'd; and did not call upon the Magistrate to come to his Aid against that Author, or against any others of the Clergy who had attack'd him with as great Mockery, Ridicule, and Irony, as ever Bishop had been by the profess'd Adversaries of the Order; or as ever the Bishops had been by the *Puritans* and *Libellers* in the Reigns of Queen *Elizabeth*, King *James* and King *Charles* the First; or as *Lesley, Hickes, Hill, Atterbury, Binks*, and other High-Church Clergy, did the late Bishop *Burnet*. Instead of that he took the true and proper Method, by publishing an *Answer to the said Irony*, compos'd in the same *ironical Strain*, intitled, *The Dean of Worcester still the same: Or his new Defence of the Bishop of Bangor's Sermon, consider'd, as it is the Performance of a great Critick, a Man of Sense, and a Man of Probity*. Which Answer does, in my Opinion, as much Honour to the Bishop, by its Excellency in the *ironical Way*, as it does by allowing the Method it self, and going into that Method, in imitation of his Reverend Brethren of the Clergy, who appear to be under no Restraints from the *Immorality* or *Indecency* of treating the Bishop in the way of Ridicule and with the utmost Contempt; but, on the contrary, to be spurr'd on by the *Excellency* and *Propriety* thereof to use it against him, even in the [100] *Pulpit*, as Part of the religious Exercise on the *Lord's-day*.

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XI. There is an universal Love and Practice of *Drollery* and *Ridicule* in all, even the most *serious* Men, in the most *serious Places*, and on the most *serious Occasions*. Go into the Privy-Councils of Princes, into Senates, into Courts of Judicature, and into the Assemblies of the Kirk or Church; and you will find that Wit, good Humour, Ridicule, and Drollery, mix themselves in all the Questions before those Bodies; and that the most solemn and sour Person there present, will ever be found endeavouring, at least, to crack his Jest, in order to raise a Character for Wit; which has so great an Applause attending it, and renders Men so universally acceptable for their Conversation, and places them above the greatest Proficients in the Sciences, that almost every one is intoxicated with the Passion of aiming at it.

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In the Reports made to us of the Debates in the Houses of Lords, Commons, and Convocation, the serious Parts of the Speeches there made die for the most part with the Sound; but the Wit, the Irony, the Drollery, the Ridicule, the Satire, and Repartees, are thought worthy to be remember'd and repeated in Conversation, and make a Part of the History of the Proceedings of those Bodies, no less than their grave Transactions, as some such must necessarily be.

Whoever will look into Antiquity for an Account of the Lives, Actions, and Works of the old Philosophers, will find little remaining of them; but some of their witty, drolling, and bantering Sayings, which alone have been thought worthy to be preserv'd to Posterity. And if you will look into the Lives of the modern Statesmen, Philosophers, Divines, Lawyers, &c. you will find that their witty Sayings ever make a considerable Part: by reporting which great Honour is intended to be done to their Memory. The great and most religious Philosopher Dr. *H. More*, has a great many Pieces of Wit attributed to him in his *Life* by Mr. *Ward*, who represents him from his Companions, [101] *as one of the merriest Greeks they were acquainted with*, and tells us, that the Doctor said in his *last Illness*, to him [102], *that the merry way was that which he saw mightily to take; and so he used it the more*.

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The great and famous Sir *Thomas More*, Lord Chancellor of *England* in *Henry* the Eighth's time, was an inexhaustible Source of *Drollery* [103], as his voluminous Works, which consist for the most part of controversial Divinity in behalf of Popery, show, and which are many of them written in Dialogue, the better to introduce the *drolling* Way of Writing, which he has us'd in such Perfection, that it is said [104] *none can ever be weary of reading them, tho' they be never so long*. Nor could Death it self, in immediate view before his Eyes, suppress his *merry* Humour, and hinder him from cracking *Jests* on the *Scaffold*; tho' he was a Man of

great *Piety* and *Devotion*, whereof all the World was convinced by his Conduct both in his Life and at his Death.

It is said (as I have before observ'd) of my Lord Chancellor *Clarendon*, that "he had too much *Levity* in his *Wit*[105], and that he did not always observe the *Decorum* of his Post." Which implies not only his Approbation of *Drollery* in the most *grave* Business, but also his great Knowledge of Mankind, by applying to them in that *Way*; which he knew from Experience, and especially from the common *drolling* [106] Conversation in the Court of King *Charles* the Second, would recommend him to the World much more than an *impartial Administration of Justice*; which is less felt, less understood, and less taken notice of and applauded, than a *Piece of Wit*; which is generally suppos'd to imply in it a great deal of Knowledge, and a Capacity fit for any thing.

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Mr. *Whiston*[107], a famous Person among us, sets up for great *Gravity*, and proposes a Scheme of *Gravity* for the Direction of those who write about Religion: He is for allowing *Unbelievers*, nay for having them "invited by Authority to produce all the real or original Evidence they think they have discover'd against any Parts of the *Bible*; against any Parts of the *Jewish* and Christian Religions, in order to their being fully weigh'd and consider'd by all learned Men; provided at the same time, that the whole be done *gravely*, and *seriously*, without all *Levity*, *Banter*, and *Ridicule*." And yet this Man, having a handle given him by Bishop *Robinson's* Letter to the *Clergy* of his *Diocess* about *New Doxologies borrow'd from Old Hereticks*, takes the advantage of the Bishop's (supposed) Ignorance, Dulness, Stupidity, and Contradiction to himself, and writes and prints, like a *Tom Brown* or *Swift*, a most *bantering* and *drolling* Letter, under the sneering Title of a *Letter of Thanks to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of London, for his late Letter, &c.* whom, one would think, he should not only have spar'd, but have applauded for his *profound Gravity*, and carrying on the Cause of Religion in a very remarkable manner, with the most *consummate Solemnity*. But so strong was the Temptation, so naturally productive of Mirth was the Bishop's *Cause*, and his grave Management thereof, as that he could not help laughing at the Bishop, by himself; and so was led on mechanically to write in that Humour, and to publish what he wrote, and afterwards to defend his drole *Manner* [108] of attacking the Bishop, against those who took *offence* at that *Manner* of writing.

