

A
L E T T E R

F R O M

R O M E,

Shewing an Exact CONFORMITY between

Popery *and* Paganism :

O R, T H E

RELIGION of the Present ROMANS
derived from That of their HEATHEN
ANCESTORS.

*Non neceſſè eſt fateri, partim horum errore ſuſceptum eſſe,
partim ſuperſtitione, multa fallendo.*

Cic. de Divinat. l. ii

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THE HISTORY OF THE

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TO THE
READER.



THE following Reflexions were the Subject of several Letters written by me from Rome to Friends in England; and as the Argument of them was much upon my Thoughts, and always in my View, during my Stay in Italy, so there hardly passed a Day, that did not afford me fresh Matter and Proof for the Confirmation of it, 'till

TO the READER.

my Collections grew up to the Size in which they now appear. Upon a Review of them at my Return, I found it necessary, for the sake of Method and Connection, to dispose them into one continued Argument, and to collect into one View, under the Form of a single Letter, what had been more slightly and separately touch'd in several.

Many Writers, I know, have treated the same Subject before me ; some of which I have never seen ; but those I have looked into, handle it in a Manner so different from what I have pursued, that I am under no Apprehension of being thought a Plagiary, or to have undertaken a Province already occupied. My Observations are grounded on Facts, which I have been a Witness to myself, and which others perhaps had not the Opportunity of examining personally, or considering so particularly as I have done : In the Representation of which, I have not claimed the allowed
Privilege

TO the READER.

Privilege of a Traveller, to be believed on my own Word, but for each Article charged on the Church of Rome, have generally produced such Vouchers, as they themselves will allow to be authentick.

Much Leisure, with an infirm State of Health, was the Cause of my Journey to Italy; and on such an Occasion I thought it a Duty incumbent on me to use the Opportunity given me by Providence towards detecting and exposing, as far as I was able, the true Spring and Source of those Impostures, which, under the Name of Religion, have been forged and contrived from time to time for no other Purpose, than to oppress the Liberty, as well as engross the Property of Mankind.

*But whatever be my Opinion of the general Scheme of their Religion, yet, out of Justice to the particular Professors of it, I think myself obliged to declare, that I found much Candour,
Humanity,*

To the READER.

Humanity, and Politeness in all those I had the Honour to converse with; and tho' my Character and Profession were well known at Rome, yet I received particular Civilities from Persons of the first Distinction both in the Church and the Court.



A L E T



A

LETTER from R O M E.

S I R,



AM sensible, that by this Time you cannot but be desirous to have some Account of the Entertainment I have met with in *Rome*; for as you have often heard me declare a very high Opinion of the Pleasure which a curious Man might reasonably expect to find in it, so you will be impatient to hear, how far my Expectation has been answered, and my Curiosity satisfied: You have, no doubt, observed from my former Letters, that the Pleasure of my Travels seemed to grow upon me in Proportion to the Progress I made on my Journey, and to my Approach towards *Rome*; and that every Place I had seen, the last still pleased me the most: This was certainly true in my Road thro' *Lyons, Turin, Genua, Florence*; but is much more remarkably so in regard to *Rome*, which, of all the Places I have yet seen, or ever shall see, is by far the most delightful and agreeable; since all those very Things which had
recom-

recommended any other Place to me, and which I had been admiring before single and dispers'd in the several Cities thro' which I had pass'd, may be seen, I find, in *Rome*, as it were in one View, and not only in greater Plenty, but in greater Perfection.

I HAVE often been thinking, that this Voyage to *Italy* might properly enough be compared to the common Stages and Journey of Life : At our setting out thro' *France*, the Pleasures we find, like those of our Youth, are of the gay fluttering kind, which grow by Degrees, as we advance into *Italy*, more solid, manly, and rational, but attain not their full Strength and Perfection till we reach *Rome* ; from which Point we no sooner turn Homewards, than they begin again gradually to decline, and tho' sustain'd for a while in some Degree of Vigour, thro' the other Stages and Cities of *Italy*, yet dwindle at last, insensibly, into Weariness and Fatigue, and a Desire to be at Home ; where the Traveller finishes his Course, as the old Man does his Days, with the usual Privilege of being tiresom to his Friends by a perpetual Repetition of past Adventures.

BUT to return to my Story : *Rome* is certainly of all Cities in the World the most entertaining to Strangers ; for whether we consider it in its Antient, or Present, its Civil, or Ecclesiastical State ; whether we admire the great Perfection of Arts exemplified in the noble Remains of *Old Rome*, or the Revival of the same Arts in the beautiful Ornaments of *Modern Rome*, every one, of what Genius or Taste soever, will be sure to find something or other that will deserve his Attention, and engage his Curiosity ; and even those, who have no particular Taste or Regard at all for Things curious, but travel merely for Fashion-sake, and to waste Time, will still spend that Time with more Satisfaction at

Rome,

Rome, than any where else ; for that Easiness of Accommodation as to all the Conveniences of Life, that general Civility and Respect to Strangers ; that Quiet and Security which every Man of Prudence is sure to find in it : But one Thing is certainly peculiar to this City ; that tho' Travellers have generally been so copious in their Descriptions of it, and there are publish'd in all Parts of *Europe* such voluminous Collections of its Curiosities, yet 'tis a Subject never to be exhausted ; since in the infinite Variety of Entertainment it affords, every judicious Observer will necessarily find out something or other that has either escaped the Searches of others, or that will at least afford Matter for more particular and curious Remarks, than a common Traveller is capable of making, or a general Collector has Time to reflect on. The learned *Montfaucon*, speaking of the *Villa of Prince Borghese*, says, 'Tho' its *Antique Monuments and Rarities have been a hundred times described in Print, that many more of them still have been overlooked and omitted, than are yet published.*^a And if this be true of one single Collection here, what an Idea must we have of the immense Treasure of the same kind, which the whole City will furnish ?

As for my own Journey to this Place, it was not, I own, any Motive of Devotion, which draws so many others hither, that occasion'd it : My Zeal was not that of visiting the *Holy Thresholds of the Apostles*, or *kissing the Feet of their Successor* : I knew that their *Ecclesiastical Antiquities* were mostly fabulous and legendary ; supported by Fictions and Impostures, too gross to employ the Attention of a Man of Sense : For should we allow them that *St. Peter* had been at *Rome*, (which some learned Men,

^a Adeo ut cum sexcentis in descriptionibus quæ de villa Burghesiana in publicum emissæ sunt, monumenta bene multa enumerata recensitaque sint, multo plura prætermissa sint inobservata. *Diar. Ital.* c. 16.

however, have doubted of^b) yet they had not, I knew, any *authentick Monuments* remaining of him; any *visible Footsteps* subsisting to demonstrate his Residence among them: and should we ask them for any Evidence of this kind, they would refer us to the *Impression of his Face on the Wall of the Dungeon in which he was confined*: or to a *Fountain in the Bottom of it, raised miraculously by him out of the Rock, in order to baptize his Fellow-Pri-soners*: or to the *Mark of our Saviour's Feet in a Stone, on which he appeared to him, and stopp'd him, as he was flying out of the City from a Persecution then raging*: In Memory of which Fact, there was a *Church built on the Spot call'd St. Mary delle Piante, or of the Marks of the Feet*; which falling into Decay, was supplied by a *Chapel at the Expence of our Cardinal Pool'd*: But the *Stone* itself, *more valuable*, as their Writers say, *e. than any of the precious ones, being a perpetual Monument and Proof of the Christian Religion, is preserved with all due Reverence in St. Sebastian's Church*; where I purchased a Print of it, with several others of the same kind: Or they would appeal perhaps to the Evidence of some *Miracle* wrought at his Execution; as they do in the Case of *St. Paul*, in a *Church of his, call'd, At the three Foun-tains*, the Place where he was beheaded: on which Oc-

^b Vid. Frid. Spanh. Miscellan. Sacræ Antiq. l. 3. Dissertat. 3.

^c Due gloriose memorie lasciarono di se in questa prigione i detti santi Apo-stoli, &c. Vid. Rom. Modern. Giorn. 5. c. 13. Rione di Campitelli. It. vid. Aringhi Rom. subterran. l. 2. c. 1. It. Montfauc. Diar. Ital. c. 13. p. 174.

Unda deest: Petri virga Tarpeia Rupes
Percussa, e Petris larga fluenta dedit, &c.

^a Rom. Modern. Giorn. 2. Rione di Ripa 21.

^c Vid. Aring. ibid. l. 3. c. 21. Lapis vero ille dignissimus & omni pretiosos-lapidi antefendus, in D. Sebastiani Ecclesiam translatus, ibidem, quo par est reli-gionis cultu, in perenne Religionis Christianæ monumentum asseratur. Ibid.

caſion, it ſeems, *inſtead of Blood there iſſued only Milk from his Veins; and his Head, when ſeparated from his Body, having made three Jumps on the Ground, raiſed at each Place a Spring of living Water, which retains ſtill, as they would perſuade us, the plain Taſte of Milk: Of all which Facts we have an Account in Baronius, Mabillon, and all their graveſt Authoꝛs^f; and may ſee printed Figures of them in the Deſcription of Modern Rome g.*

IT was no Part of my Deſign to ſpend my Time Abroad in attending to the ridiculous Fictions of this kind: The Pleaſure I had chiefly propoſed to myſelf, was to viſit the genuine Remains and *venerable Reliques of Pagan Rome; the authentick Monuments of Antiquity* that demonſtrate the Certainty of thoſe Hiſtories, which are the Entertainment, as well as the Inſtruction of our younger Years; and which, by the early Prejudice of being the firſt Knowledge we acquire, as well as the Deſight they give in deſcribing the Lives and Manners of the greateſt Men that ever lived, gain ſometimes ſo much upon our riper Age, as to exclude, too often, other more uſeful and neceſſary Studies: I could not help flattering myſelf with the Joy I ſhould have in viewing the *very Place and Scene* of thoſe important Events, the Knowledge and Explication of which have ever ſince been the chief Employment of the learned and polite World; in *treading that Ground*, where at every Step we ſtumble on the Ruins of *ſome Fabrick* deſcribed by the *Antients*, and cannot help ſetting a Foot on the *Memorial* of ſome *celebrated Action*, in which the *great Heroes of Antiquities*

^f Cum ſacrum caput obtruncaretur, non tam fluenta ſanguinis, quam candidiſſimi lactis rivuli, &c.

It. in ipſo autem Martyrii loco tres adhuc pexigui jugiter fontes, &c. horum primus cæteris dulcior ſaporem lactis præ ſe fert, &c. Aring. l. 3. c. 2. It. vid. Baronii Annal. A. D. 69. It. Mabill. Iter Ital. p. 142.

^g Vid. Rom. Modern. Gior. 2. c. 17. Rione di Ripa.

had been personally engaged. I amused myself with the Thoughts of taking a Turn in those very Walks where Cicero and his Friends had held *their Philosophical Disputations*, or standing on that very Spot, where he had delivered some of his *famous Orations*.

SUCH Fancies as these, with which I often entertained myself on my Road to *Rome*, are not, I dare say, peculiar to myself, but common to all Men of Reading and Education, whose Dreams upon a *Voyage to Italy*, like the Descriptions of the *Elysian Fields*, represent nothing to their Fancies, but the Pleasure of finding out and conversing with *those Sages and Heroes of Antiquity*, whose Characters they have most admired. Nor indeed is this Imagination much disappointed in the Event; for, as Cicero observes, ^h *Whether it be from Nature, or some Weakness in us, 'tis certain, we are much more affected with the Sight of those Places where great and famous Men have spent most Part of their Lives, than either to hear of their Actions, or read their Works*: And he was not, as he tells us, *so much pleased with Athens itself, for the stately Buildings or exquisite Pieces of Art it was full of, as in recollecting the great Men it had bred, in carefully visiting their Sepulchres, and finding out the Place where each had lived, or walked, or held his Disputations* ⁱ: And this is what every Man of Curiosity will, in the like Circumstances, find true in himself: And for my own part, as oft as I have been rambling about in the very *Rostra of Old Rome*,

^h Natura ne nobis hoc, inquit, datum dicam, an errore quodam, ut cum ea loca videamus, in quibus Memoria dignos Viros acceperimus multos esse versatos, magis moveamur, quam si quando eorum ipsorum aut facta audiamus, aut scriptum aliquid legamus. Cic. de Fin. 5.

ⁱ Me quidem ipsæ illæ nostræ Athenæ non tam operibus magnificis, exquisitisque antiquorum Artibus delectant, quam recordatione summorum Virorum, ubi quisque habitare, ubi sedere, ubi disputare sit solitus; studiosæque eorum etiam Sepulchra contemplor. De Legib. 2. 2.

or in that same *Temple of Concord* where *Tully* assembled the Senate in *Cataline's Conspiracy*^k, I could not help fancying myself much more sensible of the Force of his Eloquence; whilst the very Impression of the Place served to raise and warm my Imagination to a Degree almost equal to that of his *old Audience*.

As therefore my general Studies had furnished me with a competent Knowledge of *Roman History*, as well as an Inclination to search more particularly into some Branches of its Antiquities, so I had resolved to employ myself chiefly in Inquiries of this sort, and to lose as little Time as possible in taking notice of the Fopperies and ridiculous Ceremonies of the *present Religion* of the Place. But in this I soon found myself mistaken; for the whole Form and outward Dress of their Worship seemed so grossly *idolatrous and extravagant* beyond what I had imagined, and made so strong an Impression on me, that I could not help considering it with a very particular Regard; especially when the very Reason, which I thought would have hinder'd me from taking any notice of it at all, was the chief Cause that engaged me to pay so much Attention to it: For nothing, I found, concurred so much with my original Intention of conversing solely and chiefly with the Antients, or so much help'd my Imagination to fancy myself wandering about in *Old Heathen Rome*, as to observe and attend to their *Religious Worship*; all whose Ceremonies appeared plainly to have been copied from the *Rituals of Primitive Paganism*, as if handed down by an uninterrupted Succession from the *Priests of Old* to the *Priests of New Rome*, whilst each of them readily explained and called to my Mind some Passage of a *Classick Author*, where the *same Ceremony* was described, as transacted in the *same Form and Manner*, and in the *same*

^k Vid. Orat. in Catilin. 3. 4. It. Phil. 2. 4.

Place, where I now saw it executed before my Eyes: So that as oft as I was present at any Religious Exercise in *their Churches*, it was more natural to fancy myself looking on at some *solemn Act of Idolatry in Old Rome*: than assisting at a Worship, instituted on the Principles, and formed upon the Plan of Christianity.

