
AN
A P O L O G Y

For the, &c.

I *F good and ill Nature equally operated upon Mankind, I might have saved my self the Trouble of this Apology; for it is manifest by the Reception the following Discourse hath met with, that those who approve it, are a great Majority among the Men of Tast; yet there have been two or three Treatises written expresly against it, besides many others that have flirted at it occasionally, without one Syllable having been ever published in its Defence, or even Quotation to its Advantage, that I can remember,*
10 *except by the Polite Author of a late Discourse between a Deist and a Socinian.*

Therefore, since the Book seems calculated to live at least as long as our Language, and our Tast admit no great Alterations, I am content to convey some Apology along with it.

15 *The greatest Part of that Book was finished above thirteen Years since, 1696, which is eight Years before it was published. The Author was then young, his Invention at the Height, and his Reading fresh in his Head. By the Assistance of some Thinking, and much Conversation, he had endeavour'd to Strip himself of as*
20 *many real Prejudices as he could; I say real ones, because under*

the Notion of Prejudices, he knew to what dangerous Heights some Men have proceeded. Thus prepared, he thought the numerous and gross Corruptions in Religion and Learning might furnish Matter for a Satyr, that would be useful and diverting: He resolved
5 *to proceed in a manner, that should be altogether new, the World having been already too long nauseated with endless Repetitions upon every Subject. The Abuses in Religion he proposed to set forth in the Allegory of the Coats, and the three Brothers, which was to make up the Body of the Discourse. Those in Learning he*
10 *chose to introduce by way of Digressions. He was then a young Gentleman much in the World, and wrote to the Tast of those who were like himself; therefore in order to allure them, he gave a Liberty to his Pen, which might not suit with maturer Years, or graver Characters, and which he could have easily corrected with a*
15 *very few Blots, had he been Master of his Papers for a Year or two before their Publication.*

Not that he would have governed his Judgment by the ill-placed Cavils of the Sour, the Envious, the Stupid, and the Tastless, which he mentions with disdain. He acknowledges there
20 *are several youthful Sallies, which from the Grave and the Wise may deserve a Rebuke. But he desires to be answerable no farther than he is guilty, and that his Faults may not be multiply'd by the ignorant, the unnatural, and uncharitable Applications of those who have neither Candor to suppose good Meanings, nor Palate to*
25 *distinguish true Ones. After which, he will forfeit his Life, if any one Opinion can be fairly deduced from that Book, which is contrary to Religion or Morality.*

Why should any Clergyman of our Church be angry to see the Follies of Fanaticism and Superstition exposed, tho' in the most
30 *ridiculous Manner? since that is perhaps the most probable way to cure them, or at least to hinder them from farther spreading. Besides, tho' it was not intended for their Perusal; it raillies nothing but what they preach against. It contains nothing to provoke them*

by the least Scurillity upon their Persons or their Functions. It Celebrates the Church of England as the most perfect of all others in Discipline and Doctrine, it advances no Opinion they reject, nor condemns any they receive. If the Clergy's Resentments lay upon
5 their Hands, in my humble Opinion, they might have found more proper Objects to employ them on: Nondum tibi defuit Hostis; I mean those heavy illiterate Scriblers, prostitute in their Reputations, vicious in their Lives, and ruin'd in their Fortunes, who to the shame of good Sense as well as Piety are greedily read,
10 meerly upon the Strength of bold, false, impious Assertions, mixt with unmannerly Reflections upon the Priesthood, and openly intended against all Religion; in short, full of such Principles as are kindly received, because they are levell'd to remove those Terrors that Religion tells Men will be the Consequence of immoral Lives.
15 Nothing like which is to be met with in this Discourse, tho' some of them are pleased so freely to censure it. And I wish, there were no other Instance of what I have too frequently observed, that many of that Reverend Body are not always very nice in distinguishing between their Enemies and their Friends.
20 Had the Author's Intentions met with a more candid Interpretation from some whom out of Respect he forbears to name, he might have been encouraged to an Examination of Books written by some of those Authors above-described, whose Errors, Ignorance, Dullness and Villany, he thinks he could have
25 detected and exposed in such a Manner, that the Persons who are most conceived to be infected by them, would soon lay them aside and be ashamed: But he has now given over those Thoughts, since the weightiest Men in the weightiest Stations are pleased to think it a more dangerous Point to laugh at those Corruptions in Religion,
30 which they themselves must disapprove, than to endeavour pulling up those very Foundations, wherein all Christians have agreed.