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XII. The burning Papists themselves are not always *serious* with us: They treat the Church and its Defenders as *fanatical*, and *laugh* at them as *such*, just as the Church does the Dissenters, and have their elaborate Works of *Drollery* against their Adversaries. They publish'd a Poem against the *Reformation*, just before the Death of Queen *Anne*, which was design'd to have given such a Stroke to the Protestant Religion among us, under the new projected Revolution, as *Hudibras* did to *Puritanism* after the *Restoration*. The Popish Editor, in the Preface to the said Poem, says, "that the Motive of the Author (*Thomas Ward*) for publishing the *History of the Reformation in a Burlesque Style* (tho a History full of melancholy Incidents, which have distracted the Nation, even beyond the hope of recovery, after so much Blood drawn from all its Veins, and from its Head) was that which he met with in Sir *Roger L'Estrange's* Preface to the second Part of his *Cit* and *Bumkin*, express'd in these Words; *Tho this way of fooling is not my Talent, nor Inclination; yet I have great Authorities for the taking up this Humour, in regard not only of the Subject, but of the Age we live in; which is so much upon the Drole, that hardly any thing else will down with it.*"

And the ingenious Protestant Editor of this Poem at *London*, which he allows to have some Wit in it, concludes the Remarks he makes upon it, by saying, "One thing more we can't forbear hinting at, that a Retaliation would be as happy a Thought as could enter into the Head of a Man of Genius and Spirit. What a fruitful Harvest would the Legends, Tricks, spiritual Jugglings, Convents, and Nunneries, yield to a good Poet? *Buchanan* in his *Franciscani*, and *Oldham* in his *Satires* on the Jesuits, have open'd the Way, and we heartily wish some equal Pen would write the whole Mystery of Iniquity at length."

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XIII. All the old Puritan Preachers, who were originally Divines of the Church of *England*, sprinkled and season'd their Sermons with a great many *drolling* Sayings against *Libertinism* and *Vice*, and against Church Ceremonies; many of which Sayings are reported and handed down to us in Books and Conversation, as are also the Effects of those Sayings, which we are told converted many to *Christ* on the Spot, or in the Instant of Delivery. Nor is that manner wholly laid aside, but has continued to be kept alive by some Hands at all times; who have been greatly follow'd for their Success in drolling upon *Sinners*, and treating of Religion in humoursom and fantastical Phrases, and fixing that way of Religion in some Mens Minds.

I do not remember to have met with a more complete Drole in the Church of *England*, or in any other of the *laughing* or *ridiculing* Sects, than *Andrew Marvel* of the grave *Puritan* Sect, in many Works of his both in Prose and Verse, but especially in his *Rehearsal Transposed*; which tho writ against *Parker*, who with great Eloquence, Learning, and a Torrent of Drollery and Satire, had defended the Court and Church's Cause, in asserting the Necessity of Penal Laws against the Nonconformists, "was read from the *King* down to the Tradesman with great pleasure, on account of that Burlesque Strain and lively Drollery that ran thro' it," as Bishop *Burnet* tells us[109]. Nor were the gravest *Puritans* and Dissenters among us

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less taken and pleas'd with his Writings for their *Drollery*, than our *drole King*; tho there are some Passages in them, which should give just Offence to chaste Ears.

I find also, that the *Puritans* and *Dissenters* have always born with, and allow'd of, a great Mixture of *Drollery* in their Sermons, that one would think should offend their Gravity, and pious Ears; and that they applaud their Ministers for such their Discourses, as much as the Church does Dr. *South* for the Ribaldry sprinkled thro'out his Sermons about the most high Points in Divinity. They have always had some eminent Divines among them who have been remarkable for such Passages and Reflections: And these have never lessen'd their number of Auditors, nor drawn upon themselves the Character of *Irreligious*; but have had the largest Auditories of contributing Hearers, as well as of Churchmen, who came to smile, and have been esteem'd very *pious* Men.

In fine, the *Puritans* and *Dissenters* have, like the Church, their Taste of Humour, Irony, and Ridicule, which they promote with great Zeal, as a Means to serve Religion: And I remember, that, among other things said in behalf of *Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress*, upon the reprinting it lately by Subscription, it was affirm'd, and that, in my Opinion, truly, "that it had infinitely out-done *The Tale of a Tub*; which perhaps had not made one Convert to Infidelity, whereas the *Pilgrim's Progress* had converted many Sinners to *Christ*."

XIV. The *Quakers* are certainly the most *serious* and solemn People among us in Matters of Religion, and out-go the Dissenters of all other Kinds therein: But yet the Church has no regard to them on that Account, but takes Advantage from thence to *ridicule* them the more, and to call their Sincerity more in question. And I much doubt whether there was ever a Book written against them by the Divines of any Sect with perfect Decency, and that had not its extravagant Flouts, Scorn, Banter, and Irony, and that not only of the *laughing*, but of the *cruel* kind: Wherein they copy'd after the *Jews* of old, who while they prosecuted *Christ* to Death, and carried on their High-Church Tragedy against him, acted against him the *comick Scenes* [110] "of spitting in his Face, and buffeting him with the Palms of their Hands, saying, *Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee;*" and who, when they had nail'd him to the Cross, *revil'd* him with divers *Taunts*, in which the *Chief Priests, Scribes, Elders*, and even the *Thieves, which were crucified with him*, concurr'd. But yet for all this, these solemn Quakers themselves are not altogether averse to *Irony* and *Ridicule*, and use it when they can. Their Books abound in Stories to ridicule in their Turn the Priests, their great and bitter Adversaries: And they please themselves with throwing at the Priests the *Centuries of Scandalous Ministers*, and the Books of the *Cobler of Glocester*. They have also their Satirist and Banterer, *Samuel Fisher*; whose Works, tho all wrote in the *drolling* Style and Manner, they pride themselves in, and have collected into one great Volume in *Folio*; in which Quaker-Wit and Irony are set up against Church, Presbyterian, and Independent Wit and Irony, without the least Scruple of the lawfulness of such Arms. In a word, their Author acts the Part of a *Jack-Pudding, Merry Andrew, or Buffoon*, with all the seeming Right, Authority, and Privilege, of the Member of some Establish'd Church of abusing all the World but themselves. The *Quakers* have also encourag'd and publish'd a most arch Book of the famous *Henry Stubbe*, intitled, *A Light shining out of Darkness, &c.* Wherein all the other religious Parties among us are as handsomly and learnedly banter'd and ridicul'd, as the *Quakers* have been in any Book against them. And when they were attack'd by one *Samuel Young*, a whimsical Presbyterian-Buffoon-Divine, who call'd himself *Trepidantium Malleus*, and set up for an Imitator of Mr. *Alsop*, in several Pamphlets full of Stories, Repartees, and Ironies; in which *Young*, perhaps, thought himself as secure from a Return of the like kind, as a Ruffian or Thief may when he assaults Men: His Attacks were repell'd in a Book intitled "*Trepidantium Malleus intrepidanter malleatus;* or the West Country Wiseaker's crack-brain'd *Reprimand* hammer'd about his own Numbscul. Being a *Joco-satirical* Return to a late Tale of a Tub, emitted by a reverend *Non-con*, at present residing not far from *Bedlam*," said to be written by *William Penn*, who has therein made use of the carnal Weapons of Irony and Banter, and dress'd out the Presbyterian Priest in a Fool's Coat, for a Spectacle to the Mob. It is also to be observ'd, that there are several Tracts in the two Volumes of *William Penn's* Works lately publish'd, that for ingenious Banter and Irony, are much superior to the Priests his Adversaries; and that other Quaker Authors profess to write sometimes in a [111] *drolling* Style.

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XV. The Jacobite Clergy have set up for great *Droles* upon all the true Friends of the *Establishment*. And I presume, the Body of our High Churchmen would not willingly deprive them of the Benefit of their *Drollery*.