MANY of our Divines have, I know, with much Learning and solid Reasoning charg'd, and effectually prov'd the *Crime of Idolatry on the Church of Rome*: but these Controversies, (in which there is still something plausible to be said on the other Side, and where the Charge is constantly denied, and with much Subtilty evaded) are not capable of giving that Conviction, which I immediately received from my Senses, the surest Witnesses of Fact in all Cases; and which no Man can fail to be furnish'd with, who sees *Poperly*, as it is exercised in *Italy*, in the full Pomp and Display of its Pageantry, and practising all its Arts and Powers without Caution or Reserve. This *Similitude of the Popish and Pagan Religion*, seem'd so evident and clear, and struck my Imagination so forcibly, that I soon resolv'd to give myself the Trouble of searching into the Bottom of the Notion, and to explain and demonstrate the Certainty of it, by exhibiting and comparing together the principal and most obvious Parts of each Worship; which, as it was my first Employment after I came to *Rome*, shall be the Subject of my first Letter from thence: reserving therefore to my next, the Account I design to give you of the *Antiquities* and other *Curiosities* of the Place, I shall find Matter enough for this Time, to tire both you and myself, in shewing the *Source and Origin* of the *Popish Ceremonies*, and the exact *Conformity* of them with those of their *Pagan Ancestors*.

THE very first thing that a Stranger must necessarily take Notice of, as soon as he enters their *Churches*, is the Use of *Incense* or *Perfumes* in their *Religious Offices*: The first Step he takes within the Door will be sure to make him sensible of it, by the Offence he will immediately receive from the Smell, as well as Smoak of this *Incense*; with which the whole Church continues fill'd for some Time after every solemn Service: A Custom, received directly from *Paganism*; and which presently called to my Mind the Old Descriptions of the *Heathen Temples* and *Altars*, which are seldom or never mention'd by the *Antients* without the Epithet of *perfumed* or *incensed*¹.

AND in some of their *Principal Churches*, where you have before you, in one View, a *great Number of Altars*, and all of them smoaking at once with *Steams of Incense*, how natural is it to imagine oneself transported into the *Temple of some Heathen Deity*, or that of the *Paphian Venus* described by *Virgil*?

——— *Ubi Templum illi, centumque Sabæo
Thure calent Aræ, fertisque recentibus balant.*

Æn. I. 420.

Her hundred Altars there with Garlands crown'd,
And richest Incense smoaking breathe around
Sweet Odours, &c.

UNDER the *Pagan Emperours*, the Use of *Incense* for any Purpose of Religion was thought so contrary to the Obligations of *Christianity*, that in their Persecutions, the

¹ ——— Τέμενον Βώμοσε Θυήεις. Hom. II. J. 148.

——— *Thuricremis cum dona imponeret Aris.* Virg. Æn. 4. v. 453.
Theocrit. Id. 123. Hom. II. θ. 48. Virg. II. Æn. 481.

very Method of *trying and convicting a Christian*, was by requiring him only to throw the least Grain of it into the Censer, or on the Altar ^m.

UNDER the *Christian Emperours*, on the other hand, it was looked upon as a *Rite* so peculiarly *Heathenish*, that ⁿ the very *Places or Houses*, where it could be proved to have been done, were by a *Law of Theodosius*, *confiscated by the Government*.

IN the *Old Bas-Reliefs*, or *Pieces of Sculpture*, where any *Heathen Sacrifice* is represented, we never fail to observe a *Boy in Sacred Habit*, which was always white, attending on the *Priest*, with a little *Chest or Box* in his Hands, in which this *Incense* was kept for the *Use of the Altar* ^o. And in the same manner still in the *Church of Rome*, there is always a *Boy in Surplice*, waiting on the *Priest* at the *Altar* with *Sacred Utensils*, and among the rest, the *Thuribulum* or *Vessel of Incense*, which, being set on Fire, the *Priest*, with many ridiculous *Motions and Crossings*, waves several times, as 'tis smoaking, around and over the *Altar* in different *Parts of the Service*.

THE next thing that will of course strike one's *Imagination*, is their *Use of Holy Water*: For nobody ever

^m Maximus dixit: Ture tantum Deos, Nicander, honorato. Nicander dixit: Quomodo potest homo Christianus lapides & ligna colere, Deo relicto immortalis? &c. Vid. Act. Martyr. Nicandri, &c. apud Mabill. Iter. Ital. T. 1. Par. 2. p. 247.

Adeo ut Christianos verè sacrificare crederent, ubi summis Digitis paululum thuris injecissent in Acerram, &c. Vide Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 9.

Non est in eo tantum Servitus Idoli, siquis duobus digitalis. Thura in bustum aræ jaciât. Hieron. Oper. T. 4. Epist. ad Heliod. p. 8.

ⁿ Namque omnia loca, quæ Thuris constiterit vapore fumâsse, si tamen ea fuisse in jure thurificantium probabitur, Fisco nostro adsocianda censemus, &c. Jac. Gothof. de Stat. Paganor. sub Christian. Imper. leg. 12. p. 15.

^o Vid. Montfauc. Antiq. Tom. 2. Plate 23, 24, 25.

Da mihi Thura, Puer, Pingues facientia Flammas. Ovid. Trist. 5. 5.

goes in or out of a *Church*, but is either *sprinkled* by the *Priest*, who attends for that Purpose on solemn Days, or else serves himself with it from a *Vessel*, usually of *Marble*, placed just at the *Door*, not unlike one of our *baptismal Fonts*: Now *this Ceremony* is so notoriously and directly transmitted to them from *Paganism*, that their *own Writers* make not the least *Scruple* to own it. The *Jesuit la Cerda*, in his *Notes* on a *Passage* of *Virgil*, where this *Practice* is mention'd, says, *That hence was derived the Custom of Holy Church to provide purifying or holy Water at the Entrance of their Churches.* p *Aquaminarium* or *Amula*, says the *Learned Montsaucon*, was a *Vase of Holy Water*, placed by the *Heathens* at the *Entrance of their Temples*, to *sprinkle themselves* with. q The same *Vessel* was by the *Greeks* called *Ἱερίδανθήριον*; two of which, the one of *Gold*, the other of *Silver*, were given by *Cræsus* to the *Temple of Apollo at Delphi*. r And the *Custom of sprinkling* themselves was so necessary a *Part* of all their religious *Offices*, that the *Method of Excommunication* seems to have been by prohibiting to *Offenders* the *Approach and Use* of the *Holy-water Pot* s: The very *Composition* of this *Holy-water* was the same also among the *Heathens*, as it is now among the *Papists*, being nothing more than a

p *Spargens rore levi*, &c. *Virg. Æn.* 6. 230. vid. *Not.*

q Vid. *Montfauc. Antiquit.* T. 2. Pt. 1. l. 3. c. 6.

Ἱερίδανθῆριον ἵερὸν
 Ἱερίδανθῆριον ἵερὸν
 Eurip. *Jonc.* v. 96.

r *Herodot.* l. 1. § 1. *Clem. Alex. Strom.* l. 1.

s Vid. *Æschin. Orat. contra Ctesiphon.* 58.

Mixture of Salt with common Water^t: And the Form of the *Sprinkling-Brush*, called by the Ancients *Aspersorium* or *Aspergillum* (which is much the same with what the *Priests* now make use of) may be seen in *Bas-reliefs*, or *ancient Coins*, where-ever the *Insignia*, or *Emblems of the Pagan Priesthood* are describ'd, of which 'tis generally one^u.

PLATINA in his *Lives of the Popes*, and other Authors, ascribe the Institution of this *Holy-water* to *Pope Alexander the First*; who is said to have lived about the Year of Christ 113: but it could not be introduced so early, since for some Ages after we find the *primitive Fathers* speaking of it, as a Custom purely *Heathenish*, and condemning it as *impious* and *detestable*. *Justin Martyr* says, *That it was invented by Demons in Imitation of the true Baptism signified by the Prophets, that their Votaries might also have their pretended Purifications by Water*^x. And the Emperour *Julian*, out of Spite to the *Christians*, used to order the *Victuals* in the *Markets* to be *sprinkled with Holy-water*, on purpose either to starve, or force them at least to eat what by their own Principles they esteemed polluted^y.

^t Porro singulis Diebus Dominicis Sacerdos missæ sacrum facturus, aquam sale adpersam benedicendo revocare debet eaque populum adpersere. Durant. de Rit. l. 1. c. 21.

ἔπειτα δ' ἄλεισι μεμιγμένον, ὡς νενομίσασι.
Θαλλῶ ἐπιβράνειν ἐξέμισμον ἀλαεῖς ὕδωρ.
ὕδατι πεβράναι ἐμελαῖον ἄλας.

Theocrit. id. 95.
Menand. Fragma.

^u Vid. Montfauc. Antiq. T. 2. P. 1. l. 3. c. 6. It may be seen on a *Silver Coin* of *Julius Cæsar*, as well as many other Emperors. Ant. Agostini distorto sopra le Medaglie.

^x Καὶ τὸ λητρὸν διητέτο ἀκίσαντες δι' Δαίμονας διὰ τῆ προφήτῃς κηρυγμένον, ἀνήγγισαν καὶ βανίζειν ἐαυτοὺς τὲς εἰς τὰ ἱερὰ αὐτῶν ἐπιβάνοντας. Just. Mart. Apol. 1. p. 91. Edit. Thirlb.

^y Vid. Hospinian. de Orig. Templor. l. 2. c. 25.

Thus we see what contrary Notions the *Primitive* and *Romish Church* have of this Ceremony: the first condemns it as *superstitious, abominable, and irreconcilable with Christianity*: The latter adopts it as highly *edifying and applicable* to the Improvement of *Christian Piety*: The one looks upon it as the *Contrivance of the Devil to delude Mankind*; the other as the *Security of Mankind* against the *Delusions of the Devil*. But what is still more ridiculous than even the *Ceremony itself*, is to see their learned Writers gravely reckoning up the several Virtues and Benefits derived from the Use of it both to Soul and Body^z; and to crown all, producing a long *Roll of Miracles* to attest the Certainty of each Virtue they ascribe to it^a. And may we not now justly apply to the present People of Rome what was said by the Poet of its Old Inhabitants, for the Use of this very Ceremony?

Ab nimium faciles, qui tristia crimina cædis

Flumineâ tolli posse patetis aquâ!

Ovid. Fast. 2. 45.

Ah, easy Fools, to think that a whole Flood
Of Water e'er can purge the Stain of Blood!

I do not at present recollect whether the *Antients* went so far, as to apply the Use of this *Holy-water* to the purifying or blessing *their Horses, Asses, and other Cattle*; or whether this be an Improvement of *modern Rome*, which has dedicated a *yearly Festival* peculiarly to this Service, called in their vulgar Language, the

^z Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 21. it. Hospin. ibid.

^a Hujus Aquæ Benedictæ Virtus variis miraculis illustratur, &c. Durant. ibid.

Benediction of Horses; which is always celebrated with much Solemnity in the Month of *January*; when all the Inhabitants of the City and Neighbourhood, send up *their Horses, Asses, &c.* to the *Convent* of *St. Anthony*, near *St. Mary the Great*, where a *Priest in Surplice* at the Church Door *sprinkles* with his Brush all the *Animals* singly, as they are presented to him, and receives from each Owner a *Gratuity* proportionable to his *Zeal* and *Ability* ^b. Amongst the rest I had my own *Horses* blest at the *Expence* of about *Eighteen Pence* of our Money, as well to satisfy my own *Curiosity*, as to humour the *Coachman*, who was persuaded, as the common People generally are, that some *Mischance* would befall them within the Year, if they wanted the *Benefit* of this *Benediction*. *Mabillon* in giving an *Account* of this Custom, makes no other *Reflection* upon it, than that it was *new* and *unusual* to him ^c.

I HAVE met indeed with some Hints of a Practice not quite foreign to this among the Ancients; of *sprinkling their Horses with Water in the Circensian Games*: ^d But whether this was done out of a *superstitious View*, of inspiring any *Virtue*, or purifying them for those Races which were esteemed *Sacred*; or merely to refresh them under the *Violence* of such an *Exercise*, is not easy to determine: But allowing the *Romish Priests* to

^b Ma ogni sorte d'animali a questo Santo si raccomanda, e però nel giorno della sua festa sono portate molte offerte a questa sua Chiesa, in gratitudine delle grazie, che diversi hanno ottenute da lui sopra de' loro bestiami. Rom. Modern. Giorn. 6. c. 46. Rione de'Monti.

^c In Festo Sancti Antonii prope S. Mariam Majorem ritus nobis insolitus visus est, ut quicquid Equorum est in Urbe ducantur cum suis phaleris ad portam Ecclesiae, ubi Aqua lustrali ab uno e Patribus omnes & singuli asperguntur, dato annuo censu. Mabill. It. Ital. p. 136.

^d Vid. Rubenii Elect. l. 2. 18.

have taken the Hint from some *Old Custom of Paganism*; yet this however must be granted them, that they alone were capable of cultivating so coarse and barren a Piece of Superstition into a Revenue sufficient for the Maintenance of *forty or fifty idle Monks*.

No sooner is a Man advanced a little forward into their *Churches*, and begins to look about him, but he will find his Eyes and Attention attracted by the Number of *Lamps* and *Wax Candles*, which are constantly burning before the *Shrines* and *Images of their Saints*: In all the great Churches of Italy, says *Mabillon*^e, they hang up *Lamps* at every Altar: A Sight, which will not only surprize a Stranger by the Novelty of it, but will furnish him with another Proof and Example of the *Conformity of the Romish with the Pagan Worship*; by recalling to his Memory many Passages of the *Heathen Writers*, where their *perpetual Lamps* and *Candles* are described, as continually burning before the *Altars* and *Statues of their Deities*^f.

HERODOTUS tells us of *Aegyptians*, (who first introduced the Use of *Lights* or *Lamps* in their Temples ^g) that they had a *famous yearly Festival*, called from the *principal Ceremony* of it, the *lighting up of Candles*^h: But there's scarce a *single Festival at Rome*,

^e Ad singulas Ecclesiæ aras (qui ritus in omnibus Italiz Basilicis observatur) singulæ appensæ sunt Lampades. Mabill. It. Ital. p. 25.

^f Placere & Lychnuchi pensiles in delubris. Plin. Hist. Nat. l. 34. 31.
Vidi Cupidinem Argenteum cum Lampade. Cic. in berr. 2.

Centum aras posuit, vigilemque sacraverat ignem.

Virg. Æn. 4. 200.

^g Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 1. c. 16.

^h Καὶ τῆς ὀστῆς ἕνομα κίετα λυχνοαίη. Herod. l. 2. LXII. Edit. Lond.

which.

which might not for the same Reason be called by the same Name.

