

# FIXED STARS:

OR,

*An Analyzation and Refutation of*

## ASTROLOGY:

The Principles of this Science being plainly laid open,  
and their absurdity and Wickedness clearly  
demonstrated.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

## MANY ANECDOTES,

Shewing the Folly, and also the Mischievous Tendency,  
of Fortune-Seeking, Fortune-Telling, and  
Almanack Predictions.

LIKEWISE

## SOME EMINENT TESTIMONIES,

BOTH IN PROSE AND IN VERSE

Against Astrology, Fortune-Seeking, Fortune-  
Telling, &c.

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By G. BEAUMONT, Minister of the Gospel.

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*The Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed, belong unto us and to our children for ever.—Deut. xxix —29.*

*Is it not because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to enquire of Baal-zebub the God of Ekron?—2 Kings, i.—3.*

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SECOND EDITION—Greatly Enlarged.

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1814.

ERRATA:—Page 80, line 10 from the bottom, for,  
other temperatures then they; read *than* they, &c.

P. 93, bottom line, for Oct. 31, 1801, read 1808, &c.

CAUTION;—P. 108, lines 5 and 6 from bottom; for  
“the ability of foretelling *any thing*,” (to avoid the  
ambiguity to which the words *any thing* are liable)  
read, *any thing they please*, &c.

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*Entered at Stationers' Hall.*

# PREFACE.

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**I**N the year 1803 I published the first Edition of the *FIXED STARS*: That edition being all sold off some time ago, I now present the Public with a Second Edition, corrected, and greatly enlarged.

It is not easy for an author to say any thing in favour of his own productions, without being liable to very unpleasant imputations. Of the *merit* of this humble essay, I have nothing to advance: but I may be allowed to say, that some such publication was really wanting; and, farther, that it is *well meant*, though it may be but indifferently executed.

A publication like this, I say, is really wanting; for though the present generation, like all preceding ones, has vanity enough to think, and frequently to call itself an "*enlightened age*," yet in spite of this conceit, and in spite of Societies for the Reformation of Manners—Of Bible Societies—Of Tract Societies—Of Sunday Schools &c. there is in thousands and tens of thousands of people, a strong bias towards *Astrology* and *Fortune-Telling*. This mischievous propensity is principally, though not wholly, among the lower ranks of Society. The cause of this evil propensity will be differently accounted for; some ascribing it to a superstitious inclination inherent in our nature; but others, perhaps with more justice, will charge it upon ill example and bad counsel. For my own part, I attribute the evil in question, partly to some wretched publications on *Astrology* and *Fortune-Telling*, which are now and then issued from the press, by men who care not what they do to mankind, if they can but make a penny for themselves; and partly, nay chiefly, to those despicable *Prognostications* and *Predictions* which annually make their appearance in our almanacks! *Almanack-Makers* having long since discovered that mankind are fond of the *Wonderful*, and of the *Knowledge of things to come*, have every year dealt out these things with an unsparing hand: and if this their conduct had only amounted to a little fun, it might have been palliated though not justified. But when it is considered that by this abominable conduct, the moral principle of many men is poisoned, and consequently their well being both for time and eternity endangered, and frequently their utter ruin effected, the subject becomes awfully serious; and if these Al-

manack-Makers had one grain of true wisdom in them, they would choose Death or Strangling rather than thus sin against God, & accelerate the destruction of their fellow men! When a man has given up his confidence in, and his reliance on the Divine Being, and has attached his destiny to the posture of *Signs* and *Planets*, instead of fearing God and working righteousness, he is subverted in the fundamental principle of all goodness; and if he be not speedily retrieved from his error, he will finally be ruined by his wickedness! To Almanack-Makers and Fortune-tellers, if I mistake not, the Day of Judgment will be a tremendous Day!

There have been several publications against Astrology, in this nation; but it is long since they were out of print. One of these by *Mr. John Gaule*, a Clergyman, entitled *MAG-ASTRO-MANCER*, &c, is a Master-piece in its kind: but then it is too learned to be of much use to any but the learned; and moreover, it is rarely to be met with; and if it were reprinted it would be almost useless, as it would be both too learned and too dear for those who most needed it. Another of the kind was published by a *Mr. Wm. Rowland*, about 160 years ago, and of course long out of print. And another by *Gassendus*, a Frenchman, translated into English above 150 years since, and of course now out of print also. These men all wrote well in the refutation of Astrology; but they would have done still better had they stooped a little more to the capacities of ordinary readers; for generally, those who most need their instructions will least understand them. But, men are seldom willing to write in a style below their abilities.