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The celebrated Mr. *Collier* [112] thus attacks Bishop *Burnet*, for his *ESSAY on the Memory of Queen Mary*. "This Doctor, you know, is a Man of mighty *Latitude*, and can say any thing to serve a Turn; whose *Reverence* resolves Cases of Conscience backwards and forwards, disputes *pro* and *con*, praises and dispraises by secular Measures; with whom Virtue and Vice, passive Obedience and Rebellion, Parricide and filial Duty, Treachery and Faithfulness, and all the Contradictions in Nature, are the *best* and *worst* things under the Sun, as they are for his Purpose, and according as the Wind sits: who equally and indifferently writes for and against all Men, the Gospel, and himself too, as the World goes: who can bestow a Panegyrick upon the seven deadly Sins, and (if there be occasion) can make an Invective

against all the Commandments.—”

In relation to Dr. *Payne's Sermon* on the Death of that *Queen*, he says^[113], “that to go thro’ it is too great a Discipline for any Man, whose Palate hath ever relish’d any thing above *three half-penny Poetry*.” He adds, “Why, Sir, many Years ago I have heard some of it sung about the Streets in wretched and nauseous *Doggrel*. What think you of this? *Page 6. I know not how to draw her Picture, ’tis so all over beauteous, without any Foil, any Shade, any Blemish; so perfect in every Feature, so accomplish’d in every Part, so adorn’d with every Perfection and every Grace. O rare, Sir! here’s Phillis and Chloris, and Gillian a Croydon.*

“*Sh’ hath every Feature, every Grace,
‘So charming every part, &c.*

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“Tis no wonder he tells us, (*p. 8.*) of *strewing her with the Flowers of withered and decay’d Poetry*; for the *Song* out of which he hath transcrib’d his *Sermon*, is of very *great age*, and hath been sung at many a *Whitsun-Ale*, and many a *Wedding* (tho I believe never at a Funeral before) and therefore in all this time may well be *decay’d and wither’d*: In the mean time, if you were to draw the Picture of a *great Princess*, I fancy you would not make choice of *Mopsa* to sit to it. Alas! Sir, there was *Cassandra* and *Cleopatra*, and many a famed *Romance* more, which might have furnish’d him with handsome Characters, and yet he must needs be *preaching and instructing* his People out of *Hey down derry*, and the *fair Maid of Kent*. If he had intitled it, *The White-Chapel Ballad*, and got some body to set it to the Tune of *Amaryllis*, compos’d by *W. P. Songster*, the Character of the *Author*, the *Title*, and the *Matter*, would have very well agreed, and perhaps it might have passed at the Corners of the Streets; but to call it a *Sermon*, and by *W. P. Doctor* in *Divinity*, ’tis one of the *lewdest* things in the World.—”

Mr. *Lesley* attacks the Clergy, who pray’d “that God would give King *James* Victory over all his Enemies^[114], when that was the thing they least wish’d; and confess’d, that they labour’d all they could against it,” saying, “good God! What Apprehensions, what Thought had those Men of their publick Prayers; bantering God Almighty, and mocking him to his Face, who heard their Words, and saw their Hearts? Is not *Atheism* a smaller Sin than this, since it is better to have no God, than so to set up one *to laugh at him*.”

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Again he says, (*p. 123.*) “It is a severe Jest, that the common People have got up against the Clergy, that there was but one thing formerly which the Parliament could not do, that is, to make a Man a Woman: But now there is another, that is, to make an Oath which the Clergy will not take.”

The same Author attacks Bishop *Burnet's Speech upon the Bill against Occasional Conformity*, by a Pamphlet intitled, *The Bishop of Salisbury's proper Defence from a Speech cry'd about the Streets in his Name, and said to have been spoken by him in the House of Lords upon the Bill against Occasional Conformity*; which is one perpetual *Irony* on the Bishop, and gives the Author occasion to throw all manner of Satire and Abuse on the Bishop. The beginning of this Pamphlet, which is as follows, will let the Reader into the full Knowledge of the Design of the *Irony*, and the manner of Execution.

“The License of this Age and of the Press is so great, that no Rank or Quality of Men is free from the Insults of loose and extravagant Wits.

“The good Bishop of *Salisbury* has had a plentiful Share in this sort of Treatment: And now at last, some or other has presum’d to burlesque his Lordship in printing a Speech for him, which none that knows his Lordship can believe ever came from him.

“But because it may go down with others who are too apt to take Slander upon trust, and that his Lordship has already been pelted with several Answers to his Speech, I have presum’d to offer the following Considerations, to clear his Lordship from the Suspicion of having vented (in such an august Assembly) those crude and undigested Matters which are set forth in that Speech, and which so highly reflect on his Lordship’s self.”

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He has taken the same Method of *Irony* to attack the said Bishop for his *Speech* on the *Trial of Sacheverel*, and for a *Sermon*, under this Title, “The Good Old Cause, or Lying in Truth; being a Second Defence of the Lord Bishop of *Sarum* from a Second Speech, and also the Dissection of a Sermon it is said his Lordship preach’d in the Cathedral Church of *Salisbury*.” And this Pamphlet, which is also a continued Banter, begins thus.

“No Man has more deserv’d than this good Bishop, and no Man has been more persecuted by various Ways and Means than his Lordship, even to mobbing! But the ugliest and most malicious of all these Arts, is that of putting false Things upon him; to write scandalous, seditious, and senseless Papers, and to affix his Lordship’s Name! I was forc’d some Years ago to vindicate his Lordship’s Reputation from one of this sort: That Speech had a Bookseller’s Name to it of good figure, and look’d something like; but this Speech (said likewise to be spoken in the House of Lords) has no body to own it, and has all the Marks of *Grub*. But the nasty Phiz is nothing to the inside. That discovers the Man; the Heart is false.”

This same Author has thought fit to attack Mr. *Hoadley* (since a Bishop) in the way of Banter: His *Best Answer ever was made, and to which no Answer will ever be made*, is by his own Confession a *Farce*; when he says in his *Preface*, “If you ask why I treat this Subject by way of *farce*, and shew a little Merriment sometimes? it was because the Foundation you

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stand upon is not only *false* but *ridiculous*, and ought to be treated with the *utmost Contempt*."

Again, in his "*Finishing Stroke, in defence of his Rehearsals, Best Answer, and Best of all*," he gives us (p. 125.) what he calls, "A Battle-Royal between three Cocks of the Game, *Higden, Hoadley*, and a *Hottentot*;" which in the *Contents* he calls *A Farce*, and to which he joins both a *Prologue* and *Epilogue*, and divers other Particulars, all taken from the *Play-house*.

The Reverend Mr. *Matthias Earbery* sets up for a great Satirist and Drole upon the swearing and Low-Church Clergy, in numerous Pamphlets of late, more particularly in his "*Serious Admonition to Dr. Kennet*: To which is added, a short but complete Answer to Mr. *Marshal's* late Treatise called, *A Defence of our Constitution in Church and State*; and a Parallel is drawn between him and Dr. *Kennet*, for the Satisfaction of the unprejudic'd Reader."