THE *Primitive Writers* frequently expose the Folly and Absurdity of this *Heathenish Custom*: they *light up Candles to God*, says *Lactantius*, as if he liv'd in the Dark: and do not they deserve to pass for Madmen, who offer Lamps to the Author and Giver of Light?

IN the Collections of *Old Inscriptions*, we find many Instances of Presents and Donations from private Persons of *Lamps and Candlesticks* to the *Temples and Altars* of their Gods: ^k A Piece of Zeal which continues still the same in modern *Rome*; where each Church abounds with *Lamps of massy Silver*, and sometimes even of *Gold*; the *Gifts of Princes*, and other Persons of Distinction: And 'tis surprizing to see how great a Number of this kind are perpetually burning before the *Altars* of their *Principal Saints*, or *Miraculous Images*; as *St. Anthony of Padua*, or the *Lady of Loretto*; as well as the vast Profusion of *Wax Candles* with which their Churches are illuminated on every great Festival: when the *high Altar* covered over with *Gold and Silver Plate*, brought for the Purpose out of their Treasuries, and stuck full of *Wax Lights*, disposed in beautiful Figures, looks more like the rich *Side-board of some great Prince*, dressed out for a Feast, than an *Altar* to pay divine Worship at.

BUT a Stranger will not be more surprized at the Number of *Lamps*, or *Wax Lights* burning before their

^k Hospin. de Orig. Templor. l. 2. 22.

^{*} Cupidines 11. cum suis Lychnachis & Lucerna. Grut. Insc. 177. 3.

Altars, than at the Number of *Offerings*, or *Votive Gifts*, which are hanging all around them, in consequence of *Vows* made in the Time of Danger, and in Gratitude for Deliverances and Cures wrought in Sicknefs or Distrefs: a Practice fo common among the *Heathens*, that no one *Custom of Antiquity* is fo frequently mentioned by all their Writers; and many of their *Original Donaria*, or *Votive Offerings* are preferved to this Day in the *Cabinets of the Curious*; viz. *Images of Metal, Stone, or Clay*, as well as *Legs, Arms, and other Parts of the Body*, which had formerly been hung up in their *Temples* in Testimony of some divine Favour or Cure effected by their *tutelar Deity* in that particular Member¹: but the moft common of all *Offerings* were *Pictures*, representing the *History of the miraculous Cure or Deliverance* vouchsafed upon the *Vow of the Donor*.

*Nunc, Dea, nunc succurre mihi; nam posse mederi
Picta docet Templis multa Tabella tuis.* Tibul. El. 1. 3.

Now, Goddess, help, for thou canst Help bestow,
As all these Pictures round thy Altars shew.

A Friend of *Diagoras the Philosopher*, called the *Atheist*, having found him once in a *Temple*, as the Story is told by *Cicero*^m, You, says he, *who think the Gods take no notice of human Affairs*, do not you see here by this Number of *Pictures*, how many People for the sake of their *Vows* have been saved in *Storms at Sea*, and got safe into *Harbour*? Yes, says *Diagoras*, I see how it is; for those are never painted, who happen to be drowned. The *Temples of Æsculapius* were more especially rich in

¹ Vid. Montfauc. Antiq. T. 2. p. 1. l. 4. c. 4, 5, 6.

^m Cic. Nat. Deor. l. 3. 253.

these Offerings, which *Livy* says, were the *Price and Pay for the Cures he had wrought for the Sick* ⁿ. And they used always to hang up in them and expose to common View in Tables of Brass or Marble a Catalogue or Relation of all the *miraculous Cures* he had performed for his *Votaries* ^o: A remarkable Fragment of one of these Tables is still remaining and published in *Gruter's p-Collection*, having been found in the Ruins of the *Temple of the same God in the Island of the Tiber at Rome*: Upon which the *learned Montfaucon* makes this Reflection; that in it are either seen the *Wiles of the Devil to deceive the Credulous*; or else the *Tricks of Pagan Priests suborning Men to counterfeit Diseases and miraculous Cures* ^q.

Now this Piece of Superstition had been found of old so beneficial to the *Priesthood*, that it could not fail of being taken into the Scheme of the *Romish Worship*: where it reigns at this Day in as full Height and Vigour as in the *Ages of Pagan Idolatry*, and in so gross a Manner as to give Scandal and Offence even to some of their own Communion. *Polydore Virgil*, after having described this Practice of the Antients, *In the same Manner*, says he, *do we now offer up in our Churches little Images of Wax*; and as oft as any Part of the Body is hurt, as the *Hand or Foot, &c.* we presently make a *Vow to God, or one of his Saints, to whom upon our Recovery we make*

ⁿ Tum donis dives erat. quæ remediorum salutarium ægri mercedem sacra-
verant Deo. Liv. l. 45. 28.

^o Τὸ ἱερόν πλήρες ἔχοντι αἰῶν τε καμνόντων, καὶ ἀνακατεμένων πινάκων.
ἐν οἷς ἀναγεγραμμένα τυγχάνουσι αἱ θεεργασίαι. Strabo T. 1. p. 515.

^q Gruter. Inscript. p. 71.

Et Montfauc. Antiq. T. 2. P. 1. l. 4. c. 6.

^r Ibid.

an Offering of that Hand or Foot in Wax: Which Custom is now come to that Extravagance, that we do the same thing for our Cattle, as we do for ourselves, and make Offerings on account of our Oxen, Horses, Sheep; where a scrupulous Man will question whether in this we imitate the Religion or Superstition of our Ancestors.

THE *Altar of St. Philip Neri*, says *Baronius*^t, shines with votive Pictures and Images, the Proofs of as many Miracles, receiving every Day the additional Lustre of fresh Offerings from such as have been favoured with fresh Benefits: Amongst whom the present Pope himself pays, as I have been told, a yearly Acknowledgment, for a miraculous Deliverance he obtained by invoking *this Saint*, when he had like to have perished under the Ruins of a House overturn'd in an Earthquake.

THERE is commonly so great a Number of these Offerings hanging up in their Churches, that instead of

^a Pol. Virg. de Inv. Rer. l. 5. 1.

^t Baron. Ann. 1. An. 57. n. 162. It. Aring. Rom. Subter. l. 1. c. 30, it. l. 6 27.

This *Philip Neri* is a Saint in high Esteem in all Parts of *Italy*, where he has many Churches dedicated to him: he was Founder of the Congregation of the Oratory, and died about a Century and half ago: his Body lies under his Altar, with the following Inscription, in a fine Church called *Chiesa Nuova*, which was founded and built for the Service of his Congregation; where we see his Picture by *Guido*, and his Statue by *Algardi*. Cardinal *Baronius*, who was one of his Disciples, lies buried too in the same Church.

C O R P V S
S. PHILIPPI NERII CONGR. ORATORII
FVNDATORIS
AB IPSO DORMITIONIS DIE ANNOS
QVATVOR ET QVADRAGINTA
INCOVRVPTVM DIVINA
VIRTVTE SERVATVM OCVLIS FIDELIVM
EXPOSITVM A DILECTIS IN CHRISTO
FILIVS SVB EIVSDEM S. PATRIS ALTARI
PERPETVAE SEPVLTVRAE MORE MAIORVM
COMMENDATVM EST
ANNO SALVTIS. M.DC.XXXVIII.

D

adding

adding any Beauty, they often give Offence, by covering or obstructing the Sight of something more valuable and ornamental: Which we find to have been the Case likewise in the *Old Heathen Temples*; where the *Priests* were obliged sometimes to take them down, for the Obstruction they gave to the Beauty of a fine Pillar or Altar^u: for they consist chiefly, as has been said, of *Arms*, and *Legs*, and little *Figures* of *Wood* or *Wax*, but especially *Pieces of Board* painted, and sometimes indeed *fine Pictures*, describing the Manner of the Deliverance obtained by the *miraculous Interposition of the Saint* invoked: Of which *Offerings* the *blessed Virgin* is so sure always to carry off the greatest Share, that it may truly be said of her, what *Juvenal* says of the *Goddeſs Isis*, whose Religion was at that time in the greatest Vogue at *Rome*, that the *Painters get their Livelihood out of her*.

Pictores quis nescit ab Iside paſci?

As once to *Isis*, now it may be said,
That *Painters* to the *Virgin* owe their Bread.

As oft as I have had the Curiosity to look over these *Donaria*, or *votive Offerings*, hanging round the *Shrines of their Images*, and consider the several Stories of each, as they are either express'd in Painting, or related in Writing, I have always found them to be but *meer Copies*, and as it were *verbal Translations* of the *old Originals of Heathenism*: for the *Vow* is often said to have been *divinely inspired*, or *expressly commanded*; and the Cure and Deliverance wrought either by the *visible Apparition*, and *immediate Hand of the Tutelar Saint*, or by the Notice of a *Dream*, or some other *miraculous Admo-*

^u Ab his columniis quæ incommodè opposita videbantur, signa amovit, &c. Liv. l. 40. 51.

nitio from Heaven. *There can be no doubt, say their Writers^w, but that the Images of our Saints often work signal Miracles, by procuring Health to the Infirm, and appearing to us often in Dreams, to suggest something of great Moment for our Service.*

AND what is all this, but a Revival of the *old Impostures*, and a Repetition of the same *old Stories*, which the *antient Inscriptions* are full of, with no other Difference, than what the *Pagans* ascribed to the imaginary Help of *their Deities*, the *Papists* as foolishly impute to the Favour of *their Saints*? As may be seen by the few instances I have subjoined, out of the great Plenty which all *Books of Antiquities* will furnish: And whether the Reflection of *Father Montfaucon* on the *Pagan Priests*, mentioned above, be not in the very same Case as justly applicable to the *Romish* ones, I must leave to the Judgment of my Reader.

^w Extra omnem controversiam est, Sanctorum Imagines mirifica designare miracula, ut & debilibus valetudo bona per eos concilietur, sæpeque in somniis apparentes optima quæque nobis consulant. Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 5.

x SILVANO SALVTARI
L. MANLIVS SATVRNINVS
EX VISO POSUIT.
Gruter. p. 65.

SILVANO
&c.
SOMNIO MONITA
ib. 62.

MINERVAE. MEMORI
CAELIA. IVLIANA.
INDVLGENTIA. MEDICINARVM
EIVS GRAVI. INFIRMITATE.
LIBERATA. D. P.

IOVI OPT. &c.
FLAVIVS. COSMVS
IVSSV DEI FECIT.
20.

^{48.}
And that this is still the Stile of Votive Inscriptions with the Papists, we see by the following one in a Church at *Milan*.

DIVAE.. SAVINAE, &c.
LIVIA. EVPHEMIA .. IN
ACERBO. STOMACHI
CRVCIATV. OPEM NACTA.
V. S. M. D. XI.

BUT the Gifts and Offerings of the kind I have been speaking of, are but the Fruits of vulgar Zeal, and the Presents of inferior People, whilst Princes and great Persons, as it used to be of old, γ frequently make Offerings of large *Vessels*, *Lamps*, and even *Statues* of massy *Silver* or *Gold*, with *Diamonds*, and all sorts of *precious Stones* of incredible Value; so that the *Church of Loretto* is now become a *Proverb* for its immense Riches of this sort, just as *Apollo's Temple at Delphi* was with the Antients on the same Account.

Ἄουδ' ὄσα λαίνῳ εἰδὸς ἀρήτορος ἐνὶδς ἔργει
Φοίβε Ἀπόλλωνῳ. II. i. 404.

Nor all the Wealth *Apollo's Temple* holds
Can purchase one Day's Life, &c.

IN the famed Treasury of this *Holy House*, one Part consists, as it did too among the *Heatbens*, of a *Wardrobe*: And whilst they were shewing us the great Variety of rich Habits 'tis fill'd with, some covered with *precious Stones*, others more curiously embroidered by such a *Queen*, or *Princess*, for the Use of the *miraculous Image*; I could not help recollecting the Picture which *old Homer* draws of *Queen Hecuba* of *Troy*, prostrating herself before the *miraculous Image* of *Pallas*, with a Present of the *richest and best-wrought Gown* she was Mistress of.

Τῶν ἐν ἀειραμένην Ἐκτίθη φέρε δῶρον Ἀθήνη,
Ὅς χάλλισῳ ἔλω ποικίλμασιν ἠδὲ μέγισῳ;
Ἀσῆρ δ' ὡς ἀπέλαμπε, &c. II. ζ. 293.

A Gown she chose, the best and noblest far,
Sparkling with rich Embroidery like a Star, &c.

γ Consul Apollini, Æsculapio, Saluti dona vovere, & dare signa inaurata iustus: quæ novit, deditque. Liv. l. 40. 37.

THE Mention of *Loretto* puts me in mind of the Surprise I was in at the first Sight of the *Holy Image*; for its Face is as black as a *Negro's*, that one would take it rather for the Representation of a *Proserpine*, or *infernal Deity*, than what they impiously stile it, the *Queen of Heaven*. But I soon recollected, that this very Circumstance of its Complexion made it but resemble the more exactly the *old Idols of Paganism*, which in *sacred* as well as *profane Writers* are described to be *black with the perpetual Smoak of Lamps and Incense*^z.

WHEN a Man is once engaged in Reflections of this kind, imagining himself in some *Heathen Temple*, and expecting as it were some *Sacrifice*, or other *Piece of Paganism* to ensue, he will not be long in Suspence before he sees the finishing Act and last Scene of *genuine Idolatry*, in Crouds of bigot Votaries prostrating themselves before some *Image of Wood or Stone*, and paying divine Honours to an *Idol* of their own erecting. Should they squabble with us here about the Meaning of the Word *Idol*, St. *Ferom* has determined it to the very Case in question, telling us, that by *Idols are to be understood the Images of the Dead*^a: and the *Worshippers of such Images* are used always in the *Stile of the Fathers*, as Terms synonymous and equivalent to *Heathens* or *Pagans*^b.

As to the Practice itself, it was condemned by many of the wisest Heathens, and for several Ages, even in *Pagan Rome*, was thought impious and detestable; for

^z Baruch. 6. 19, 21. Arnob. l. 6.

^a *Idola intelligimus Imagines mortuorum.* Hier. Comm. in Isã. c. 37.

^b *Innumeri sunt in Græcia exterisque nationibus, qui se in discipulatum Christi tradiderunt, non sine ingenti odio eorum qui simulacra venerantur.* Pamphili Apol. pro Orig. vid. Hieron. Op. Tom. 5. p. 233. Ed. Par.