He thinks it no fair Proceeding, that any Person should offer

1 Scurillity] Scurility 1711 9 Piety] Piety, 1710 16 pleased] pleas'd 1711

determinately to fix a name upon the Author of this Discourse, who hath all along concealed himself from most of his nearest Friends: Yet several have gone a farther Step, and pronounced another Book to have been the Work of

Letter of
Enthusiasm

5 the same Hand with this; which the Author directly affirms to be a thorough mistake, he having yet never so much as read that Discourse; a plain Instance how little Truth, there often is in general Surmises, or in Conjectures drawn from a Similitude of Style, or way of thinking.

10 Had the Author writ a Book to expose the Abuses in Law, or in Physick, he believes the Learned Professors in either Faculty, would have been so far from resenting it, as to have given him Thanks for his Pains, especially if he had made an honourable Reservation for the true Practice of either Science: But Religion
15 they tell us ought not to be ridiculed, and they tell us Truth, yet surely the Corruptions in it may; for we are taught by the tritest Maxim in the World, that Religion being the best of Things, its Corruptions are likely to be the worst.

There is one Thing which the judicious Reader cannot but
20 have observed, that some of those Passages in this Discourse, which appear most liable to Objection, are what they call Parodies, where the Author personates the Style and Manner of other Writers, whom he has a mind to expose. I shall produce one Instance, it is in the 51st Page. Dryden, L'Estrange, and some
25 others I shall not name, are here levelled at, who having spent their Lives in Faction, and Apostacies, and all manner of Vice, pretended to be Sufferers for Loyalty and Religion. So Dryden tells us in one of his Prefaces of his Merits and Suffering, thanks God that he possesses his Soul in Patience: In other Places he talks at
30 the same Rate, and L'Estrange often uses the like Style, and I believe the Reader may find more Persons to give that Passage an Application: But this is enough to direct those who may have over-

6 mistake,] mistake; 1710 7 Discourse;] Discourse, 1710

look'd the Authors Intention.

There are three or four other Passages which prejudiced or ignorant Readers have drawn by great Force to hint at ill Meanings; as if they glanced at some Tenets in Religion, in answer to all
5 *which, the Author solemnly protests he is entirely Innocent, and never had it once in his Thoughts that any thing he said would in the least be capable of such Interpretations, which he will engage to deduce full as fairly from the most innocent Book in the World. And it will be obvious to every Reader, that this was not any part of*
10 *his Scheme or Design, the Abuses he notes being such as all Church of England Men agree in, nor was it proper for his Subject to meddle with other Points, than such as have been perpetually controverted since the Reformation.*

To instance only in that Passage about the three wooden
15 *Machines mentioned in the Introduction: In the Original Manuscript there was a description of a Fourth, which those who had the Papers in their Power, blotted out, as having something in it of Satyr, that I suppose they thought was too particular, and therefore they were forced to change it to the Number Three, from*
20 *whence some have endeavour'd to squeeze out a dangerous Meaning that was never thought on. And indeed the Conceit was half spoiled by changing the Numbers; that of Four being much more Cabalistical, and therefore better exposing the pretended Virtue of Numbers, a Superstition there intended to be ridicul'd.*

25 *Another Thing to be observed is, that there generally runs an Irony through the Thread of the whole Book, which the Men of Tast will observe and distinguish, and which will render some Objections that have been made, very weak and insignificant.*

This Apology being chiefly intended for the Satisfaction of
30 *future Readers, it may be thought unnecessary to take any notice of such Treatises as have been writ against this ensuing Discourse, which are already sunk into waste Paper and Oblivion; after the*

usual Fate of common Answerers to Books, which are allowed to have any Merit: They are indeed like Annuals that grow about a young Tree, and seem to vye with it for a Summer, but fall and die with the Leaves in Autumn, and are never heard of any more.