He has a bantering Argument [115] to shew, that, "If in future Ages Mr. *Marshal's* Book should escape the just Judgment it deserves, of being condemn'd to the *Pastry-Cooks* and *Grocers*, an industrious Chronologist might make an Observation to prove him too young to write it."

The *Parallel* is in *Pag.* 126, which being very gross *Raillery*, I only refer you to it.

This Mr. *Earbery* also wrote a *Letter to Bishop Fleetwood*, under the Title of "A Letter to the Bishop of *Ely*, upon the Occasion of his *suppos'd* late *Charge*, said to be deliver'd at *Cambridge August 7, 1716, &c.*" in which he pursues the Ironical Scheme laid down in the said Title, and endeavours to *vindicate* his *Lordship from the Aspersion of writing such a mean Pamphlet*, as the *Charge*.

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Nor do these *Jacobites* confine their Drollery to their Adversaries without, but exercise it on one another, as may be seen in their late Dispute about King *Edward the Sixth's* Liturgy. And Mr. *Lesley* himself, happening to engage on the side opposite to the Traditions of the Fathers, and attacking those Traditions by Low-Church Notions and Arguments, and thereby running counter to all his former Books, is attack'd just in the same manner he attack'd Bishop *Burnet*, in a Book under this Title, "Mr. *Lesley's* Defence, from some erroneous and dangerous Principles, advanced in a Letter said to have been written concerning the New Separation." And it has several Paragraphs at the beginning in the very words of one of Mr. *Lesley's* Books against the said Bishop, as may be seen on Comparison.

XVI. *Christ-Church in Oxford* is no less famous for the *Drolling*, than for the *Orthodox* Spirit reigning there; and the former, being judged an excellent Method to support the latter, is cultivated among the Youth, and employ'd by the Members of that Society against all the supposed Adversaries of the Church, and encourag'd by the governing Ecclesiasticks there and elsewhere.

Among the many, who have receiv'd their Education there, and been form'd in Drollery, I will only instance in the Reverend Dr. *Atterbury* and Dr. *South*; who being as famous for *Drollery* as for Zeal for Religion, and applauded for their *Wit* no less than for their *Orthodoxy*; and particularly for employing the former in behalf of the latter, seem of sufficient Weight to bear down all Attempts to stifle their Productions. What Considerations can make us amends for the Loss of such excellent *drolling Writings*, which promote Religion as well as Mirth?

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With what incomparable Mockery, Ridicule and Sarcasm does Dr. *Atterbury* treat all the Low-Church Clergy that come in his way, together with the *Whig* Ministry and Administration in his several *Convocational Tracts*? Dr. *Wake*, our present Archbishop of *Canterbury*, is represented by him as writing so *contumeliously* [116] of the Clergy, *that had he not inform'd us in his Title Page who he was, we should rather have guess'd him to have been of the Cabal against Priests and Priestcraft, than one of the Order*; and as wholly govern'd by [117] *Interest* in the *Debate*, and as giving us a most [118] *shallow empty Performance* in relation to our Ecclesiastical Constitution, which he [119] *has done his best to undermine*, as knowing himself to be in the wrong; and as *deserving* any Name or Censure, none being *too bad to be bestow'd* on him; and in fine, as *the least of the little officious Pens by which he expects to be traduc'd*.

Dr. *Bentley* is represented as *wrote out of Reputation into Preferment*; which, whether it be a more severe Sarcasm on the Doctor, than on the Government, is hard to determine; and besides, it gives Applause to one of the most drolling and bantering Performances that this drolling Age has produc'd, I mean Dr. *Bentley's Dissertations on the Epistles of Phalaris, and the Fables of Æsop, examin'd*.

Bishop *Burnet* is a standing Subject of Ridicule with him; as are Bishop *Nicholson*, Bishop *Kennet*, Bishop *Gibson*, Bishop *Trimnel* [to whom he writes a most drolling [120] Letter] and Dr. *West*; and all the Topicks that can affect them as Scholars, as honest Men, and Clergymen, are employ'd to render them *ridiculous*, and set the World a laughing at them, who are not in the least spar'd for their being of the Holy Order; but on the contrary seem more loaded and baited with Sarcasms for that reason.

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For a *Specimen*, take this Banter or Burlesque upon Bishop *Kennet's* Dedication of his *Ecclesiastical Synods and Parliamentary Convocations, &c.* to the Archbishop of *Canterbury*; which Banter runs thus^[121].

“*May it please your Grace,*

“Mr. *Atterbury* has lately forc'd a Dedication upon you, which favours too much of Presumption or Design; he has presum'd to surprize you with an unexpected Address, and appears very indecently before your Grace, because he has taken no care to express upon this Subject a due Respect and Reverence to the Governors in Church and State, such as is suitable to the Christian Religion, and his particular Function: The Reports and Authorities in his Book are Fruits of other Mens Collections, not the immediate Effects of his own Searches into *Registers* and *Records*; he imperiously summons your Grace and my Lords the Bishops to an immediate Compliance upon pain of being pronounc'd Betrayers of the Church—This, my Lord, is the Character of the Person *I set up* against; but as for me, I am quite another sort of Man, I am very well bred, a great Antiquary, beholden to no body, *some Wits and merry Folks call me a Tool and a Play-thing* (*Pref. p. 8.*) But I assure your Grace, that what Freedom soever I may have taken in taxing the Vices of the inferior *Clergy*, (*p. 77. 188.*) and in reflecting upon the *ambitious Designs of dignify'd Presbyters* (*p. 196.*); yet *I am however tender and dutiful in treating the Governors of our Church* (*p. 78.*); especially *those of them who are of the Ecclesiastical Commission for Preferments*, (*p. 311.*) I have a very great Respect and Reverence for every body that will give me any thing; and how resolute soever Mr. *Atterbury* may be, your Grace may do what you please with

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Your Grace's most humble

and obedient Servant,

WHITE KENNET.

But for *Drollery*, the Reverend Dr. *South* outdoes even *Christ-Church*, and fills all his Performances with it, and throws it out against the Enemies of the Church, and in particular against the late Dr. *Sherlock*, whom he thought fit to single out. I shall select some Passages from his Writings against the said Doctor, which cannot but entertain the High-Church Orthodox Reader, and reconcile him to a *Drollery* so well employ'd.