Numa, we find, prohibited it to the *old Romans*, nor would suffer any *Images* in their *Temples*: Which Constitution of his they observed religiously, says *Plutarch* ^c, for the first *Hundred and Seventy Years of the City*. But as *Image Worship* was thought abominable even by some *Pagan Princes*, so with the first *Christian Emperors* it was forbidden on Pain of Death ^d: Not because these *Images* were the Representations of *Dæmons*, or *false Gods*, but because they were *vain, senseless Idols*, the *Work of Mens Hands*, and for that Reason unworthy of any Honour: And all the Instances and Overt-acts of such Worship, described and condemned by them, are exactly the same with what the *Papists* practise at this Day, viz. *lighting up Candles; burning Incense; hanging up Garlands, &c.* as may be seen in the *Law of Theodosius* beforementioned; which confiscates that *House or Land where any such Act of Gentile Superstition had been committed* ^e. These Princes, who were influenced, we may suppose, in their Constitutions of this sort, by the Advice of their Bishops, did not think *Paganism* abolished, till the *Adoration of Images* was utterly extirpated; which was reckoned always the *principal* of those *Gentile Rites*, that agreeably to the Sense of the *purest Ages of Christianity*, are never mentioned in the *Imperial Laws*, without the Epithets of *prophane, damnable, impious, &c.* ^f

^c Vid. Plutar. in Vit. Num. p. 65. C.

^d Pœnæ capitis subjugari præcipimus, quos simulacra colere constiterit Vid. Gothof. Comment. de statu Pagan. sub Christian. Imperatorib. Leg. 6. p. 7.

^e In nulla urbe sensu carentibus simulacris, vel accendat lumina, imponat thura, ferta suspendat.

Si quis vero mortali opere facta, & ævum passura simulacra imposito thure venerabitur——is utpote violatæ religionis reus, ea domo seu possessione multabitur, in qua eum constiterit gentilitia superstitione famulatum, ibid. Leg. 12. p. 15.

^f Ibid. Leg. 17. 20.

WHAT Opinion then can we have of the present Practice of the *Church of Rome*, but that by a Change only of *Name* they have found Means to retain the *Thing*; and by substituting *their Saints* in the Place of *the old Demigods*, have but set up *Idols of their own* instead of those of their *Forefathers*? In which 'tis hard to say whether their Assurance or their Address is more to be admired, who have the Face to make that the principal Part of *Christian Worship*, which the *first Christians* looked upon as the most criminal Part even of *Paganism*, and have found means to extract Gain and great Revenues out of a Practice, which in *primitive Times* would have cost a Man both Life and Estate.

BUT our Notion of the *Idolatry of modern Rome* will be much heightened still and confirmed, as oft as we follow them into those *Temples*, and to those very *Altars*, which were built originally and dedicated by *their Heathen Ancestors*, the *old Romans*, to the Honour of their *Pagan Deities*; where we shall hardly see any other Alteration than the *Shrine* of some *old Hero* filled now by the meaner Statue of some *modern Saint*: Nay, they have not always, as I am well informed, given themselves the Trouble of making even this Change, but have been content sometimes to take up with the *old Image*, just as they found it; only *baptized* as it were, and consecrated anew by the Imposition of a *Christian Name*: This *their Antiquaries* will not scruple to put Strangers in Mind of, in shewing their *Churches*; and it was, I think, in that of *St. Agnes*, where they shewed me an *antique Statue* of a *young Bacchus*, which with a new Name, and some little Change of Drapery, stands now worshipped under the Title of a *female Saint*.

TULLY reproaches *Clodius*, for having publicly dedicated the Statue of a common Strumpet, under the Name and Title of the Goddess Liberty: A Practice still frequent with the present Romans, who have scarce a fine Image or Picture of a female Saint, which is not said to have been designed originally by the Sculptor or Painter for the Representation of his own Mistress: and who dares, may we say with the old Roman, & to violate such a Goddess as this; the Statue of a Whore?

THE noblest Heathen Temple now remaining in the World, is the Pantheon or Rotunda; which, as the Inscription ^h over the Portico informs us, having been impiously dedicated of old by Agrippa to Jove and all the Gods, was piously reconsecrated by Pope Boniface the Fourth to the Blessed Virgin and all the Saints: With this single Alteration it serves as exactly well for all the Purposes of the Popish, as it did for the Pagan Worship, for which it was built: For as in the old Temple every one might find the God of his Country, and address himself to that Deity, whose Religion he was most devoted to; 'tis just the same thing now; every one chuses the Patron he likes best; and one may see here different Services going on at the same time at different Altars, with distinct Congregations around them, just as the Inclinations of the People lead them to the Worship of this or that particular Saint.

^z Hanc Deam quisquam violare audeat, imaginem meretricis? Cic. pro Dom. 43.

^h PANTHEON, &c.
Ab Agrippa Augusti Genero
Impie Jovi, Cæterisque Mendacibus Diis
A Bonifacio III Pontifice
Deiparæ & S. S. Christi Martyribus Pie
Dicatum,
&c.

AND what better Title can these *new Demigods* shew to the Adoration now paid them, than the *old ones*, whose Shrines they have usurped? Or how comes it to be less criminal to *worship Images* erected by the *Pope*, than those which *Agrippa*, or that which *Nebuchadnezzar* set up? If there be any real Difference, most People, I dare say, will be apt to determine in Favour of the *old Possessors*: For those *Heroes of Antiquity* were raised up into *Gods*, and received *divine Honours* in Acknowledgement for some *signal Benefits* they had been the *Authors* of to Mankind; as the *Invention of Arts and Sciences*, or of something highly useful and necessary to Life: whereas of the *Romish Saints*, 'tis certain that many of them were never heard of, but in their own *Legends or fabulous Histories*; and many more, instead of any Services done to Mankind, owe all the Honours now paid them, to their *Vices* or their *Errors*; whose Merit, like the *Story of Demetrius in the Gospel*^k, was that only of raising *Rebellions* in Defence of *their Idol*, and throwing whole Kingdoms into *Convulsions* for the Sake of some *gainful Imposture*.

AND as it is in the *Panttheon*, 'tis just the same in all the other *Heathen Temples*, that still remain in *Rome*; they have only pulled down *one Idol* to set up *another* in its Place, and changed rather the Name, than the Object of their Worship. Thus the little *Temple of Vesta*, near the *Tiber*, mentioned by *Horace*^l, is now

^l Suscepit autem vita hominum, consuetudoque communis ut beneficio excellentes viros in cœlum fama, & voluntate tollerent, &c. Cic. Nat. Deor. l. 2. 223. Imitantem Herculem illum, quem hominum fama beneficiorum memor in concilio Cœlestium collocavit. Off. 3. 299.

^k Act. Apost. xix. 23.

^l Carm. l. 1. 2.

possess'd by the *Madonna of the Sun*; ^m that of *Fortuna Virilis*, by *Mary the Egyptian*; ⁿ that of *Saturn*, ^o (where the publick Treasure was antiently kept) by *St. Adrian*; that of *Romulus and Remus* in the *Via Sacra*, by two other Brothers *Cosmas and Damianus*; ^p that of *Antonine the Godly*, by *Laurence the Saint* ^q: But for my part, I should sooner be tempted out of Devotion for *Romulus* or *Antonine*, to prostrate myself before their Statues, than those of a *Laurence* or a *Damian*; and much rather with *Pagan Rome* give *Divine Honours* to the *Founders of Empires*, than with *Popish Rome* to the *Founders of Monasteries*.

AT the Foot of *Mount Palatin*, in the Way between the *Forum* and *Circus Maximus*, on the very Spot where *Romulus* was believed to have been suckled by the Wolf, there stands another little round *Temple*, dedicated to him in the early Times of the Republick, into which, for the Elevation of the Soil without, we now descend by a great Number of Steps. 'Tis mention'd by *Dionysius of Halycarnassus*, who says, that in his Time there stood in it a *brazen Statue of antique Work of the Wolf giving suck to the Infant Brothers*; ^r which is thought by many

^m Rom. Mod. Giorn. 2. Rione di Ripa. 5.

ⁿ Ib. 4.

^o Ib. Gior. 5. Rione di Campitelli. 15.

^p Urbanus VIII. Pont. Max. Templum Geminis
 Urbis Conditoribus Superstitiosè dicatum
 A Felice IIII. S. S. Cosmæ & Damiano Fratribus
 Piè Consecratum, vetustate Labefactatum
 In splendidiorem Formam Redegit
 Ann. Sal. M.DC.XXXIII.

^q Ibid. 16.

^r Καὶ πῦρον ἔστι, ἐνθα εἶκον κείηαι τὸ παῖδες, λύκαινα παῖδοις δούσῃ τὴν
 μαστῆς ἐπίχουσα, χαλκῆα ποιήματα παλαιῆς ἐργασίας. Dion. Hal. l. 1. 64. Edit.
 Hudion.

to be that same beautiful one, which is still preserved and now shewn in the Capitol: Tho' I take this, which now remains, to have been another of the same kind which stood originally in the Capitol, and is mentioned by *Cicero* to have been there struck with Lightnings; of which it retains to this Day the evident Marks in one of its hinder Legs: 'tis however to one or other of these celebrated Statues, that *Virgil*, as *Servius* assures us, alludes in that elegant Description:

————— *Geminos huic ubera circum*
Ludere pendentis pueros & lambere matrem
Impavidos: Illam tereti cervice reflexam
Mulcere alternos, & fingere corpora linguâ. Æn. 8. 631.

The martial Twins beneath their Mother lay,
 And hanging on her Dugs, with wanton play,
 Securely suck'd; whilst she reclines her Head
 To lick their tender Limbs, and form them as they fed.

BUT to return to my Story: Because of the wonderful Escape which *Romulus* had in this very Place, when exposed in his Infancy to perish in the *Tiber*; as soon as he came to be a God, he was looked upon as singularly propitious to the Health and Safety of young Children; from which Notion it became a Practice for Nurses and Mothers to present their *sickly Infants* before his Shrine in this little *Temple*, † in Confidence of a Cure or Relief

† *Tactus est etiam ille, qui hanc urbem condidit, Romulus, quem inauratum in Capitolio parvum atq; lactantem, uberibus lupinis inhiantem fuisse meministis. Orat. in Catil. 3. 4.*

† A questo Tempio dedicato a Romolo portavano le Donne Romane ad offerir i loro figliuolini, quando pativano di qualche infirmità; e perche questa usanza andavano seguitando l'istisse ancora fatte Christiane, &c. Rom. Moderna. Giornata 2da. c. 36. Rione di Ripa.

by his Favour: Now when this *Temple* was converted afterwards into a *Church*; lest any Piece of Superstition should be lost, or the People think themselves Sufferers in the Change, by losing the Benefit of such a Protection for their Children; Care was taken to find out in the Place of the *Heathen God* a *Christian Saint*, who had been exposed too, it seems, in his Infancy, and found by Chance like *Romulus*; and for the same Reason is believed to be just as fond of and indulgent to Children, as their *old Deity* had been: And thus the Worship paid before to *Romulus*, being now transferred to one *Theodorus*, the old Superstition still subsists, and the Custom of presenting Children at *this Shrine* continues to this Day without Intermiſſion; of which I myself have been a Witness, having seen, as oft as I looked into *this Church*, ten or a dozen Women decently dressed, each with a *Child* in her Lap, sitting with silent Reverence before the *Altar of the Saint*, in Expectation of his *miraculous Influence* on the Health of the Infant.

IN consecrating these *Heathen Temples* to the Popish Worship, that the Change might be the less offensive, and the *old Superstition* as little shocked as possible, they generally observed some Resemblance of Quality and Character in the *Saint* they substituted to the *old Deity*: If in *converting the profane Worship of the Gentiles* (says the *Describer of modern Rome*^u) *to the pure and sacred one of the Church; the Faithful use to follow some Rule and Proportion, they have certainly hit upon it here, in dedicating to the Madonna, or Holy Virgin, the Temple*

^u Si nel rivoltare il profano culto de Gentili nel sacro e vero, osservarono i fedeli qualche proportion, qui la ritrovarono assai conveniente nel dedicare a Maria Vergine un Tempio, ch'era della Buona Dea ————— Rom. Mod. Gior. 2. Rion. di Ripa 10.

formerly sacred to the Bona Dea, or Good Goddess. But they have more frequently on these Occasions had regard rather to a *Similitude of Name* between the old and new Idol: Thus in a Place formerly sacred to *Apollon*, there now stands the Church of *Apollinaris*; built there, as they tell us, * that the profane Name of that Deity might be converted into the glorious one of this Martyr: And where there antiently stood a Temple of *Mars*, they have erected a Church to *Martina*, with this Inscription;

*Martirii gestans virgo Martina coronam,
Ejecto hinc Martis numine, Tempa tenet.*

Mars hence expell'd; *Martina*, martyr'd Maid,
Claims now the Worship which to him was paid.

IN another Place I have taken Notice of an Altar erected to one *St. Baccho*; † and in the Stories of their Saints have observed the Names of *Quirinus*, *Romula* & *Redempta*, *Concordia*, *Nympha*, *Mercurius*: ‡ which, tho' they may, for any thing I know, have been the genuine Names of *Christian Martyrs*, yet cannot but give Occasion to suspect, that some of them at least have been formed out of a Corruption of the old Names; and that the adding of a modern Termination, or *Italianizing* the old Name of a Deity, has given Existence to some

* La Chiesa di S. Apollinari fu fabbricata in questo luogo da' Christiani; affine il profano nome d' Apolline fusse convertito nel santo nome di questo glorioso Martire. Ib. Gio. 3. 21.

† Ibid. Gior. 6. 37.

‡ Aringh. Rom. Subter. l. 2. 21. l. 3. 12. l. 4. 16, 22. l. 5. 4.

of their present *Saints*: Thus the Corruption of the Word *Soracte*, (the old Name of a Mountain mentioned by *Horace*^a in Sight of *Rome*) has, according to Mr. *Addison*, added one Saint to the *Roman Calendar*; being now softened, ^b *because it begins with an S.* into *St. Oreste*; in whose Honour a Monastery is founded on the Place; a Change very natural, if we consider that the *Title of Saint* is never written by the *Italians* at length, but expressed commonly by the single Letter *S.* as *S. Oracte*: And thus this *Holy Mountain* stands now under the Protection of a *Patron*, whose Being and Power is just as imaginary as that of its old Guardian *Apollo*.

Sancti custos Soractis Apollo.

Virg. *Æn.* 9.

No Suspicion of this kind will appear extravagant to such as are at all acquainted with the *History of Popery*, which abounds with Instances of the grossest Forgeries both of *Saints* and *Reliques*, which, to the Scandal of many even among themselves, ^c have been imposed for genuine on the poor ignorant People. 'Tis certain that in the earlier Ages of Christianity, the *Christians* often made free with the *Sepulchral Stones of Heathen Monuments*, which being ready cut out to their Hands, they converted to their own Use; and turning downwards the Side on which the *old Epitaph* was engraved, used either to inscribe a new one on the other Side, or leave it perhaps without any *Inscription* at all, as they are

^a *Carm.* l. 1. 9.