I have inserted a large extract from the *Rev. W. Perkins*, not because of the elegance of his style, for that, though I have taken some pains to mend it, is but of inferior merit; but because *Mr. P.* had been an admirer of the Science, and, as himself asserts, "*had long studied the art, and was never quiet until he had seen all the Secrets of it.*" On this account, and moreover because *Mr. P.* was a pious Minister of the Gospel, I thought his testimony against Astrology would have greater weight with the teachable reader than an extract from *Dr. Henry More*, who has written on the same subject and in a better style; or a large quotation from the three learned writers above mentioned.

I have collected and inserted several anecdotes on the vanity and evil tendency of Astrology and Fortune-Telling, which I think will be more effectual in the reforming of some readers, than scientific argumentation. In short, there are ARGUMENTS, ANECDOTES, and BURLESQUE; and I humbly hope, and sincerely pray, that by the blessing of God, they may be made useful to thousands of mankind.

G. BEAUMONT.

Ebenezer Chapel, Ber-street, Norwich, Dec. 1813,



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## FIXED STARS,

&c. &c. &c.

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The following is a copy of a letter which appeared in the *Leeds Mercury*, and gave rise to the publication of this Book.

[“ The following paper has been transmitted to us for insertion.—The sentiments may be novel—but to some, novelty may be a recommendation. We shall be willing to find room for any further elucidation of this theory, provided it do not extend beyond our limits.—*Editor of the Leeds Mercury.*”]

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“ *The FIXED STARS,*

*Do not shine by their own Light, but by Reflection from our Sun.*

“ **M**UCH has been published the last hundred years respecting the Fixed Stars, whereby it is attempted to be proved, that every Star is a Sun, as large, and some even larger, than our own; and that every Star hath its attendant Planets, Satellites, and Comets; a doctrine so truly wonderful and extravagant, that it requires no small degree of faith to believe it.

“ In my opinion, the Fixed Stars are the *Waters above the Firmament*, that we find mentioned in the Bible, which the wise Creator has disposed in such order as he thought fit, for the conservation and nourishment of the world he

had made:—Thus we read, *Genesis*, i.—6, 7. “And God said, let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were *under the firmament*, from the waters which were *above the firmament*, and it was so.” Again; *Psalms* cxlviii. —4. “Praise him, ye heaven of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens.” And, Song of the Three Children, *verse* 38, “O all ye waters that be above the heavens, bless ye the Lord,” &c.

“If this seem dark and obscure, I will introduce what is well known to all:—The Fixed Stars never shew themselves but in the absence of our Sun, exactly in the same manner as the planets; and the Moon in her second quarter, is visible in the East, long before we have any tidings of the Stars, which could never be if they were Suns, and shone by their own light.

“The Stars defeating the glass of the Astronomer, has led him to suppose that it is occasioned by their immense distance; but this cannot be admitted: It must be owing, first to their composition, which is a crystalline water, or the water above the heavens, that has the reflection of a looking-glass, and accounts for their sparkling appearance:—And, secondly, to their being dispersed round our world in innumerable and small bodies by the all-wise Creator, both to shew his power, and to bring to pass his benevolent designs on man.

“The doctrine, therefore, of the Fixed Stars being Suns, will be very cautiously received by every person that is determined to make use of his eyes, notwithstanding it is so plausibly taught by men of renown.—First extracted from

this world of ours by the Supreme Chymist, they are continued in their orbs to convey to us, (as well as the other heavenly bodies) their benign influences, whereby all nature is cherished and refreshed, and ample provision made for the numerous family of animals, vegetables and minerals.

“The notion that the Fixed Stars are Suns, involves many difficulties and absurdities which it is impossible to reconcile; and no wonder that it has puzzled mankind more than any other theory.

“AN ADMIRER of the CREATION.

“*Leeds, August 23d, 1802.*”

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The author having had a previous inclination to combat the wicked and groundless Science of Astrology, availed himself of the appearance of the above letter to prosecute his purpose; and hence the following letter and the subsequent pages.