He stiles him *a great good Man, as a certain poor Wretch, meaning Prior, calls him.*

Again, he says^[122], “There is hardly any one Subject which he (that is Dr. *Sherlock*) has wrote upon Popery excepted, that he has wrote both for it and against it. Could any thing be more sharp and bitter against the Dissenters than what this Man wrote in his *Answer* to the *Protestant Reconciler*; and yet how frankly, or rather fulsomly does he open both his Arms to embrace them in his Sermon preach'd before the Lord Mayor on *November 4, 1688.* Tho I dare say, that the Dissenters themselves are of that Constancy, as to own that they were of the same Principles in 88 that they were of in 85; but the Truth is, old Friendships cannot be so easily forgot: And it has been an Observation made by some, that hardly can any one be found, who was first tainted with a Conventicle, whom a Cathedral could ever after cure, but that still upon every cross turn of Affairs against the *Church*, the irresistible *Magnetism* of the *Good Old Cause* (as some still think it) would quickly draw him out of the *Good Old Way.* The Fable tells us of a *Cat* once turn'd into a *Woman*, but the next sight of a *Mouse* quickly dissolv'd the *Metamorphosis*, cashier'd the *Woman*, and restor'd the *Brute.* And some *Virtuosi* (skill'd in the *useful Philosophy* of *Alterations*) have thought her much a Gainer by the latter Change, there being so many unlucky Turns in the World, in which it is not half so safe and advantageous to *walk upright*, as to be *able to fall always upon one's Legs.*”

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Again, Dr. *South* says^[123], “When I consider how wonderfully pleas'd the Man is with these two new started Terms (*Self-consciousness* and *mutual Consciousness*) so high in Sound and so empty of Sense, instead of one substantial word (*Omniscience*) which gives us all that can be pretended useful in them, with vast Overplus and Advantage, and even swallows them up, as *Moses's* Rod did those pitiful Tools of the *Magicians*: This (I say) brings to my mind (whether I will or no) a certain Story of a grave Person, who riding in the Road with his Servant, and finding himself something uneasy in his Saddle, bespoke his Servant thus: *John* (says he) *alight, and first take off the Saddle that is upon my Horse, and then take off the Saddle that is upon your Horse; and when you have done this, put the Saddle that was upon my Horse, upon your Horse; and put the Saddle that was upon your Horse, upon my Horse.* Whereupon the Man, who had not studied the Philosophy of Saddles (whether *Ambling* or *Trotting*) so exactly as his Master, replies something short upon him; *Lord, Master, what need all these words? Could you not as well have said, Let us change Saddles?* Now I must confess, I think the Servant was much in the right; tho the Master having a *rational Head of his own*, and being withal willing to make the *Notion* of *changing* Saddles more *plain, easy* and *intelligible*, and to give a clearer Explication of that word (which his Forefathers, how good *Horsemen* soever they might have been, yet were *not equally happy in explaining of*

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was pleas'd to set it forth by that more full and accurate Circumlocution."

He says[124], *The Author*, Dr. *Sherlock*, is no doubt a Grecian in his Heart! And the tenth Chapter of the *Animadversions* is one continued Banter upon the *Dean* for his Ignorance in *Greek* and *Latin*, and even his Inability to spell: All which he *closes* with saying, "That St. *Paul's School* is certainly an excellent School, and St. *Paul's Church* a most noble Church; and therefore he thinks that he directs his Course very prudently, and happily too, who in his Passage to such a *Cathedral*, takes a School in his way."

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Again, he says[125], "He cannot see any new Advantage that the *Dean* has got over the *Socinians*, unless it be, that the *Dean* thinks his *three Gods* will be too hard for their *one*."

After citing several Scurrilities of the *Dean*[126], (who it must be confess'd, appears therein a great Banterer also of Dr. *South* and his Performance) the Dr. says, "These, with several more of the like *Gravel-Lane Elegancies*, are all of them such peculiar Strictures of the *Dean's Genius*, that he might very well spare his Name, where he had made himself so well known by his Mark; for all the foregoing *Oyster-Wive-Kennel-Rhetorick* seems so naturally to flow from him, who had been so long Rector of St. *Botolph* (with the well-spoken *Billingsgate* under his Care) that (as much a Teacher as he was) it may well be question'd, whether he has learn'd more from his Parish, than his Parish from him.—All favours of the Porter, the Carman, and the Waterman; and a pleasant Scene it must be to see the *Master of the Temple* laying about him in the Language of the Stairs."

To the *Dean's* Scoff, that *this Argument*, &c. was worth its weight in Gold, tho the *Dean* fears it will not much enrich the Buyer, the Doctor replies[127], "What is that to him? Let him mind his own Markets, who never writes to enrich the Buyer but the Seller; and that Seller is himself: and since he is so, well is it for his Books and his Bookseller too, that Men generally buy before they read."

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In requital of the scurrilous Character of an ingenious Blunderer, Dr. *South* says[128], "He must here return upon him the just Charge of an impious Blasphemer, and that upon more Accounts than one; telling him withal, that had he liv'd in the former Times of the Church, his Gown would have been stript off his Back for his detestable Blasphemies and Heresies, and some other Place found out for him to perch in than the Top of St. *Paul's*, where at present he is placed like a true Church Weather-Cock, (as he is) notable for nothing so much, as standing high and turning round."

Again, he says[129], "And so I take my leave of the *Dean's three distinct infinite Minds, Spirits, or Substances*, that is to say, of his *three Gods*; and having done this, methinks I see him go whimpering away with his Finger in his Eye, and the Complaint of *Micah* in his Mouth, *Ye have taken away my Gods which I made, and what have I more*[130]? Tho he must confess, he cannot tell why he should be so fond of them, since he dares undertake that he will never be able to bring the Christian World either to believe in, or to worship a *Trinity of Gods*: Nor does he see what use they are likely to be of, even to himself, unless peradventure to swear by."

Again, the Doctor says[131], "The *Dean's* following Instruction to his Friend is certainly very diverting, in these words, where the Animadverter charges the *Dean* with Absurdities and Contradictions; turn to the Place and read it with its Context, and tell me what you cannot answer, and I will; to which he would have done well to have added, *If I can*. But the whole Passage is just as if he had said, Sir, if you find not Contradictions and Absurdities enough in my Book to satisfy your Curiosity that way, pray come to the Fountain-head, and consult me, and you shall be sure of a more plentiful Supply."

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Again, upon the *Dean's* "Frequent reproaching the [132] Animadverter with the Character of a *Wit*, tho join'd with such ill-favour'd Epithets, as his witless Malice has thought fit to degrade it with, as that he is a *spiteful Wit*, a *wrangling Wit*, a *satirical Wit*, and the *WITTY, subtle, good-natur'd Animadverter*, &c. the Dr. says, that tho there be but little *Wit* shewn in making such Charges; yet if *Wit* be a *Reproach* (be it of what sort it will) the Animadverter is too just to return this *Reproach* upon the *Defender*; and withal, understands himself, and what becomes him, too well, either to *assume* to himself, or so much as to *admit* the Character of a *Wit*, as at all due to him; especially since he knows that *common Sense* (a thing much short of *Wit*) is enough to enable him to deal with such an Adversary. Nevertheless, there are many in the World, who are both call'd and accounted *Wits*, and really are so; which (one would think) should derive something of Credit upon this Qualification, even in the Esteem of this Author himself, or at least rebate the Edge of his Invectives against it, considering that it might have pleas'd God to have made him a *Wit* too."