^b *Addison's Travels from Pesaro, &c. to Rome.*

^c *Utinam hanc religionem imitarentur, qui sanctorum recens absque certis nominibus inventorum fictus historias comminiscuntur ad confusionem verarum historiarum, imo & qui Paganorum Inscriptiones aliquando pro Christianis vulgant, &c.* *Mabill. Iter Ital.* p. 225.

often found in the *Catacombs of Rome*^d. Now this one Custom has frequently been the Occasion of ascribing *Martyrdom* and *Sainthood* to Persons and Names of meer *Pagans*.

MABILLON gives a remarkable Instance of it in an *old Stone* found on the Grave of a *Christian* with this Inscription.^e

D. M.
IVLIA EVODIA
FILIA FECIT.
MATRI.

And because in the same Grave there was found likewise a *Glass Vial* or *Lacrymatory Vessel* tinged with a reddish Colour, which they call † *Blood*, and look upon as a certain Proof of *Martyrdom*; this *Julia Evodia*, though undoubtedly a *Heathen*, was presently adopted both for *Saint* and *Martyr*, on the Authority of an *Inscription* that appears evidently to have been one of those above-mentioned, and borrowed from a *Heathen Sepulchre*: But whoever the Party there buried might have been, whether *Heathen* or *Christian*; 'tis certain however that it could not be this *Evodia herself*, but her Mother only, whose Name is not there signified.

THE same Author mentions some *original Papers* he found in the *Barbarin Library*, giving a pleasant

^d Ab immanibus enim & pervetustis superstitiosæ urbis constructionibus atque sepulchris ad suos obtegendos tumulos Christiani lapides non raro auferre consueverant. Aringh. Rom. Subt. l. 3. c. 22.

^e Vid. Mabill. Ibid.

^f Si forte rubore quodam in imo tincta vitrea Ampulla fuerit, pro argumento Martyrii habetur. Mont. Diar. It. p. 118.

Account of a Negotiation between the *Spaniards* and *Pope Urban the VIIIth*, in relation to this very Subject. The *Spaniards*, it seems, have a *Saint* held in great Reverence in some Parts of *Spain*, called *Viār*; for the farther Encouragement of whose Worship they sollicited the *Pope* to grant some *special Indulgences* to his Altars; and upon the *Pope's* desiring to be first better acquainted with his Character, and the Proofs they had of his *Saintship*, they produced a *Stone* with these *antique Letters* S. VIAR. which the Antiquaries readily saw to be a small Fragment of some *old Roman Inscription*, in Memory of one who had been *Præfectus. VIARum*, or *Overseer of the Highways*.

BUT we have in *England* an Instance still more ridiculous, of a *fititious Saintship*, in the Case of a certain *Saint*, called *Amphibolus*; who, according to our *Monkish Historians*, was *Bishop of the Isle of Man*, and *Fellow Martyr and Disciple of St. Alban*: Yet the learned *Bishop Usher* has given good Reasons to convince us, that he owes the Honour of his *Saintship* to a mistaken Passage in the *old Acts or Legends of St. Alban*^b: where the *Amphibolus* mentioned, and since revered as *Saint and Martyr*, was nothing more than the *Cloak*, which *Alban* had on at the Time of his Execution; being a Word derived from the *Greek*, and used to signify a *rough shaggy Cloak*, which *Ecclesiastical Persons* usually wore in that Age.

^g Alterum notatu dignum, quod Urbanus ab Hispanis quibusdam interpellatus de concedendis indulgentiis ob cultum Sancti, cui nomen VIAR, &c. allatus est lapis in quo hæc literæ reliquæ erant S. VIAR, &c. Vid. Mabill. Iter. Ital. p. 145.

^b Usher. de Britan. Eccles. primord. c. 14. p. 539. 4to.

It. Bp. Floyd's Histor. Acc. of Ch. Govern. in Gr. Brit. c. 7. p. 151.

THEY pretend to shew us here two *original Impressions* of our *Saviour's Face* on *Handkerchiefs*: The one sent a Present by himself to *Agbarus Prince of Edessa*, who by Letter had desired a Picture of him; the other given at the time of his Execution to a *Saint or Holy Woman* named *Veronica*, on a *Handkerchief*, which she had lent him to wipe his Face with on that Occasion: both which *Handkerchiefs* are still preserved, as they affirm, and now kept with the utmost Reverence; the first in *St. Silvester's Church*; the second in *St. Peter's*; where in Honour of this *sacred Relique* there's a fine *Altar* built by *Pope Urban the VIIIth*, with a *Statue of Veronica* herself with the following *Inscription*.

SALVATORIS IMAGINEM VERONICÆ
 SVDARIO EXCEPTAM
 VT LOCI MAIESTAS DECENTER
 CVSTODIRET URBANVS VIII.
 PONT. MAX.
 MARMOREVM SIGNVM
 ET ALTARE ADDIDIT CONDITORIVM
 EXTRVXIT ET ORNAVIT.

BUT notwithstanding the Authority of *this Pope* and his *Inscription*, this *VERONICA*, as one of their best Authors has shewn, ⁱ like *Amphibolus* before-mentioned, was not any *real Person*, but the Name given to the *Picture itself* by the *Old Writers* who mention it; being formed by blundering and confounding the Words *VERA ICON*, or *True Image*, the Title inscribed perhaps, or given originally to the *Handkerchief* by the first *Contrivers* of the *Imposture*.

¹ Hæc Christi Imago a recentioribus VERONICÆ dicitur: Imaginem ipsam veteres VERONICAM appellabant, &c. Mabil. Iter. Ital. p. 88.

THESE Stories however, as fabulous and childish as they appear to Men of Sense, are yet urged by grave Authors in Defence of their *Image-Worship*, as certain Proofs of its *divine Origine*, and sufficient to confound all the *impious Opposers* of it. ^k

I SHALL add nothing more on this Article, than that whatever Worship was paid by the *Antients* to their *Heroes* or *inferior Deities*, the *Romanists* now pay the same to their *Saints* and *Martyrs*; as their *own Inscriptions* plainly declare; which, like those mentioned above of *St. Martina* and the *Pantheon*, generally signify, that the *Honours which of old had been impiously given in that Place to the false God*, are now *piously and rightly transferred to the Christian Saint*: as one of their *celebrated Poets* expresses himself in regard to *St. George*.

*Ut Martem Latii, sic nos Te, Dive Georgi
Nunc colimus, &c.*

Mantuan.

As *Mars* our Fathers once ador'd, so now
To Thee, O *George*, we humbly prostrate bow.

AND every where through *Italy* one sees their *sacred Inscriptions* speaking the pure Language of *Paganism*,

^k Imaginem hanc ab Edeffenorum Civitate translata, condigno ad hæc usq; tempora venerationis cultu in D. Silvestri Ecclesiâ, veluti divinum quid & perenne sacrarum Imaginum monumentum, pariter ac propugnaculum adversus insanos Iconoclastas aservari, & suspiciendum fidelibus adorandamque proponi.

Sacrosancta autem Redemptoris Imago, gemmarum Thefauris quibusq; longe anteferenda, in Vaticana Basilica, quo par est venerationis cultu aservatur. Aring. Rom. Subt. T. 2. l. 5. c. 4.

Effigie più d'ogni altra sublime è adoranda, per esser non fattura di mano Angelica o d'humana, mà del Fattor medesimo degli Angeli & degli huomini. Rom. Mod. Giorn. 1. Rion. di Bor.

and giving the same *Powers, Characters* and *Attributes* to their *Saints*, as had formerly been ascribed to the *Heathen Gods*; as the few here exhibited will evince.

Popish Inscriptions.

MARIA ET FRANCISCE
TVTELARES MEI.

DIVO EVSTORGIO
QVI HVIC TEMPLO
PRAESIDET.

NVMINI
DIVI GEORGII
POLLENTIS. POTENTIS
INVICTI.

DIVIS
PRAESTITIBVS IUVANTIBVS
GEORGIO. STEPHANOQVE
CVM DEO OPT. MAX.

Pagan Inscriptions.

MERCVRIO ET MINERVAE
DIIS TVTELARIB. ^m
TVTELARES MEI.

DII QVI HVIC TEMPLO
PRAESIDENT.

NVMINI
MERCVRII SACR.
HERCVLI. VICTORI.
POLLENTI. POTENTI
INVICTO.

PRAESTITI IOVI

S.
DIIS.
DEABVS
QVE. CVM
IOVE.

BOLDONIUS censures the Author of the last Inscription, for the Absurdity of putting the *Saints* before God himself; and imitating too closely the *ancient*

¹ Vid. Boldonii Epigraphica p. 439. It. p. 348. It. p. 422. It. 649.

^m Gruter. Corp. Inscript. p. 50. It. Cic. Or. pro Lege Man. 15. It. Grut. p. 54. It. p. 50. It. lb. p. 22. It. lb. p. 2.

one, which I have set against it, where the same Impropriety is committed in regard to *Jupiter*.

As to that celebrated *Act of Popish Idolatry*, the *Adoration of the Host*; I must confess, that I cannot find the least Resemblance or Similitude of it in any part of the *Pagan Worship*: And as oft as I have been standing by at *Mass*, and seen the whole Congregation prostrate on the Ground, in the humblest Posture of adoring, at the *Elevation of this consecrated Piece of Bread*; I could not help reflecting on a Passage of *Tully*, where speaking of the Absurdity of the *Heathens* in the Choice of *their Gods*, *But was any Man*, says he, *ever so mad as to take that which he feeds upon, for a God?*ⁿ This was an Extravagance reserved for *Popery* alone; and what an *old Roman* could not but think too gross for *Ægyptian Idolatry* to swallow, is now become the *principal Part of Worship*, and the distinguishing *Article of Faith* in the *Creed of Modern Rome*.

BUT their *Temples* are not the only Places where we may see the Proofs and Overt-Acts of their *Superstition*: the whole Face of the Country has the visible *Characters of Paganism* upon it; and where-ever we look about us, we cannot but find, as *St. Paul* did in *Athens*,^o clear Evidence of its being possessed by a *superstitious and idolatrous People*.

THE *old Romans*, we know, had *their Gods*, who presided peculiarly over the *Roads, Streets and Highways*; called *Viales, Semitales, Compitales*: Whose little *Temples*

ⁿ Sed ecquem tam amentem esse putas, qui illud, quo vescatur, Deum credit esse? Cic. de Nat. Deor. 3.

^o Act. Apost. xvii. 17.

or *Altars* decked with Flowers, or whose *Statues* at least coarsly carved of Wood or Stone, were placed at convenient Distances in the publick Ways for the Benefit of Travellers, who used to step aside to pay their Devotions to these *rural Shrines*, and beg a prosperous Journey and Safety in their Travels : p Now this Custom prevails still so generally in all *Popish Countries*, but especially in *Italy*, that one can see no other Difference between the *old* and *present Superstition*, than that of changing only the Name of the *Deity*, and *Christning* as it were the *old Hecate in triviis*, by the new Name of *Maria in Trivio*, under which Title I have observed one of their Churches dedicated in this City : q and as the Heathens used to paint over the ordinary *Statues of their Gods*, with *Red* or some such gay Colour, r so I have oft observed the coarse *Images of these Saints* so daubed over with a gaudy Red, as to resemble exactly the Description of the *God Pan* in *Virgil*.

Sanguineis ebuli baccis minioque rubentem. Ecl. 10.

IN passing along the Road, 'tis common to see Travellers on their Knees before these *rustick Altars*; which none ever presume to pass by without some Act of Reverence; and those, who are most in haste, or at a

p Ut religiosis viantium moris est, cum aliquis lucus, aut aliquis locus sanctus in via oblatu est, votum postulare, donum opponere, paulisper assidere.

Neq; justius religiosam moram viatori objecerit aut ara floribus redimita aut truncus dolamine effigiatus, &c. Apulei Florid. 1.

Invoco vos, Lares viales, ut me bene juvetis. Plaut. Merc. 5. 2.

q Rom. Modern. Gior. Rion. di Colonna. c. 11.

r Fictilem fuisse & ideo miniari solitum. Plin. Hist. N. l. 35. 12. & a Censoribus Jovem miniandum locari. Ibid. l. 33. 7.

Distance,

Distance, are sure to pull off their Hats at least, in Token of Respect: and I took Notice, that our Postilions used to look back upon us, to see how we behaved on such Occasions, and seem'd surpriz'd at our passing so negligently before Places esteem'd so sacred.

BUT besides these *Images* and *Altars*, there are frequently erected on the Road huge *wooden Crosses*,^s dressed out with Flowers, and hung round with the trifling Offerings of the Country People; which always put me in mind of the *superstitious Veneration* which the *Heathens* used to pay to some old *Trunks of Trees* or Posts set up in the Highways, which they held *sacred*;^t or of that *venerable Oak* in *Ovid* covered with *Garlands* and *votive Offerings*.

*Stabat in his ingens annofo robore quercus ;
Una nemus : Vittæ mediam, memoresq; tabellæ
Sertaq; cingebant, voti argumenta potentis.* Met. 8.

Reverend with Age a stately Oak there stood,
Its Branches widely stretch'd, itself a Wood,
With Ribbands, Garlands, Pictures cover'd o'er,
The Fruits of pious Vows from Rich and Poor.

THIS Description of the *Pagan Oak* puts me in mind of a Story I have met with here, of a *Popish one* very like it, *viz.* how a certain Person devoted to the Worship of the *Virgin*, hung up a *Picture of her* in an *Oak*

^s Sanctæ Imagines & Cruces in viis publicis eriguntur, & nos propter Deum, & puram erga sanctos ejus fidem, sancta ejusmodi ubique erecta adoramus & salutamus. Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 6.

^t Nam veneror, seu stipes habet desertus in agris
Seu vetus in Trivio florida ferta Lapis. Tibul. El. 1. 11.

he had in his Vineyard, which grew so famous for *its Miracles*, that the Oak soon became covered with *votive Offerings*, and *rich Presents* from distant Countries, so as to furnish a Fund at last for the building of a *Great Church* to the *miraculous Picture*; which now stands dedicated in this City, under the Title of *St. Mary of the Oak*.^u

BUT what gave me still the greater Notion of the Superstition of these Countries, was to see those *little Oratories*, or *rural Shrines* sometimes placed under the Cover of a *Tree* or *Grove*, agreeably to the Descriptions of the *old Idolatry*, in the *sacred* as well as *profane* Writers; * or more generally raised on some *Eminence*, or, in the *Phrase of Scripture*, on *high Places*; the constant Scene of *idolatrous Worship* in all Ages; it being an universal Opinion among the *Heathens*, that the Gods in a peculiar manner loved to reside on *Eminences*, or *Tops of Mountains*: † Which *Pagan Notion* prevails still so generally with the *Papists*, that there is hardly a *Rock* or *Precipice*, however dreadful or difficult of Access, that has not an *Oratory*, or *Altar*, or *Crucifix* at least planted on the *Top* of it.