5 *When Dr. Eachard writ his Book about the Contempt of the Clergy, numbers of those Answerers immediately started up, whose Memory if he had not kept alive by his Replies, it would now be utterly unknown that he were ever answered at all. There is indeed an Exception, when any great Genius thinks it worth his while to*

10 *expose a foolish Piece; so we still read Marvel's Answer to Parker with Pleasure, tho' the Book it answers be sunk long ago; so the Earl of Orrery's Remarks will be read with Delight, when the Dissertation he exposes will neither be sought nor found; but these are no Enterprises for common Hands, nor to be hoped for above*

15 *once or twice in an Age. Men would be more cautious of losing their Time in such an Undertaking, if they did but consider, that to answer a Book effectually, requires more Pains and Skill, more Wit, Learning, and Judgment than were employ'd in the Writing it. And the Author assures those Gentlemen who have given*

20 *themselves that Trouble with him, that his Discourse is the Product of the Study, the Observation, and the Invention of several Years, that he often blotted out much more than he left, and if his Papers had not been a long time out of his Possession, they must have still undergone more severe Corrections; and do they think such a*

25 *Building is to be battered with Dirt-Pellets however envenom'd the Mouths may be that discharge them. He hath seen the Productions but of two Answerers, One of which first appear'd as from an unknown hand, but since avowed by a Person, who upon some Occasions hath discover'd no ill Vein of Humor. 'Tis a Pity any*

30 *Occasions should put him under a necessity of being so hasty in his Productions, which otherwise might often be entertaining. But there were other Reasons obvious enough for his Miscarriage in*

11 long/ 1711, 1724; along 1710

this; he writ against the Conviction of his Talent, and enter'd upon one of the wrongest Attempts in Nature, to turn into ridicule by a Weeks Labour, a Work which had cost so much time, and met with so much Success in ridiculing others, the manner how he has
5 *handled his Subject, I have now forgot, having just look'd it over when it first came out, as others did, meerly for the sake of the Title.*

The other Answer is from a Person of a graver Character, and is made up of half Invective, and half Annotation. In the latter of
10 *which he hath generally succeeded well enough. And the Project at that time was not amiss, to draw in Readers to his Pamphlet, several having appear'd desirous that there might be some Explication of the more difficult Passages. Neither can he be altogether blamed for offering at the Invective Part, because it is*
15 *agreed on all hands that the Author had given him sufficient Provocation. The great Objection is against his manner of treating it, very unsuitable to one of his Function. It was determined by a fair Majority, that this Answerer had in a way not to be pardon'd, drawn his Pen against a certain great Man then alive, and*
20 *universally revered for every good Quality that could possibly enter into the Composition of the most accomplish'd Person; it was observed, how he was pleased and affected to have that noble Writer call'd his Adversary, and it was a Point of Satyr well directed, for I have been told, Sir W. T. was sufficiently mortify'd*
25 *at the Term. All the Men of Wit and Politeness were immediately up in Arms, through Indignation, which prevailed over their Contempt, by the Consequences they apprehended from such an Example, and it grew to be Porsenna's Case; Idem trecenti juravimus. In short, things were ripe for a general Insurrection, till*
30 *my Lord Orrery had a little laid the Spirit, and settled the Ferment. But his Lordship being principally engaged with another Antagonist, it was thought necessary in order to quiet the Minds of Men, that this Opposer should receive a Reprimand, which partly occasioned that Discourse of the Battle of the Books, and the*

Author was farther at the Pains to insert one or two Remarks on him in the Body of the Book.