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## FIXED STARS.

To the PRINTER of the LEEDS MERCURY.

SIR,

**H**AVING seen in your paper of late, some uncommonly novel remarks on the Fixed Stars, and conceiving the remarks to be not only new, but to use the language of AN ADMIRER OF THE CREATION, "wonderful and extravagant;" I humbly request you to give me leave too, to make a few observations on the Stars and Planets, and on the ADMIRER OF THE CREATION's theory also.

I think, Mr. Printer, we ought to be exceedingly thankful that our lot is cast in an age of such unbounded liberality, when opinions "quaint and wide," may be broached and propagated, without a fear of destruction or molestation, from a superstitious and ignorant world! It is but a few years since, a man gave it as his opinion, in a London paper, that the sun is a body of *ice*; and we all know that the moon is said to be made of *green cheese*: the "Admirer," now comes forward and asserts that the fixed stars are bodies of *water*; so that the whole creation, except our earth, appears to be nothing but *ice, cheese, and water*.

But I would not have you imagine, Mr. Printer, that these are all the opinions, that have ever been advanced on this sublime theory. In ancient times, an heathen nation viewing the Fixed Stars and Planets, solved the whole phenomenon at once, by saying, that the sky was the chamber floor of heaven, and that the Fixed Stars were brass nails, something like coffin nails, driven in on the under side of the floor, and kept clean for us in this world below to look at. But others objected to this theory, alledging that the trouble and expence of keeping the heads of so many nails clean, would be endless ! They said, therefore, that the sky was a boarded floor, several miles above the earth, and that above the floor there was nothing but a flaming fire,—that holes being bored through the floor, we were enabled to see the fire through them, and these we called Stars. The different magnitude of the Stars they accounted for, by saying, that some were bored with an half inch and others with an inch auger : that the smallest of them were bored with a common gimblet ; but the Sun and the Moon, being very large, were bored with a faucet wimble, such as coopers use for boring tap holes, and bung holes ! But this scheme of the heavens, met with objections, also ; for it was very judiciously observed, that had the Sun and Moon been holes bored in the sky, they would have preserved their relative distance, in the same manner as the bung-hole and the vent-hole of a barrel, which are never known either to approach to, or recede from each other after their first establishment. The Sun and Moon were seen to alter their positions daily, and therefore this astronomical system could not be maintained.

But the Turks had still another system, (and for aught I know they have it yet,) whether Mr.



Mahomet taught it them, or some of their learned men found it out, by dint of study and strength of intellect, I cannot tell ; but they believed that every star was a ball or globe of fire, suspended from heaven by a chain, something like a chandelier with the branches taken off ! And that the difference of their magnitude, was determined by the length or shortness of their chain, the large stars hanging low by a long chain, and the small ones high by a short chain ; But neither could this grand display of philosophical research, satisfy a captious and spiteful world. For the objectors to this theory say, that if the Stars were each of them hung from the sky by a chain, then our world must hang by a chain also ! And, that neither *Bougainville*, *Dampier*, nor *Captain Cook*, in all their circumnavigations had found any such chain !——Besides, it is added that it would never answer a good end, to hang such a curious and wicked world as this by a chain, for some audacious men, would run up the chain to heaven in order to remonstrate against the dispensations of providence ;—others would officiously go up before they were *sent for* ; and many others again would presumptuously go before they were *fit* ! The chain, therefore, would be so crowded with the dissatisfied, the officious and the presumptuous, that it would resemble an onion-rope from top to bottom ! It is added moreover that if the world were hung by a chain, in some unlucky hour, a deposed king or disaffected subject, would wreak their vengeance on all mankind at once, by cutting or breaking it, and letting the world with all its screaming inhabitants fall down, down, down, aye, who knows where !!!

Besides the above mentioned astronomical theories, there is yet another at least : I think it was some of the inhabitants of the South Seas, who,

when they contemplated the heavens, explained the whole mystery of Astronomy with much less ado than either *Copernicus* or *Sir Isaac Newton*. For it was their opinion that the Sun and Moon were Man and Wife, and that the Stars were their children, that is, young Suns and Moons. According to their scheme the Sun was the Husband and the Moon the Wife; and they always dated the Moon's pregnancy from the time of an Eclipse of the Sun! But this old sceptical world has always been disgraced with a set of querulous wretches who have had neither *faith* nor *good works*; for many objectors to this theory started up and said, that if the Stars had been the children of the Sun and Moon, some of them at least, according to the order of nature, would have been as big as their parents by this time; and that therefore the whole sky would have been covered from center to circumference with millions of Suns and Moons, some full grown, others half grown, and in short, that there would have been thousands in all the gradations of age and size!