AMONG the rugged *Mountains of the Alps* in *Savoy*, very near a little Town called *Modana*, there stands on

^u Essendo egli divotissimo della Madonna, fece dipingere l'immagine di lei, e l'appese ad una Quercia——dove cominciò a manifestarsi con molti miracoli, intanto che sino dall' Africa, e da Constantinopoli l'erano mandati voti in tanta quantità, che vi si fece una gran Chiesa——Rom. Modern. Gior. 3. c. 30. Rion. della Reg.

* *Lucus & Ara Dianæ.* Hor.

† Ἄστρος δὲ ἐν κορυφῇ κατὰ ἕλε κῆρσι γαίωρ. Il. 0. 50.

Tuq; ex tuo edito Monte Latiali, sancte Jupiter. Cic. pro Mill.

the *Top of a Rock*, a *Chapel* with a *miraculous Image* of our *Lady*, which is visited with great *Devotion* by the *People*, and sometimes we were told, by the *King himself*; being famous, it seems, for a *Miracle* of a singular kind, (*viz.*) the restoring of *dead-born Children to Life*; but so far only as to make them capable of *Baptism*, after which they again expire: And our *Landlord* assured me, that there was daily *Proof* of the *Truth* of this *Miracle*, in *Children* brought from all *Quarters* to be presented before this *Shrine*; who never fail to shew manifest *Tokens* of *Life*, by *stretching out their Arms*, or *opening their Eyes*, or even sometimes *making Water* whilst they are held by the *Priest* in *Presence* of *the Image*. All which appeared so ridiculous to a *French Gentleman*, who was with me at the *Place*, but had not heard the *Story* from our *Landlord*, that he looked upon it as a *Banter* or *Fiction* of my own, till I brought him to my *Author*, who with his *Wife*, as well as our *Voiturins*, very seriously vouched for the *Truth* of it; and added further, that when the *French Army* passed that way in the last *War*, they were so impious as to throw down this *sacred Image* to the *Bottom* of a vast *Precipice* hard by it, which tho' of *Wood* only, was found below entire and unhurt by the *Fall*, and so replaced in its *Shrine*, with greater *Honour* and *Credit* than ever, by the *Attestation* of this *new Miracle*.

On the *Top* of *Mount Senis*, the highest *Mountain* of the *Alps* in the same *Passage* of *Savoy*, covered with perpetual *Snow*, they have another *Chapel*, in which they perform *divine Service* once a *Year*, in the *Month* of *August*; and sometimes, as our *Guides* informed us, to the *Destruction* of the whole *Congregation*, by the *Accident* of a sudden *Tempest* in a *Place* so elevated and exposed. And this surely comes up

to the Description of that Worship which the *Jews* were commanded to extirpate from the Face of the Earth: *Ye shall utterly destroy the Places wherein the Nations served their Gods, upon the high Mountains and upon the Hills, and under every green Tree: And ye shall overthrow their Altars, break their Pillars, burn their Groves, and hew down the graven Images of their Gods.* ^z

WHEN we enter their Towns, the Case is still the same as it was in the Country; we find every where the same Marks of *Idolatry*, and the same Reasons to make us fancy, that we are still treading *Pagan Ground*; whilst at every Corner we see *Images* and *Altars*, with *Lamps* or *Candles* burning before them; exactly answering to the Descriptions of the *antient Writers*; ^a and to what *Tertullian* reproaches the *Heathens* with, that *their Streets, their Markets, their Baths were not without an Idol.* ^b But above all in the *Pomp* and *Solemnity* of their *Holy-days*, and especially their *Religious Processions*, we see the genuine Remains of *Heathenism*, and Proof enough to convince us, that this is still the same *Rome*, which *old Numa* first tamed and civilized by the *Arts of Religion*: Who, as *Plutarch* says, ^c by the *Institution of Supplications and Processions* to

^z Deuteron. xii. 2, 3.

^b Ἀγάλματα ἢ ἐν ἀγορῇ θεῶν. Xenoph. l. 4. It. Eurip. Elec. 387. Μεγάλῃ δὲ Διὸς πᾶσι μὲν ἀγυαί. &c. Lucian. in Prometh.

Omnibus vicis Statuæ, ad eas Thus & Cerei. Cic. Off. 3. 26.

^a De Spectac. c. 8.

^c Τὰ μὲν πολλὰ θυσιῶν καὶ πομπῶν καὶ χορείων ἅμα σπουδῆσι διαγωγῆν ἐπίχεαιν καὶ φιλόκροτον ἠδονὴν ἐχέουσι δημαγωγῶν καὶ παιδαγωγῶν τὸ θυμοειδές, &c. Ἐδέλετο ἢ δαίνοισιν ἀνθρώπων ὑπὸ δεισιδαιμονίας, &c. Ibid. Plutar. in Numa. p. 16.

the Gods, which inspire Reverence, whilst they give Pleasure to the Spectators, and by pretended Miracles, and divine Apparitions, reduced the fierce Spirits of his Subjects under the Power of Superstition.

THE Descriptions of the *Religious Poms and Processions* of the Heathens come so near to what we see on every *Festival of the Virgin* or other *Romish Saint*, that one can hardly help thinking these *Popish ones* to be still regulated by the *old Ceremonial of Pagan Rome*: At these Solemnities the *Chief Magistrate* used frequently to assist in *Robes of Ceremony*; attended by the *Priests* in *Surplices*,^d with *Wax Candles* in their Hands, carrying upon a *Pageant* or *Thensa* the *Images of their Gods* dressed out in their best Cloaths: These were usually followed by the *principal Youth* of the Place, in *white Linen Vestments* or *Surplices*, *singing Hymns* in Honour of the *God* whose *Festival* they were celebrating; accompanied by *Crouds of all sorts* that were initiated in the *same Religion*, all with *Flambeaux* or *Wax Candles* in their Hands. This is the Account which *Apuleius*, and other Authors give us of a *Pagan Procession*; and I may appeal to all who have been abroad, whether it might not pass quite as well for the Description of a *Popish one*. *Monsieur Tournesort* in his *Travels thro' Greece* reflects upon the *Greek Church* for having retained and taken into their present Worship many of the *old Rites of Heathenism*, and particularly that of *carrying and dancing about the Images of the Saints in their Processions to Sing-*

^d Antistites sacrorum candido linteamine—ad usq; vestigia strictim injecti. Deum proferebant insignes exuvias, quorum primus lucernam præmicantem claro porrigebat lumine, &c.—Eas amænus lectissimæ juventutis, veste niveâ prænitens sequebatur chorus, carmen venustum iterantes.—Magnus præterea sexûs utriusque numerus, lucernis, tædis, cereis, &c. Apul. ibid.

ing and Musick:^e the Reflection is full as applicable to his own, as it is to the *Greek Church*, and the Practice itself so far from giving Scandal in *Italy*, that the learned Publisher of the *Florentine Inscriptions* takes occasion to shew the *Conformity* between themselves and the *Heathens* in this very Instance of carrying about the *Pictures of their Saints*, as the *Pagans* did those of their *Gods*, in their *sacred Processions*.^f

IN one of these *Processions* made lately to St. *Peter's* in the time of *Lent*, I saw that *ridiculous Penance* of the *Flagellantes* or *Self-whippers*, who march with *Whips* in their Hands, and every now and then lash themselves on the bare Back, till 'tis all covered with Blood; just in the same manner as the *Fanatical Priests* of *Bellona* or the *Syrian Goddesses*, as well as the *Votaries* of *Isis*, used to slash and cut themselves of old in order to please the *Goddess* by the *Sacrifice of their own Blood*: which *mad Piece of Discipline* we find frequently mentioned and as oft ridiculed by the *antient Writers*.

SUCH is the Force of *Fanaticism*, says *Seneca*,^g on a *disordered Mind*, that they think to appease the *Gods* by such *Methods* as an *enraged Man* would hardly take to *revenge himself*: But we are not to imagine that all the *Blood* we see on these *Occasions* flows really from the *Backs* of these *Bigots*; 'tis probable, that, like their

^e Tournefort. Lit. 3. 44.

^f Cui non abludunt si (sacra cum profanis conferre fas est) pictæ tabulæ Sanctorum Imaginibus exornatæ, quæ, &c. Inscript. Antiq. Flor. p. 377.

^g Tantus est perturbatæ mentis furor, ut sic Dii placentur, quemadmodum ne homines quidem sæviunt. De Superstit. Vid. Lipf. Elec. 2. 18.

frantick Predecessors they use some *Craft* as well as *Zeal* in this their *Fury*; and I can't but think that there was a deal of *Justice* in that *Order*, which the *Emperor Commodus* gave, in regard to these *Bellonarii*, or *Whippers of Antiquity*, though 'tis usually imputed to his *Cruelty*; when he commanded, that they should not be suffered to impose on the *People*, but be forced to cut and slash themselves effectually, and in good earnest.^h

IF we examine the pretended *Miracles*, and pious *Frauds* of the *Church of Rome*, we shall be able to trace them all from the same *Source of Paganism*, and find that the *Priests of New Rome* are not in the least degenerated from their *Predecessors*, in the *Art of imposing* on their fellow *Citizens*, by the *Forgery of these holy Impostures*; which, as *Livy* observes of *Old Rome*,ⁱ were always multiplied in *Proportion to the Credulity and Disposition of the poor People to swallow them*.

IN the early times of the *Republick*, in the *War with the Latins*, the *Gods Castor and Pollux* are said to have appeared on *white Horses* in the *Roman Army*, which by their *Assistance* gained a compleat *Victory*; in *Memory of which*, the *General Posthumius* vowed and built a *Temple publickly to those Deities*; and for *Proof of the Fact*, there was shewn, we find, in *Cicero's time*, the *Marks of the Horse's Hoofs on a Rock at Regillum*, where they first appeared.^k

^h Bellonæ servientes vere exsecrare brachium præcepit, studio crudelitatis. Lamprid. in Commodo, 9.

ⁱ Quæ quo magis credebant simplices & religiosi homines, eo plura nuntiabantur. Liv. l. 24. 10.

^k Cic. de Nat. Deor. l. 3. 5.

Now this *Miracle*, with many others I could mention of the same kind, ^l has, I dare say, as authentick an Attestation, as any which the *Papists* can produce: the Decree of a *Senate* to confirm it; a *Temple* erected in Consequence of it; *visible Marks* of the Fact on the Spot where it was transacted; and all this supported by the concurrent Testimony of the *best Authors of Antiquity*; amongst whom *Dionysius* of *Halicarnassus* says, ^m that there were subsisting in his time at *Rome* many evident Proofs of its Reality, besides a *yearly Festival*, with a *solemn Sacrifice* and *Procession* in Memory of it: Yet for all this, these Stories were but the Jest of Men of Sense even in the Times of *Heathenism*, ⁿ and seem so extravagant to us now, that we wonder there could ever be any so simple as to believe them.

WHAT better Opinion then can we have of all those of the same Stamp in the *Popish Legends*, which they have plainly built on this Foundation, and copied from this very Original? Nor content with barely copying, they seldom fail to improve the old Story with some additional Forgery and Invention: As in the present Case, instead of *Two Persons on White Horses*, they take Care to introduce *Three*; and not only on *White Horses*, but sometimes at the Head of *White Armies*; as in an old History of the Holy Wars, written by an Eye-witness, and publish'd by *Mabillon*, is solemnly affirmed of *St. George*, *Demetrius*, and *Theo-*

^l Cic. Nat. D. 2. 2. Plutar. in vita P. Æmil. Val. Max. c. 8. 1. Flor. l. 1. 11. 1. 2. 12.

^m Dion. Halic. l. 6. p. 337. Edit. Hudson.

ⁿ Aut si hoc fieri potuisset dicis, doceas oportet quomodo, nec fabellas aniles proferas. Cic. Ibid. 3. 5.

dorus °. They shew us too in several Parts of *Italy*, the *Marks of Hands and Feet on Rocks and Stones*, said to have been effected miraculously by the *Apparition* of some *Saint* or *Angel* on the Spot: p Just as the *Impression of Hercules's Feet* was shewn of old on a Stone in *Scythia*, q exactly resembling the Footsteps of a Man. And they have also many *Churches* and Publick Monuments r erected in Testimony of such Miracles, viz. of *Saints and Angels fighting visibly for them in their Battles*; which tho' always full as ridiculous as that above-mention'd, are not yet supported by half so good Evidence of their Reality. s.

THEIR *miraculous Images*, which we see in all their great Towns, said to be made by *Angels*, and sent to

° Tres itaque Milites persequentes illos sedebant super albos equos——credenda est ista ventres, & nullo modo prohibenda——hoc vero firmatum est testimonio eorundem Turcorum——Isti vero fuerunt Christi Milites Sanctus Georgius, Sanctus Demetrius, & Sanctus Theodorus, quos Deus mandavit, &c.

Adjuvante eos Domino & visibiliter mittente eis in adjutorium sanctos suos Bellatores, videl. Mercurium multotiens, aliquando Georgium necnon & interdum Theodorum, aliquando totos tres cum suis dealbatis exercitibus, videntibus non solum Christi militibus, sed etiam ipsis inimicis Paganis, &c. Vid. Bell. Sac. Hist. in Mabill. Iter. Ital. T. 1. Par. 2. p. 138, 155.

p Si conserva poi in questa Chiesa una pietra, sopra la quale apparendo l'Angelo in Castello, vi lasciò le piante de suoi piedi impresse, e d'un fanciullo paiono le vestigia. R. Mod. Gior. 5. Rion. di Campetalii. c. 1.

q Herodot. l. 4. p. 4. 251. Edit. Lond.

r There is an Altar of Marble in *St. Peter's*, one of the greatest Pieces of modern Sculpture, representing in Figures as large as the Life, the Story of *Attila* King of the *Huns*, who in full March towards *Rome* with a victorious Army in order to pillage it, was frightened and driven back by the Apparition of an Angel, in the time of Pope *Leo* the First.