This Answerer has been pleased to find Fault with about a dozen Passages, which the Author will not be at the Trouble of
5 *defending, farther than by assuring the Reader, that for the greater Part the Reflector is entirely mistaken, and forces Interpretations which never once entered into the Writer's Head, nor will he be sure into that of any Reader of Tast and Candor; he allows two or three at most there produced to have been deliver'd unwarily, for*
10 *which he desires to plead the Excuse offered already, of his Youth, and Frankness of Speech, and his Papers being out of his Power at the Time they were published.*

But this Answerer insists, and says, what he chiefly dislikes, is the Design; what that was I have already told, and I believe there is
15 *not a Person in England who can understand that Book, that ever imagined it to have been any thing else, but to expose the Abuses and Corruptions in Learning and Religion.*

But it would be good to know what Design this Reflector was serving, when he concludes his Pamphlet with a Caution to
20 *Readers, to beware of thinking the Authors Wit was entirely his own, surely this must have had some Allay of Personal Animosity, at least mixt with the Design of serving the Publick by so useful a Discovery; and it indeed touches the Author in a very tender Point, who insists upon it, that through the whole Book he has not*
25 *borrowed one single Hint from any Writer in the World; and he thought, of all Criticisms, that would never have been one, He conceived it was never disputed to be an Original, whatever Faults it might have. However this Answerer produces three Instances to prove this Author's Wit is not his own in many Places. The first is,*
30 *that the Names of Peter, Martin and Jack are borrowed from a Letter of the late Duke of Buckingham. Whatever Wit is contained in those three Names, the Author is content to give it up, and*

desires his Readers will substract as much as they placed upon that Account; at the same time protesting solemnly that he never once heard of that Letter, except in this Passage of the Answerer: So that the Names were not borrowed as he affirms, tho' they should
5 happen to be the same which however is odd enough, and what he hardly believes; that of Jack, being not quite so obvious as the other two. The second Instance to shew the Author's Wit is not his own, is Peter's Banter (as he calls it in his *Alsatia Phrase*) upon Transubstantiation, which is taken from the same Duke's
10 Conference with an Irish Priest, where a Cork is turned into a Horse. This the Author confesses to have seen, about ten Years after his Book was writ, and a Year or two after it was published. Nay, the Answerer overthrows this himself; for he allows the Tale was writ in 1697; and I think that Pamphlet was not printed in
15 many Years after. It was necessary, that Corruption should have some Allegory as well as the rest; and the Author invented the properest he could, without enquiring what other People had writ, and the commonest Reader will find, there is not the least Resemblance between the two Stories. The third Instance is in
20 these Words: I have been assured, that the Battle in St. James's Library, is *mutatis mutandis*, taken out of a French Book, entituled, *Combat des livres*, if I misremember not. In which Passage there are two Clauses observable: I have been assured; and, if I misremember not. I desire first to know, whether if that
25 Conjecture proves an utter falshood, those two Clauses will be a sufficient Excuse for this worthy Critick. The Matter is a Trifle; but, would he venture to pronounce at this Rate upon one of greater Moment?⁹ I know nothing more contemptible in a Writer than the Character of a Plagiary; which he here fixes at a venture, and this,
30 not for a Passage, but a whole Discourse, taken out from another Book only *mutatis mutandis*. The Author is as much in the dark about this as the Answerer; and will imitate him by an Affirmation at Random; that if there be a word of Truth in this Reflection, he is a poultry, imitating Pedant, and the Answerer is a Person of Wit,

Manners and Truth. He takes his Boldness, from never having seen any such Treatise in his Life nor heard of it before; and he is sure it is impossible for two Writers of different Times and Countries to agree in their Thoughts after such a Manner, that two
5 *continued Discourses shall be the same only mutatis mutandis. Neither will he insist upon the mistake of the Title, but let the Answerer and his Friend produce any Book they please, he defies them to shew one single Particular, where the judicious Reader will affirm he has been obliged for the smallest Hint; giving only*
10 *Allowance for the accidental encountring of a single Thought, which he knows may sometimes happen; tho' he has never yet found it in that Discourse, nor has heard it objected by any body else.*

So that if ever any design was unfortunately executed, it must
15 *be that of this Answerer, who when he would have it observed that the Author's Wit is not his own, is able to produce but three Instances, two of them meer Trifles, and all three manifestly false. If this be the way these Gentlemen deal with the World in those Criticisms, where we have not Leisure to defeat them, their*
20 *Readers had need be cautious how they rely upon their Credit; and whether this Proceeding can be reconciled to Humanity or Truth, let those who think it worth their while, determine.*