XVII. As things now stand, it may easily be seen, that Prosecutions for *Raillery* and *Irony* would not be relish'd well by the Publick, and would probably turn to the Disreputation and Disgrace of the Prosecutor.

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Archbishop *Laud* has always been much censur'd for his malicious Prosecution of *Williams* in the *Star-Chamber*; among whose Crimes I find the following laid to his Charge: [133] *That he said all Flesh in England had corrupted their Ways*; that he call'd a Book intitled, A Coal from the Altar (written by Dr. *Heylin*, for placing the Communion-Table at the East-end of

the Church, and railing it in) a *Pamphlet*; that he *scoffingly* said, that he had heard of a *Mother Church*, but not of a *Mother Chapel*, meaning the *King's*, to which all Churches in Ceremony ought to conform; that he wickedly jested on *St. Martin's Hood*; that he said the *People* ought not to be lash'd by every body's *Whip*; that he said, (citing a *National Council* for it) that the *People* are *God's* and the *King's*, and not the *Priest's* *People*; and that he doth not allow *Priests* to jeer and make *Invectives* against the *People*. And I humbly conceive, that such Matters had much better be suffer'd to go on in the World, and take their Course, than that Courts of Judicature should be employ'd about them. A Sentence that imply'd some *Clergymen* corrupt, as well as some *Laymen*, of whom *Laud* would only allow to have it said, that they had *corrupted their Ways*; a *Jest* upon *St. Martin's Hood*, which, according to Ecclesiastical History, *cur'd sore Eyes*; and a *Ridicule* upon a High-Church Book of *Heylin's*, by calling it a *Pamphlet*, tho it was really a *Pamphlet*, as consisting of but seventy Pages in Quarto; seem less *wicked* and hurtful than disturbing, fining, and undoing Men about them. And the having some Concern for the *People*, that they should not be used as the *Priest* pleas'd; that the *People* belong to *God* and the *King*, and not to the *Priest*; and the not allowing the *Priests* to jeer and make *Invectives* against the *People*; seem all Errors fit to be born with.

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Archbishop *Laud* was also thought guilty of an excessive Piece of Weakness in the Punishment of [134] *Archibald* the *King's* Fool, by laying the Matter before the Privy-Council, and occasioning him to be expell'd the *King's* House for a poor *Jest* upon himself; who, as he was a Man at the Head of the State, should have despis'd such a thing in any Body, much more in a *Fool*, and who should never have been hurried on to be the Instrument of any *Motion* against him, but have left it to others; who upon the least Intimation would have been glad to make their court to *Laud*, by sacrificing a *Fool* only to his Resentment.

XVIII. I could have entertain'd the Reader with a great Variety of Passages out of the Fathers of the Church, whose Writings are Magazines of Authority, and urg'd upon us upon all Occasions by Ecclesiasticks, and are particularly full of *Burlesque* and *Ridicule* on the *Gods* and *Religion* of the *Pagans*; in the use whereof they are much more unanimous, than in the Articles of their *Creed*. But that being a Subject too great and extensive for a Digression, I shall content my self with the few following Reflections; which will sufficiently evince, that the *Taste* of the Primitive Christians was like that of the rest of the World; that they could laugh and be as merry as the *Greeks* and other *Pagans*; and that they would take the Advantage of the *Pagans* weak Cause, to introduce *Ridicule*, which always bears hard upon Weakness and Folly, and must load them so as to prevent a Possibility of their being remov'd by another *Ridicule*.

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These Fathers have transfused into their Writings all the Wit and Raillery of the antient *Pagan* Writers and Philosophers; who it is well known wrote a great deal to turn *Paganism* into *Ridicule*; most of which now exists no where but in the Works of the Fathers; all Books of that kind being lost, except *Cicero's* Books of *the Nature of Gods*, and of *Divination*, and the Dialogues of *Lucian*; both which Authors have been of great use to the *Fathers* to set them up for *Wits*, *Droles*, and *Satirists*. For a Specimen how well these antient *Pagans* could *drole*, and how much beholden we are to the Fathers for recording their Drolleries, the most remarkable, I think, are some *Fragments* of a Book of *Oenomaus* concerning the *Pagan Oracles*, cited and preserv'd by [135] *Eusebius*; who has given us occasion to [136] regret the loss of this Work, as one of the most valuable Books written by the Antients on the Subject of *Oracles*, tho those Books were very numerous. And it is to be observ'd, that this Book and a great many, perhaps a [137] thousand more, were publish'd in *Greece*, where the Imposture of *Oracles* greatly prevail'd, and great Wealth flow'd in, not only to the *Priests* of the *Oracular Temples*, but to all the Inhabitants of *Greece*, and especially to those who lived in the Neighbourhood of the several *Oracular Temples*; who made a great Profit from the rich Travellers, that came from all Parts of the World to know their Fortunes. This shews the great Integrity and Fairness of the old *Pagans*; who would suffer not only their supposed standing Revelation to be call'd in question, but a Revelation that brought in as much Money, as the Chapels, Churches, and Shrines dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, or to any of the Saints, do in the *Roman* Church, without calling any Man to Account for the Liberties they took; who, as far as appears, were not expos'd [138] to any *Danger* thereby. It is also to be observ'd, that the merry [139] *Epicureans* were none of them ever prosecuted, and that *Epicurus* himself died quietly at Athens in a very great old Age.

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But the Book, which the Fathers made the most use of, was that arch, fly, and drolling Performance, now lost, of *Evemerus*, which he intitled, *A sacred History*: wherein he gave an historical Account of the *Birth*, *Country*, *Lives*, *Deaths*, and *Burials* of the *Gods*. This Work was translated into *Latin* by that arch Wag *Ennius*, who himself has most ingeniously ridicul'd several Impostors or very grave Persons, in a remarkable Piece of Poetry, which I shall give my Reader in *English*.

"I value not a Rush the Marsian Augur,
"Nor Country-Fortune Tellers, nor Town-Star-Gazers,
"Nor jugling Gypsies, nor yet Dream-Interpreters:
"For, not by Skill or Art, are these Diviners;
"But superstitious Prophets, Guessers impudent,
"Or idle Rogues, or craz'd, or mere starving Beggars.

"They know no way themselves, yet others would direct;
"And crave a Groat of those, to whom they promise Riches:
"Thence let them take the Groat, and give back all the rest.