The Castle and Church of *St. Angelo* have their Title from the Apparition of an Angel over the Place, in the time of *Gregory* the Great. Rom. Moder. Giorn. 1. Rion. di Borgo 1.

s Divum Jacobum Nationis Hispanicæ, qui armatus sæpe visus in sublimè præire ac protegere acies Hispanorum, nobilesque iis victorias in sacris bellis conciliare. Boldonii Epigraph. l. 2. p. 349.

them

them from *Heaven*, † are but the *old Fables* revived of the Διοσκειτὲς Ἀγαλμα, or *Image of Diana dropt from the Clouds*; † or the *Palladium of Troy*, which, according to *old Authors*, * was a wooden Statue three Cubits long, which fell from *Heaven*.

IN one of their *Churches* here, they shew a *Picture of the Virgin*, which, as their *Writers* affirm, † was brought down from *Heaven* with great *Pomp*, and after having hung a while with surprizing *Lustre* in the *Air*, was, in sight of all the *Clergy and People of Rome*, delivered by *Angels* into the *Hands of Pope John the First*, who marched out in solemn *Procession*, in order to receive this *celestial Present*. And is not this exactly of a *Piece* with the *old Pagan Story of King Numa*, when in this same *City*, he issued from his *Palace*, with *Priests and People* after him, and with *publick Prayer and solemn Devotion* received the *Ancile, or Heavenly Shield*, which in sight of all the *People of Rome*, was sent down to him with much the same *Formality from the Clouds*? † And as that wise *Prince* for the *Security* of his

† Sed quorsum hic Sancti Dominici Imaginem, quæ apud Surrianum in Calabria jugibus nunc miraculis præfulget, silentio obvolvimus? de Cælo quippe, ut pia traditio est, hæc primum anno 1530. delata validissimum adversus Impios Iconoclastas propugnaculum exhibet. Aringh. Rom. Subter. l. 5. c. 5.

De Imagine illa, quæ cum ab Angelis confecta fuerit, ἀχειρίνωθι vocatur, nil nisi tritum succurrit. Montfauc. Diar. Ibid. 137.

‡ Act. Apost. c. xix. 35.

* Vid. Pitisci Lexic. Antiquitat.

† Vid. Rom. Modern. Giorn. 2. Rion. di Ripa, c. 43.

‡ A media Cælum regione dehiscere cæpit:
 Submisere oculos cum duce turba suos.
 Ecce levi scutum versatum leniter aura
 Decedit, a populo clamor ad astra venit, &c.

Or. Fast. l. 3.

Heavenly

Heavenly Present, ordered several others to be made so exactly like it, that the *Original* could not be distinguished; ^a so the *Romish Priests* have thence taken the Hint, to form after each *Celestial Pattern*, a Number of *Copies*, so perfectly resembling each other, as to occasion endless Squabbles among themselves about their several Pretensions to the *Divine Original*.

THE *Rod of Moses*, with which he performed his *Miracles*, is still preserved, as they pretend, and shewn here with great Devotion, in one of the principal *Churches*: And just so the *Rod of Romulus*, with which he performed his *Auguries*, was preserved by the *Priests*, as a *sacred Relique* in *old Rome*, and kept with great Reverence from being *touched or handled* by the People: ^b Which *Rod* too, like most of the *Popish Reliques*, had the Testimony of a *Miracle* in Proof of its Sanctity; for when the *Temple*, where it was kept, was burnt to the Ground, it was found intire under the *Asbes*, and untouched by the *Flames*: ^c Which same *Miracle* has been borrowed and exactly copied by the *present Romans*, in many Instances; particularly, in a *miraculous Image* of our *Saviour* in *St. John Lateran*, which the *Flames*, it seems, had no Power over, tho' the *Church itself* had been twice destroyed by *Fire*. ^d

^a Plura jubet fieri simili cœlata figurâ;
Error ut ante oculos insidiantis eat.

Ov. Fast. l. 3.

^b Παρελαβόντες ἐν ἱερῶν τὸ ξύλον ὡσπερ ἄλλο τι τῶν ἱερῶν ἀψαυσον ἐρούλαττον. Plutar. in Camil. 145. D.

^c Possunt & illa miraculorum loco poni: Quod deusto sacrario faliorum, nihil in eo præter Lituum Romuli integrum repertum est. Valer. Max. c. 8. 10. It. Cic. de Divin. 1. 17. Plut. in Rom.

^d E questa Immagine non s'abbruciò, essendo la Chiesa stata abbruciata due volte, Rom. Moder. Gior. 6. Rion. de' Monti. 11.

NOTHING is more common among the *Miracles of Popery*, than to hear of *Images* that on certain Occasions had *spoken*, or *shed Tears*; or *sweat*, or *bled*: and do not we find the very same Stories in all the *Heathen Writers*? Of which I could bring numberless Examples from *old* as well as *new Rome*, from *Pagan* as well as *Popish Legends*. *Rome*, as the Describer of it says, ^e *abounds with these Treasures, or speaking Images*: But he laments the Negligence of their Ancestors, in not recording, so particularly as they ought, the *very Words and other Circumstances of such Conversation*. They shew us here an *Image of the Virgin*, which reprimanded *Gregory the Great* for passing by her too carelessly; and in *St. Paul's Church* a *Crucifix*, which spoke to *St. Bridgith*.^f *Durantus* mentions another *Madonna*, which spoke to the *Sexton*, in *Commendation of the Piety of one of her Votaries*.^g And did not the *Image of Fortune* do the same, or more in *old Rome*? which, as *Authors* say, spoke twice in praise of those *Matrons, who had dedicated a Temple to her*.^h

^e Non si puo negare, che per le grande abbondanza, che ha' Roma in simili tesori, non siano stati negligenti i nostri Maggiori, in darne buon conto a' posteri loro. Rom. Mod. R. di Monti. 21.

^f Vi è una *Madonna* detta di *St. Gregorio*, della quale si dice, che un giorno passando il detto Pontifice, & non salutandola, gli dicesse, &c. Ibid. Gior. 5. Rion. di Campetalli.

Ad sanctum Paulum, ubi vidimus ligneam Crucifixi Imaginem, quem sancta Brigida sibi loquentem audiisse perhibetur. Mabil. D. Italic. p. 133.

^g Imaginem Sanctæ Mariæ Custodem Ecclesiæ allocutam & Alexii singularem pietatem commendasse. Durant. de Rit. l. 1. c. 5.

^h Fortunæ item muliebris simulacrum, quod est in via Latina, non semel, sed bis locutum confitit, his pæne verbis, bene me matronæ vidistis, riteque dedicastis. Valer. Max. 1. 8.

THEY have a Church here dedicated to *St. Mary the Weeper*, or to a *Madonna* famous for shedding *Tears*:ⁱ They shew an *Image* too of our *Saviour*, which for some time before the *Sacking of Rome* wept so heartily, that the *Good Fathers of the Monastery* were all employed in wiping its *Face with Cotton*.^k And was not the Case just the same among their *Ancestors*, when on the Approach of some publick Calamity the *Statue of Apollo*, as *Livy* tells us, wept for three Days and Nights successively?^l They have another *Church* built in Honour of an *Image* which bled very plentifully, from a Blow given it by a *Blasphemer*.^m And were not the old *Idols* too as full of *Blood*, when, as *Livy* relates, all the *Images in the Temple of Juno* were seen to sweat with Drops of it?ⁿ

ALL which *Prodigies* as well modern as ancient, are derived from the same Source, viz. the *Contrivance of Priests or Governours*, in order to draw some Gain or Advantage out of the poor People they thus impose upon.

XENOPHON, though himself much addicted to *Superstition*, speaking of the *Prodigies* which preceded

ⁱ S. Maria del Pianto. Rom. Mod. Gior. 3. Rion. della Regosa 5.

^k Dicono, ch'avanti il sacco di Roma pianse piu volte, e li Padri ci venissero ad asciugar le lagrime con Bombace. Ib. Gior. 6. Rio de' Mon. 31.

^l Apollo triduum & tres noctes lacrymavit. Liv. l. 43. 13.

^m Comminciarono a tirarle de' sassi nel viso, e nè uscì sangue, del quale si vedono infra' hora i segni, &c. Rom. Mod. Gior. 3. Rio. di Ponte 17.

ⁿ Signa ad Junonis sospitæ sudore manavere. Liv. 23. 31.
Ad Lucum Feroniæ sanguine sudarunt. Ib. 27. 4.

the Battle of *Leuctra* and portended Victory to the *Thebans*, tells us, that *some People looked upon them all as forged and contrived by the Magistrates*,^o the better to animate and encourage the Multitude: And as the *Originals* themselves were but *Impostures*, 'tis no wonder, that the *Copies* of them appear such *gross and bungling Forgeries*.

I HAVE observed a Story in *Herodotus*,^p not unlike the Account given us of the *famed Travels* of the *House of Loretto*; of *certain sacred mystical things*, that *travelled about from Country to Country*, and after *many Removals and Journeys* settled at last for good and all in *Delus*. But this *Imposture* of the *holy House* might be suggested rather, as *Mr. Addison* has observed, ^q by the extraordinary Veneration paid in *old Rome* to the *Cottage of its Founder Romulus*: Which was held *sacred by the People*, and repaired with great Care from time to time with the same kind of *Materials*, and kept up in the same Form in which it was originally built.^r It was turned also, I find, like this other *Cottage of our Lady*, into a *Temple*, and had *divine Service* performed in it, till it happened to be burnt down by the *Fire of a Sacrifice* in the time of *Augustus*:^s But what makes the *Similitude* still more remarkable is, that this *pretended Cottage of Romulus* was shewn on the *Capitoline*

^o Οἱ μὲν δὴ τινες λέγουσιν ὡς ταῦτα πάντα τεχνάσματα ἦν τ' ἀφροδισιμῶτον. Xenoph. Ellen. l. 6.

^p Herodot. l. 4. p. 235. Edit. Lond.

^q Addison's Travels from Pefaro to Rome.

^r Dion. Halicar. l. 1.

^s Σακνή ἢ τῆ Ρωμόλου εἰς ἱερουργίας πνός ἦν οἱ ποσὶς τικες ἐν αὐτῇ ἐπισηποῦμεσαν. ἐκασθ. Dion. l. 48. p. 437.

Hill; † whereas 'tis certain that *Romulus* himself lived in another Part of the City, on *Mount Palatin*: † so that if it had really been the *House of Romulus*, it must needs, like the *holy House of Loretto*, have taken a *Leap* too in the Air, and suffered a *miraculous Translation*, tho' not from so great a Distance, yet from *one Hill* at least to the *other*.

BUT if we follow their own Writers, 'tis not the *holy House of Loretto*, but the *homely Cradle of our Saviour*, that we should compare rather with the *little House of Romulus*: Which Cradle is now shewn in *St. Mary the Great*, and on *Christmas Day* expos'd upon the high Altar to the Adoration of the People, being held in the same Veneration by *present Rome*, as the *humble Cottage of its Founder* had been by its *old Inhabitants*. *Rome*, says *Baronius*, * is now in Possession of that noble Monument of *Christ's Nativity*, made only of Wood, without any Ornament of Silver or Gold, and is made more happily illustrious by it, than it was of old by the Cottage of *Romulus*; which, though built only with Mud and Straw, our Ancestors preserv'd with great Care for many Ages.

† Per Romuli casam, perque veteris Capitolii humilia tecta juro. Val. Max. l. 4. c. 11.

Item in Capitolio commonefacere potest, & significare mores vetustatis Romuli casam in Arce sacrorum, Vitruv. l. 2. c. 1. Vid. etiam Macrob. Sat. 1. 15. Virg. Æn. 8. 65.

† Παιδί τῷ εἰς τῷ ἱερῷ δεικνύμενον τῷ μέγαν ἐκ παλαιῆς κατὰ βασιλῆα. Plutarch. in Rom. p. 30.

Ρωμαίων μὲν τὸ παλαιὸν κηλίχαν, Τάπῳ δὲ τὸ Καπιτώλιον. Dion. Hal. l. 2. p. 110. Ed. Hudf.

* Porro Christi natalis nobile monumentum ex ligno confectum nullâq; argenti vel auri calaturâ confectum, Roma possidet, eoq; multò felicîus illustratur quàm Tugurio Romuli, &c. Vid. Baron. An. 1. Christi 5. It. Aring. Rom. Subt. 1.6. 1.

THE *melting of St. Januarius's Blood at Naples*, whenever it is brought near to his *Head*, which is done with great Solemnity on the Day of his *Festival*, y whilst at all other times it continues dried and congealed in a Glass Phyal, is one of the *standing* and most *authentick Miracles of Italy*. Yet Mr. *Addison*, who twice saw it performed, assures us, that instead of appearing to be a *real Miracle*, he thought it *one of the most bungling Tricks he had ever seen.*^z

MABILLON's own Account of this Fact seems to solve it very naturally without the help of a *Miracle*:^a for during the time that a *Mass* or *two* are celebrated in the Church, the other Priests are tampering with this *Phyal of Blood*, which is *suspended all the while in such a Situation, that as soon as any Part of it begins to melt by the Heat of their Hands, or other Management, it drops of course into the lower Side of the Glass which is empty*; upon the Discovery of which the Priest proclaims the *Miracle* aloud, to the great Joy and Edification of the People.

BUT however it be effected, it is plainly nothing else but the *Copy of an old Cheat* of the same Kind, transacted near the same Place, which *Horace* makes

^y De sancti Januarii cruore mirum quiddam narratur in Breviario Romano— quod ejus sanguis, qui in ampulla vitrea concretus asservatur, cum in conspectu capitis ponitur, admirandum in modum colliquifera videtur. Aringh. Rom. Subter. l. 1. 16.

^a Addison's Trav. at Naples.

^z Ad præsentiam capitis colliquifera videtur, ampullâ eâ parte, qua sanguis, naturaliter in subjectam ampullæ partem cadere debet, suspensâ; missâ interim una duæve, dum sanguis decedit, celebrantur. Mabill. Iter. Ital. p. 106.

himself merry with in his Journey to *Brandusium*; telling us, how the Priests would have imposed upon him and his Friends, at a Town called *Gnatia*, by persuading them, that the *Frankincense* in the Temple used to dissolve and melt miraculously of itself without the Help of Fire. ^b

IN the Cathedral Church of *Ravenna* I saw in *Mosaick Work* the Pictures of those *Archbishops* of the Place, who, as all their Historians affirm, ^c were chosen for several Ages successively by the special Designation of the *Holy Ghost*, who in a full Assembly of Clergy and People used to descend visibly on the *Person Elect* in the Shape of a Dove. If the Fact of such a Descent be true, it will easily be accounted for by a Passage in *Aulus Gellius*, (whence the Hint was probably taken) who tells us of *Archytas* the *Philosopher* and *Mathematician*, that he formed a *Pigeon of Wood* so artificially, as to make it fly by the Power of Mechanism, just as he directed it. ^d And we find from *Strada*, that many Tricks of this Kind were actually contrived for the Diversion of *Charles the Fifth* in his Monastery by one *Turrianus*, who made little Birds fly out of the Room, and back again, by his great Skill in Machinery. ^e

^b Hor. Sat. 1. 5. v. 98.