It is agreed, this Answerer would have succeeded much better, if he had stuck wholly to his Business as a Commentator upon the
25 *Tale of a Tub, wherein it cannot be deny'd that he hath been of some Service to the Publick, and has given very fair Conjectures towards clearing up some difficult Passages; but, it is the frequent Error of those Men (otherwise very commendable for their Labors) to make Excursions beyond their Talent and their Office, by*
30 *pretending to point out the Beauties and the Faults; which is no part of their Trade, which they always fail in, which the World never expected from them, nor gave them any thanks for endeavouring at. The Part of Min-ellius, or Farnaby would have fallen in with his Genius, and might have been serviceable to many*

Readers who cannot enter into the abstruser Parts of that Discourse; but Optat ephippia bos piger. The dull, unwieldy, ill-shaped Ox would needs put on the Furniture of a Horse, not considering he was born to Labour, to plow the Ground for the Sake of superior Beings, and that he has neither the Shape, Mettle
5 nor Speed of that nobler Animal he would affect to personate.

It is another Pattern of this Answerer's fair dealing, to give us Hints that the Author is dead, and yet to lay the Suspicion upon somebody, I know not who, in the Country; to which can be only
10 returned, that he is absolutely mistaken in all his Conjectures; and surely Conjectures are at best too light a Pretence to allow a Man to assign a Name in Publick. He condemns a Book, and consequently the Author, of whom he is utterly ignorant, yet at the same time fixes in Print, what he thinks a disadvantageous Character upon
15 those who never deserved it. A Man who receives a Buffet in the Dark may be allowed to be vexed; but it is an odd kind of Revenge to go to Cuffs in broad day with the first he meets with, and lay the last Nights Injury at his Door. And thus much for this discreet, candid, pious, and ingenious Answerer.

How the Author came to be without his Papers, is a Story not proper to be told, and of very little use, being a private Fact of which the Reader would believe as little or as much as he thought good. He had however a blotted Copy by him, which he intended to have writ over, with many Alterations, and this the Publishers
25 were well aware of having put it into the Booksellers Preface, that they apprehended a surreptitious Copy, which was to be altered, &c. This though not regarded by Readers, was a real Truth, only the surreptitious Copy was rather that which was printed, and they made all hast they could, which indeed was needless; the Author
30 not being at all prepared; but he has been told, the Bookseller was in much Pain, having given a good Sum of Money for the Copy.

In the Authors Original Copy there were not so many Chasms

25 aware of] aware of, 1710 30 prepared] prepar'd 1711

as appear in the *Book*; and why some of them were left he knows not; had the *Publication* been trusted to him, he should have made several *Corrections of Passages* against which nothing hath been ever objected. He should likewise have altered a few of those that
 5 seem with any *Reason* to be excepted against, but to deal freely, the greatest *Number* he should have left untouch'd, as never suspecting it possible any wrong *Interpretations* could be made of them.

The *Author* observes, at the *End* of the *Book* there is a *Discourse* called A *Fragment*; which he more wondered to see in
 10 *Print* than all the rest. Having been a most imperfect *Sketch* with the *Addition* of a few loose *Hints*, which he once lent a *Gentleman* who had designed a *Discourse* of somewhat the same *Subject*; he never thought of it afterwards, and it was a sufficient *Surprize* to see it pieced up together, wholly out of the *Method* and *Scheme* he
 15 had intended, for it was the *Ground-work* of a much larger *Discourse*, and he was sorry to observe the *Materials* so foolishly employ'd.