XIX. Wherefore I cannot but presume, that an Attempt to make a *Law* to restrain *Irony*, &c. would prove abortive, and that the Attempt would be deem'd the Effect of a very partial Consideration of things, and of present Anger at a poor Jest; which Men are not able to bear themselves, how much soever they abound in *Jests*, both of the *light* and *cruel* kind, on others: tho for my own part I concur heartily with you in *making* such a *Law*, and in leaving it to a Person of your *Equity* to draw it up, craving only the Liberty to propose an Amendment or Addition, *viz.* that you would be pleas'd to insert a Clause to prevent *Irony*, *Ridicule*, and *Banter*, from invading the Pulpit, and particularly to prevent pointing out *Persons of Men* [140] from thence, and reviling them, as also reviling whole Bodies of Men: For whatever is immoral in Print, is, in my Opinion, immoral in the Pulpit. Besides, these things seem more improper in the Pulpit, than they can be in Print: because no *Reprisals* can be made in the former, as in the latter Case; where they, or the Fear of them, may give some Check to the Disorder, and reduce things to a tolerable Temper and Decency. If, in order to justify my Motion, it could be thought necessary or proper here to give a Detail of ridiculing and ironical Passages, taken from Sermons against particular Men, and Bodies of Men, and their Doctrines, you cannot but know how easy it would be to fill a Volume with them, without going to Authors, who have occasionally produc'd abundance of them. And I will only mention here a Passage in a *Volume of Sermons*, just now publish'd, of a well known *High Divine*, the Reverend Mr. *William Reeves*, made famous by his *Translation* of some *Apologies of the Primitive Fathers*, which gain'd him the Applauses of a great many *High Men*, and particularly *Hickes*, *Dodwel*, and *Nelson*, &c. and a Recommendation from the last to the Queen, who in the latter end of her Reign made him *Chaplain in Ordinary*, and obtain'd for him a considerable Preferment. This Gentleman, attacking Bishop *Hoadley's Sermon of The Kingdom of Christ*, says[141], "In these last Days we have been taught to be as indolent and unconcern'd as possible in the Service of God: A noted *Novellist* [Bp. *Hoadley*] among many other odd *Engines*, hath invented one, to pump out all Devotion from Prayer, and make it a *Vacuum*. Instead of the old fervent, affectionate way of Worshipping, he hath substituted a new Idol, a Vanity, a Nothing of his own, a *calm and undisturb'd Address to God*.—The *Arrows* and *bitter Words* Mr. *Hales* hath levell'd against *Rome* only, our Right Reverend hath *pointed a-new*, and shot them full against the Church he superintends, and with all the Force of inbred, fanatick Fury. And by this time surely it is well known, that he is a very *warm Man* in every thing, but his *Prayers*."

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XX. Instead of addressing the foregoing Papers to you, I could have address'd them to several others; who of late have thought fit to recognize the Right of Men, to examine into, and judge for themselves in all Matters of speculation, and especially in Matters of mere Religion, and to publish their Reasons against any Opinions they judge erroneous, tho publicly receiv'd in the Country where they live, provided they do it *seriously* and *gravely*: which is a noble Progress in Truth, and owing to that glorious Liberty, and Freedom of Debate, that we enjoy under our most excellent Princes; and which extorts it even from them, who, to have some Credit in the World, are forced to own, what would discredit them to go on to deny, among all who have any degree of *Virtue*, *Sense*, and *Learning*. But I was determin'd to address my self to you, as a Person of more remarkable *Moderation* than ordinary in your *Letter* to Dr. *Rogers*: And one, who had, long before, in your *Defence of the Constitution in Church and State; in answer to the Charge of the Nonjurors, accusing us of Heresy and Schism, Perjury and Treason*, "valu'd [142] and commended the Integrity of the Nonjurors in declaring their Sentiments:" and who, tho you justly charge those of them you write against, "as attacking us with such uncommon Marks of Violence [143] as most plainly intimate, that no Measures are intended to be kept with us by them in the Day of their Prosperity, who in the Day of their Adversity, even when they are most at Mercy, cannot refrain from such *raging* Provocations; but when reduced to the Necessity of *taking* Quarter, profess most plainly they will never give it:" Yet as to these Enemies, who would destroy our Church and State, and [144] "revive upon us the Charge of *Heresy* and *Schism*, *Perjury* and *Treason*, Crimes of no small figure either in the Law or in the Gospel," you only say, that "if you may have leave to borrow a Thought from [145] one of their own most celebrated Writers, you would tell them, that *the Blood and Spirits were made to rise upon such Occasions*: Nature design'd not, that we should be cold or indifferent in our manner of receiving, or returning, such foul Reproaches." This is great Moderation, and such as I heartily approve, being dispos'd to forgive the Punishment due by Law to any Fault, when the Non-execution of it will not overturn the Government. And I am willing to hope, that since you can think that such bitter Adversaries to you, as these licentious *Jacobites* are, should only be smartly replied to, and not be prosecuted by the Government, you will, upon Reflection, think, that a merry, good humour'd Adversary should be treated as well.

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Tho I have endeavour'd to defend the Use of *Ridicule* and *Irony*, yet it is such *Irony* and *Ridicule* only as is fit for polite Persons to use. As to the gross *Irony* and *Ridicule*, I disapprove of it, as I do other Faults in Writing; only I would not have Men punish'd, or any other way disturb'd about it, than by a Return of *Ridicule* and *Irony*. This I think fit to

conclude with, more to prevent Misrepresentation from others, than from you; whom I look on to have too much Sense and Integrity to mistake or misrepresent me.

I am Yours, &c.

F I N I S.

Footnotes:

- [28] *Page* 337.
- [29] *Pag.* 302.
- [30] *Page* 301.
- [31] *Pag.* 307.
- [32] Stillingfleet's *Answer to several late Treatises, &c.* *Page* 14.
- [33] *Pag.* 71.
- [34] *Vindication of the Answer to the Royal Papers.* *p.* 105.
- [35] *Preface to Unreasonableness of Separation.* *p.* 62.
- [36] *Rule's Rational Defence of Nonconf.* *p.* 29.
- [37] *Preface to Stillingfleet still against Stillingfleet.*
- [38] *Preface to a Discourse of Miracles wrote in the Roman Church, &c.*
- [39] See *Stillingfleet's Second Vind. of the Protestant Grounds of Faith, c.* 3.
- [40] *Edwards's New Discov.* *p.* 184-215.
- [41] *Ecclesiast. Hist. cent. 8.* *p.* 196.
- [42] *Vind.* *p.* 199.
- [43] See Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks*, Vol. I. *p.* 61.
- [44] *Memoirs de Trevoux, An. 1707.* *p.* 396. *An. 1717.* *p.* 1200.
- [45] *Trapp's Popery truly stated,* *p.* 123.
- [46] *Preface.*
- [47] *Heylin's History of the Presbyterians,* *p.* 391.
- [48] *Wotton on the Misna,* *p.* 118.
- [49] *Freeholder,* N^o 30.
- [50] *Freeholder,* Numb. xlv.
- [51] See Cicero de Officiis, *l.* 1. *c.* 30.
- [52] See Patrick's *Friendly Debate*, Part 1, *p.* 139-141. *5th Edit.*
- [53] *Preface to The State of the Roman Catholick Religion,* *p.* 11.
- [54] *De Divin.* *l.* 2. *c.* 25.
- [55] *Rog. Hoveden,* Pars ii. *p.* 520.
- [56] *1 Kings* xviii.
- [57] *Psalm* ii. 4.
- [58] *Gen.* iii. 22.
- [59] *Archæolog. Philos.* *l.* 2. *c.* 7.
- [60] Shaftesbury *in Charact.* Vol. 3. and *Whitchcot's Sermons:* Vol. I.
- [61] Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks*, Vol. I. *p.* 71.
- [62] *Page* 307.
- [63] *How useful* LeStrange's *Observers, which were design'd to expose the Dissenters to Contempt and Persecution, were deem'd to the Church at the time they were publish'd,*

may be judged of by Bp. Burnet, who says [in his Eighteen Papers, p. 90.] "Another Buffoon was hired to plague the Nation with three or four Papers a Week, which to the Reproach of the Age in which we live, had but too great and too general Effect, for poisoning the Spirits of the Clergy."