^c Quis enim nescit, quod sacræ testantur historix tunc temporis cum Fabianus in summum Pontificem salutatus est, Columbam cælitus advenisse, ejusque capiti insidendo suffragium detulisse? &c. Hoc idem in complurium Ravennatum Episcoporum electionibus solenne exitit, quorum memoriam Rubeus recolit. Hist. Raven. &c. Aring. Rom. Subt. l. 6. c. 48.

^d Pleriq; nobilium Græcorum affirmatissime scripserunt simulachrum Columbx ex ligno ab Archyta ratione quadam, disciplinaq; mechanica factum volasse: Ita erat libramentis suspensum, &c. A. Gell. Noct. Att. l. 10. 12.

^e Vid. Gronovii Not in Gell. Ibid.

It would be endless to run through all the *Popish Miracles*, which are evidently forged or copied after the *Originals of Paganism*; since there is scarce a *Prodigy* in the *Old Historians*, or a *Fable* in the *Old Poets*, but what is transcribed into *their Legends*, and swallowed by their silly Bigots as certain and undoubted Facts.

THE Story of *Arion the Musician* riding triumphant with his Harp on the *Back of a Dolphin*, that took him up when *thrown over-board at Sea*, is, one would think, too grossly fabulous to be applied to any Purpose of *Superstition*: Yet our *present Romans* so far surpass the *old ones* in *Fable* and *Imposture*, that out of this *single Story* they have coined many others of the *same Stamp*, viz. of *Dolphins taking up and bringing ashore* with great Pomp several of *their Saints*, both dead and alive, who had been *thrown into the Sea by Infidels*, either to drown or deprive them of Burial. ^f

THE *Fable of the Harpies*, those *Furies* or *winged Monsters*, who were so troublesome to *Æneas* and his *Companions*, & seems copied in the very *first Church* within the Walls of *Rome*, close to the Gate we enter at; where there is an *Altar* with a *publick Inscription*,

^f Quos Judex submersos in mare necavit; sed Delphinatorum obsequio Corpora eorum ad littus delata sunt: Sed de Obsequio Delphinatorum martyribus impensio plura infra suo loco. Aringh, Rom. Subterr. l. 1, c. 9, 10.

Virg. Æn. 3. 211.

signifying

signifying, that it was built by *Pope Paschal the Second*, by *divine Inspiration*, in order to drive away a *Nest of huge Dæmons or Monsters*, who used to perch upon a *Tree* in that very Place, and terribly insult all who enter'd the *City*.

THE *Popish Writers* themselves are forced to allow, that many both of *their Reliques* and *their Miracles* have been forged by the *Craft of Priests*, for the sake of *Money* and *Lucre*. *Durantus*, a zealous Defender of *all their Ceremonies*, gives several Instances of the former; particularly of *the Bones of a common Thief*, which had for some time been *honoured with an Altar*, and worshipped under the *Title of a Saint*.ⁱ And for the latter; *Lyra*, in his *Comment on Bel and the Dragon*, observes, that *sometimes also in the Church very great Cheats are put upon the People*, by *false Miracles*, contrived, or countenanced at least, by *their Priests* for some *Gain* and *temporal Advantage*.^k And what their own *Authors* confess of *some of their Miracles*, we may

Altare à Paschali Papa II. divino afflatu
ritu solemnè hoc loco erectum
quo dæmones
proceros nucis arbori insidentes
transcurrentem hinc populum dirè insultantes
confestim expulit,
Urbani VIII. pont. max. auctoritate
excelsiorem in locum quem conspicis
translatum fuit.
An. Dom. MDCXXVII.

ⁱ S. Martinus Altare, quod in honorem Martyris exstructum fuerat, cum ossa & reliquias cujusdam latronis esse deprehendisset, submoveri jussit. Durant. de Ritib. l. 1. c. 25.

^k Aliquando fit in Ecclesia maxima deceptio populi in miraculis fictis à sacerdotibus, vel eis adhærentibus propter lucrum temporale, &c. Vid. Nic. Lyr. in Dan. c. 14.

venture,

venture, without any Breach of Charity, to believe of *all the rest*; nay, we cannot indeed believe any thing else without Impiety; and without supposing God to concur in an extraordinary manner, to the Establishment of *Fraud, Error, and Superstition* in the World.

THE *Refuge* or *Protection* given to all, who fly to the *Church* for Shelter, is a *Privilege* directly transferred from the *Heathen Temples* to the *Popish Churches*; and has been practised in *Rome*, from the time of its *Founder Romulus*; who in Imitation of the *Cities of Greece*, opened an *Asylum* or *Sanctuary* to *Fugitives* of all Nations. ^l

BUT we may observe the great Moderation of *Pagan*, above that of *Popish Rome*, in regard to this Custom; for I do not remember that there was ever more than this *one Asylum* in the Times of the *Republick*; whereas there are now *some Hundreds* in the same City; and when that single one (which was opened rather for the Increase of its Inhabitants, than the Protection of Criminals) was found in the End to give too great Encouragement to Mischief and Licentiousness; they *inclosed it round in such a manner as to hinder all Access to it*:^m whereas the present *Popish Sanctuaries* stand perpetually open, not to receive *Strangers*, but to shelter *Villains*; that it may literally be said of these, what *our Saviour* says of the *Temple*, *They have turned the House of Prayer into a Den of Thieves*.ⁿ

^lRomulus, ut saxo lucum circumdedit alto,
Quilibet huc, inquit, confuge tutus eris.

Ov. Fast. 3.

^m Ὁ Ἰωάννης ἡ ἀπειροεχέχθον ὄντι μνησὶνα ἐπι τὸ παρόσιτων ἐσελθεῖν ἐς αὐτὸ
δουδάναι. Di. l. 47. p. 385.ⁿ Matth. xxi. 13.

IN the *early Ages of Christianity* there were many Limitations put upon the Use of this Privilege by *Emperours* and *Councils*; and the greater Crimes of *Murder, Adultery, Theft, &c.* were especially excepted from the Benefit of it: ° but now they scruple not to receive to *Sanctuary* even the most detestable Crimes; and 'tis owing without doubt to this Policy of *Holy Church*, that Murders are so common with them in *Italy* on slight Provocations; whilst there is a *Church* always at hand and always open to secure Offenders from legal Punishment; several of whom have been shewn to me in different Places, walking about at their Ease and in full Security within the Bounds of their *Sanctuary*.

IN their very *Priesthood* they have contrived, one would think, to keep up as *near a Resemblance* as they could to that of *Pagan Rome*: and the *Sovereign Pontif*, instead of deriving his Succession from *St. Peter*, (who if ever he was at *Rome*, was not at least in any *Pomp* or *Splendor* there) may with more Reason and much better Plea for the Power he enjoys, stile himself the *Successor* of the *p Pontifex Maximus*, or *Chief Priest of old Rome*; whose *Authority* and *Dignity* was the greatest in the

° Neq; Homicidis, neq; Adulteris, neq; virginum raptoribus, &c. terminorum custodias cautelam; sed etiam inde extrahes, & supplicium eis inferes. Justin. Novel. 17. c. 7.

¶ Multa divinitus, Pontifices, a majoribus nostris inventa, nihil præclarior, quam quod vos eosdem, & religionibus Deorum Immortalium & summæ Republicæ præesse voluerunt. Cic. pro Dom. 1.

Maximus Pontifex dicitur, quod maximus rerum, quæ ad sacra & religiones pertinent, judex sit, viadexq; contumaciæ privatorum, Magistratumq; Fest. l. 1. 1. in voce Max.

Quod Judex atq; Arbitrator habetur rerum divinarum, humanarumq; Id. in Ordo Sacerdotum.

T. Coruncanium Pontificatum maximo ad principale extulere fastigium. Vell. Pater. l. 2. 128.

Republick; and who was looked upon as the *Arbiter* or *Judge of all things*, Civil as well as Sacred, Human as well as Divine: whose Power, established almost with the Foundation of the City, was an *Omen* (says *Polydore Virgil*) and *sure Presage of that Priestly Majesty*, by which Rome was once again to reign as universally, as it had done before by the Force of its Arms. 9

* THE great Variety of their *Religious Orders and Societies of Priests* seems to have been formed upon the Plan of the *old Colleges or Fraternities of the Augurs, Pontifices, Salii, Fratres Arvales, &c.* The *Vestal Virgins* might furnish the Hint for the *Foundation of Nunneries*: And I have observed something very like the *Rules and Austerities of the Monastick Life* in the Character of several *Priests of the Heathens*, who used to live by themselves retired from the World^r near the *Temple or Oracle of the Deity* to whose particular Service they were devoted; as the *Selli*, the *Priests of Dodonæan Jove*, a self-mortifying Race.

ἀμφὶ δὲ Σελλοί

Σοὶ ναῖεσ' ὑπορῆται ἀνιπτόποδες χαμαιῖναι.

Il. 17. 234.

Whose Groves the *Selli*, Race austere, surround;
Their Feet unwash'd, their Slumbers on the Ground.

Mr. Pope.

⁹ Certum portentum quo est significatum, Urbem Romam postremo perinde Pontificia Majestate, qua nunc late patet, gentibus moderaturam, atque olim potentia imperasset. Pöl. Vir. In. rer. l. 4. 14.

^r Τὸ ᾧ ἱερέων γίνεσθαι ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων χεῖς ἀφοεισμένον. Plato in Timæo. p. 1044.

BUT above all, in the old Descriptions of the *lazy mendicant Priests* among the *Heathens*, who used to travel from *House to House* with *Sacks on their Backs*, and from an Opinion of their Sanctity raise every where Contributions of *Money, Bread, Wine, and all kind of Victuals*, for the Support of their Fraternity, we see the very Picture of the *begging Friers*; who are always about the Streets in the *same Habit*, and on the *same Errand*, and never fail to carry home with them a *good Sack full of Provisions* for the Use of their *Convent*.

CICERO, in his *Book of Laws*, restrains this Practice of *begging*, or *gathering Alms*, to one particular Order of *Priests*, and that only on *certain Days*; because, as he says, *it propagates Superstition, and impoverishes Families*. Which by the way may let us see the Policy of the *Church of Rome*, in the great Care they have taken to *multiply their begging Orders*.

I COULD easily carry on this Parallel through many more Instances of the *Pagan and Popish Ceremonies*, if I had not already said enough to shew from what Spring all that Superstition flows which we so justly charge them with, and how vain an Attempt it must be to justify by the Principles of *Christianity a Wor-*

* Stipes areas immo vero & argenteas multis certatim offerentibus sinu recipere patulo; nec non & vini cadum & lactem & caseos avidis animis corradentes & in sacculos huic quaestui de industria preparados farcientes, &c. Apuleius Metam. l. 8. p. 262.

* Stipem sustulimus, nisi eam quam ad paucos dies propriam Idææ matris excepimus: Implet enim superstitione animos, exhaurit domos. Cic. de Legib. l. 2. 9, 16.

ship formed upon the Plan, and after the very Pattern of pure *Heathenism*. I shall not trouble myself with inquiring at what time, and in what manner these several Corruptions were introduced into the *Church*: whether they were contrived by the *Intrigues and Avarice of Priests*, who found their Advantage in reviving and propagating *Impostures*, which had been of old so profitable to *their Predecessors*: Or whether the *Genius of Rome* was so strongly turned to *Fanaticism and Superstition*, that they were forced, in Condescension to the Humour of the People, to accommodate and dress up their *new Religion* to the Modes and Fopperies of the *old one*. This, I know, is the *Principle*, by which their *own Writers* defend themselves as oft as they are attacked on this Head.

ARINGHUS in his Account of *subterraneous Rome* acknowledges this Conformity between the *Pagan and Popish Rites*, and defends the Admission of the *Ceremonies of Heathenism* into the *Service of the Church* by the Authority of their *wisest Popes and Governors*, "who, he says, found it necessary in the Conversion of Gentiles, to dissemble and wink at many things, and yield to the Times; and not to use Force against Customs, which the People were so obstinately fond of; nor think of extirpating at once every thing, that had the Appearance of profane; but to supersede

* Ac maximi subinde Pontifices quamplurima prima quidem facie dissimulanda duxere, optimum videlicet rari temporis deferendum esse; suadebant quippe sibi haud ullam adversus gentilitios ritus vim, utpote qui mordicus a fidelibus retinebantur, adhibendam esse; neque ullatenus eritendum, ut quicquid profanos speret mores, omnino tolleretur, quinimo quam maxima utendum lenitate, sacrarumque legum ex parte intermittendum imperiura arbitrabantur, &c. Vid. Aring. Rom. Subter. Tom. I. l. I. c. 21.

in some measure the Obligation of the sacred Laws; till these Converts, convinced of themselves by Degrees, and informed of the whole Truth, by the Suggestions of the Holy Spirit, were content to submit in earnest to the Yoke of Christ.

'TIS by the same Reasoning that the *Jesuits* defend the *Concessions* they make to their *Profelytes* in *China*; who, where pure Christianity will not go down, never scruple to compound the Matter between *Jesus* and *Confucius*; and prudently allow what the *stiff* old *Prophets* so impolitickly condemned, a *Partnership* between *God* and *Baal*: Of which though they have often been accused at the *Court of Rome*, yet I have never heard that their Conduct has been censured. But this kind of Reasoning, however plausible it may be in regard to the first Ages of Christianity, or to Nations just converted from *Paganism*, is yet so far from excusing the present *Gentilism* of the *Church of Rome*, that it is a direct Conviction and Condemnation of it; since the Necessity alledged in Defence of it, if ever it had any real Force, has not, at least for many Ages past, at all subsisted: And their present Toleration of such Practices, however useful at first for the reconciling of *Heathens* to *Christianity*, seems now to be the readiest way they can take to drive *Christians* back again to *Heathenism*.

BUT 'tis now high time for me to conclude, being persuaded, if I do not flatter myself too much, that I have sufficiently made good, what I first undertook to prove; an *exact* *Conformity*, or *Uniformity* rather, of *Worship* between *Popery* and *Paganism*: For whilst, as I have shewn above, we see the *present People of Rome* worshipping at this Day in the *same Temples*;

Temples ; at the *same Altars* ; sometimes the *same Images* ; and always with the *same Ceremonies*, as the *old Romans* ; they must have more *Charity*, as well as *Skill in distinguishing*, than I pretend to, who can absolve them from the *same Crime of Superstition* and *Idolatry* with their *Pagan Ancestors*.

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