There is one farther *Objection* made by those who have answer'd this *Book*, as well as by some others, that *Peter* is
 20 frequently made to repeat *Oaths* and *Curses*. Every *Reader* observes it was necessary to know that *Peter* did *Swear* and *Curse*. The *Oaths* are not printed out, but only supposed, and the *Idea* of an *Oath* is not immoral, like the *Idea* of a *Prophane* or *Immodest* *Speech*. A *Man* may laugh at the *Popish Folly* of cursing *People* to
 25 *Hell*, and imagine them swearing, without any crime; but lewd *Words*, or dangerous *Opinions* though printed by halves, fill the *Readers* *Mind* with ill *Idea's*; and of these the *Author* cannot be accused. For the judicious *Reader* will find that the severest *Stroaks* of *Satyr* in his *Book* are levelled against the modern *Custom* of
 30 *Employing Wit* upon those *Topicks*, of which there is a remarkable *Instance* in the 153d. Page, as well as in several others,

4 altered] alter'd 1711 12 *Discourse of*] *Discourse* 1711 13 *Surprize*] *Surprise* 1711 31 153d.] 143t. 1711

tho' perhaps once or twice exprest in too free a manner, excusable only for the Reasons already alledged. Some Overtures have been made by a third Hand to the Bookseller for the Author's altering those Passages which he thought might require it. But it seems the
5 *Bookseller will not hear of any such Thing, being apprehensive it might spoil the Sale of the Book.*

The Author cannot conclude this Apology, without making this one Reflection; that, as Wit is the noblest and most useful Gift of humane Nature, so Humor is the most agreeable, and where
10 *these two enter far into the Composition of any Work, they will render it always acceptable to the World. Now, the great Part of those who have no Share or Tast of either, but by their Pride, Pedantry and Ill Manners, lay themselves bare to the Lashes of Both, think the Blow is weak, because they are insensible, and*
15 *where Wit hath any mixture of Raillery; 'Tis but calling it Banter, and the work is done. This Polite Word of theirs was first borrowed from the Bullies in White-Fryars, then fell among the Footmen, and at last retired to the Pedants, by whom it is applied as properly to the Productions of Wit, as if I should apply it to Sir*
20 *Isaac Newton's Mathematicks, but, if this Bantring as they call it, be so despicable a Thing, whence comes it to pass they have such a perpetual Itch towards it themselves? To instance only in the Answerer already mentioned; it is grievous to see him in some of his Writings at every turn going out of his way to be waggish, to tell*
25 *us of a Cow that prickt up her Tail, and in his answer to this Discourse, he says it is all a Farce and a Ladle: With other Passages equally shining. One may say of these Impedimenta Literarum, that Wit owes them a Shame; and they cannot take wiser Counsel than to keep out of harms way, or at least not to come till they are*
30 *sure they are called.*

To conclude; with those Allowances above-required, this Book should be read, after which the Author conceives, few things will

remain which may not be excused in a young Writer. He wrote only to the Men of Wit and Tast, and he thinks he is not mistaken in his Accounts, when he says they have been all of his side, enough to give him the vanity of telling his Name, wherein the
 5 World with all its wise Conjectures, is yet very much in the dark, which Circumstance is no disagreeable Amusement either to the Publick or himself.

The Author is informed, that the Bookseller has prevailed on several Gentlemen, to write some Explanatory Notes, for the
 10 goodness of which he is not to answer, having never seen any of them, nor intends it, till they appear in Print, when it is not unlikely he may have the Pleasure to find twenty Meanings, which never enter'd into his Imagination.

June 3, 1709.

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POSTSCRIPT.

Since the writing of this, which was about a Year ago; a
 25 **S** Prostitute Bookseller hath publish'd a foolish Paper, under the Name of Notes on the Tale of a Tub, with some Account of the Author, and with an Insolence which I suppose is punishable by Law, hath presumed to assign certain Names. It will be enough for
 the Author to assure the World, that the Writer of that Paper is utterly wrong in all his Conjectures upon that Affair. The Author farther asserts that the whole Work is entirely of one Hand, which every Reader of Judgment will easily discover. The Gentleman who gave the Copy to the Bookseller, being a Friend of the Author, and
 30 using no other Liberties besides that of expunging certain Passages where now the Chasms appear under the Name of Desiderata. But if any Person will prove his Claim to three Lines in the whole

9 Explanatory] explanatory 1710 20 this,] this 1710

Book, let him step forth and tell his Name and Titles, upon which the Bookseller shall have Orders to prefix them to the next Edition, and the Claimant shall from henceforward be acknowledged the undisputed Author.