[64] *In this Work the Dissenters and Low Churchmen are sufficiently rally'd and abus'd, and particularly the Free-Thinkers, whose Creed is therein represented as consisting of these two Negatives, No Queen and no God. Examiners, Vol. 3. p. 12.*

Mr. Addison tells us [Freeholder N^o. 19.] "the Examiner was the favourite Work of the Party. It was usher'd into the World by a Letter from a Secretary of State, setting forth the great Genius of the Author, the Usefulness of his Design, and the mighty Consequences that were to be expected from it. It is said to be written by those among them whom they look'd upon as their most celebrated Wits and Politicians, and was dispers'd into all Quarters of the Nation with great Industry and Expence.—In this Paper all the great Men who had done eminent Services to their Country, but a few Years before, were draughted out one by one, and baited in their Turns. No Sanctity of Character, or Privilege of Sex exempted Persons.—Several of our Prelates were the standing Marks of publick Raillery.—"

[65] *In his Ecclesiastical Policy, his Defence and Continuation thereof, and his Reproof to Marvel's Rehearsal transpos'd.*

[66] *In his Friendly Debates.*

[67] *In his six Volumes of Sermons, and in his Books of the Trinity.*

[68] *In his Discourse of the Knowledge of Christ, &c. his Defences of Dr. Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of Separation, and his Answer to the Protestant Reconciler.*

[69] *In his Translation of Dryden's Absalom and Achitophel into Latin Verse, whereby he was first flush'd; and in his Convocational Controversy, and in his numerous State Libels.*

[70] *In his Sermons, Rights of the Church, and especially his Character of a Low-Churchman, drawn to abuse Bishop Floyd.*

[71] *Of this, the Trials of Penn and Mead before Howel, and of Baxter before Jefferys, are Master Pieces; of which last you have an Account in Kennet's Compleat History of England, Vol. 3d. and of the former in the Phoenix, Vol. I.*

[72] *Snape's Vindication against Pilloniere. p. 50.*

[73] *Id. p. 63.*

[74] *The Stage condemn'd, p. 2.*

[75] *Popery truly stated, p. 127, 128.*

[76] *Pag. 75, 76, 77, 79, 81, 112, 113, 120, 122, 124, 125.*

[77] *Sermons, Vol. III. p. 299.*

[78] *Rule of Faith, p. 347, 348.*

[79] *See p. 57.*

[80] *Pag. 59.*

[81] *Pag. 57.*

[82] *Burnet's History of his own Times, p. 674.*

[83] *Ib. p. 792.*

[84] *Ibid. p. 740.*

[85] *Ibid. p. 683.*

[86] *The Protestant Mouse speaks.*

[87] *Boyer's Life of Queen Anne, in the Annual List of the Deaths, p. 65.*

[88] *A Clergyman preach'd thus to his Auditory: "You have Moses and Aaron before you, and the Organs behind you, so are a happy People; for what greater Comfort would mortal Men have?" See Walker's Sufferings, &c. p. 178.*

[89] *See the Article Heylin, in Wood's Athenæ Oxon.*

[90] *Burnet's Hist. p. 100.*

[91] *Characteristicks, Vol. I. p. 259.*

[92] *Burnet. ibid.*

[93] *Page 177.*

- [94] Burnet *p.* 95.
- [95] Kennet's *Register*, *p.* 258.
- [96] *Ibid.* *p.* 516.
- [97] Burnet's *Hist.*
- [98] Kennet's *Register*, *p.* 111.
- [99] Burnet's *History*, *p.* 107.
- [100] *See the Bp. of Bangor's Preface to the Answer to the Representation of the Lower House of Convocation.*
- [101] Ward's *Life of Dr. Henry More*, *p.* 120.
- [102] *Ibid.* *p.* 122.
- [103] *See the several Lives of him.*
- [104] *Life lately printed*, 1726. *p.* 99.
- [105] Burnet's *Hist.* *p.* 95.
- [106] Temple's *Works*, Vol. II. *p.* 40.
- [107] *Collection of authentick Records*, Vol. II. *p.* 1099.
- [108] *Second Letter to the Bishop of London*, *p.* 3, 4.
- [109] *History*, *p.* 260.
- [110] *Mat.* xxvi. 67, 68.
- [111] Elwood's *History of his own Life*, &c. *p.* 318.
- [112] *Remarks on some late Sermons*, &c. *p.* 34.
- [113] *Pag.* 52.
- [114] *Answer to State of the Protestants in Ireland*, &c. *p.* 108.
- [115] *Pag.* 120, 121.
- [116] *Preface*, *p.* 14.
- [117] *Pag.* 11, 24.
- [118] *Pag.* 1.
- [119] *Pag.* 4, 11, 12, 13, 19.
- [120] Appendix to Parliamentary Original, &c. *p.* 14.
- [121] Some Remarks on the Temper of some late Writers, &c. *p.* 33.
- [122] Preface to *Animad.* *p.* 12, 13.
- [123] *Animad.* *p.* 114.
- [124] *Ibid.* *p.* 332.
- [125] *Ibid.* *p.* 348.
- [126] Tritheism charged, *p.* 2, 3.
- [127] *Ib.* *p.* 108.
- [128] *Ibid.* *p.* 170.
- [129] *Ibid.* *p.* 281.
- [130] *Judg.* 18.24.
- [131] *Ib.* *p.* 285.
- [132] *Ibid.* *p.* 299.
- [133] *Fuller's Church History*, Cent. 17. B. 11. Sect. 89, Parag. 10.
- [134] *Rushworth*, Part II. Vol. I. *p.* 471.
- [135] *Prap. Evang.* l. 4. *p.* 209-234.
- [136] Fontenelle, *Historie des Oracles*. I. Dissert. c. vii.
- [137] Euseb. *Id.* l. 4.
- [138] *Baltus*, Suite de la Reponse a l'His. des Oracles, *p.* 283.

[139] *Ibid.*

[140] *Bp. Hoadley's Answer to the Representation, &c. Pref.* p. 12.

[141] *Page* 91.

[142] *Page* 2.

[143] *Page* 1.

[144] *Page* 4, 5.

[145] *Mr. Collier.*

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4. *After THE TEMPEST* (the Dryden-Davenant version of *The Tempest* [1670]; the "operatic" *Tempest* [1674]; Thomas Duffett's *Mock-Tempest* [1675]; and the "Garrick" *Tempest* [1756]), with an Introduction by George Robert Guffey. 332 pages.

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