Neither does it appear that men have always entertained the same opinion respecting *Rainbows*; some now a days, taking them to be composed of the Sun's rays and a watery mist; but others in time past believed them to be substantial arches—Hence, an *Irish* Mason, having undertaken to build a bridge with two or three arches, signified to his intimate friend, that, were it possible to beg a few old Rainbows, for bridge arches, he could soon complete his undertaking. The friend being as *wise* as himself, highly approved of the scheme, but they not being able to discover in whose care old Rainbows were deposited, found themselves still embarrassed! The friend however, broke the silence, and removed the apparent difficulty all at

once, by saying, "surely new Rainbows would be stronger and handsomer than old ones, and if you were to take one or two of them down when you see them, I do not think there would be any thing said about it!" This was agreed to, and their minds made up on the business; but the grand project being told in confidence to a philosopher, they were very gravely informed by him, that Rainbows are too wide in the span for bridge arches, and that a bridge constructed with three or four *such* arches, would reach from Cork to Carrickfergus, and, that ten thousand years would be insufficient to complete such a project. And besides this, they were told that a Rainbow is not worth a groat after sunset. The Irish mason, therefore began to make his bridge with stones and mortar, according to the old laborious way!

Thus you see, Mr. Printer, by this specimen of my abilities, that I am able to answer *any thing*! but fearing lest your patience should be exhausted with such a *grave* subject, and such a pensive style, I shall conclude for the present, hoping, &c.

ASTRONOMUS.

*Leeds, September 8, 1802.*

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PRELIMINARY REMARKS ON ASTROLOGY.

ON a superficial view, and especially to superficial minds, *Astrology* may seem a tolerable kind of science; a science which may be studied without sin, and practised without danger. But on a nearer view, and a more accurate estimate, it will be found to militate both against common prudence and revealed religion; and consequently to be an

inlet to the theory of infidelity, the practice of wickedness, and the vengeance of heaven!

Every prudent man considers himself as having a common stake in the well-being of human society; and therefore will feel himself interested in the nature of those theories, maxims and principles, by which moral society is actuated and governed. He will of course believe it to be his duty to root up and destroy falsehood and error; and to establish and maintain wisdom and truth. It is from this consideration alone, that I have undertaken to confront the science of Astrology: and I am the more ready to do so, because I have frequently been both eye and ear witness to its pernicious effects on the minds and morals of many weak and credulous persons, within the sphere of my acquaintance and observation.

But I am aware that the taking down of a science, though a bad one, is not to be effected by mere declamation; but rather by fairly stating and analyzing the fundamental principles on which it depends: this, therefore, I shall endeavour to effect.

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### *Analyzation and Explanation of the TWELVE SIGNS of the ZODIAC.*

**E**VERY one knows that the *twelve signs* in the zodiac, and the *seven planets*, including the sun and moon, are the foundation, corner, and top stones of the whole system of Astrology. We will therefore begin with the twelve signs. The first sign, then, is called *Aries*, that is, the *Ram*; because (as is supposed by those who have well studied the subject) the nations who invented the name, perceived that in the beginning of the spring



quarter, when the sun enters *Aries*, the *Ram* had a goodly flock of ewes and lambs to follow him into the field; and as many of those people lived by grazing and selling of cattle, they were pleased to honour the Ram by placing his name upon the first constellation in the zodiac.

The second sign is *Taurus*, that is, the *Bull*; because in those countries where cows are not so much domesticated as with us, they usually calved in spring, a little after the ewes had yeaned. The Bull, therefore, having increased his tribe, and of course the wealth of his owner, was honoured by the placing of his name on the second constellation, or sign.

The third is *Gemini*, that is, the *Twins*; these twins are usually represented by two infant boys, and are called *Castor* and *Pollux*; but the twins in reality, mean two kids, because goats usually bring forth two at a time. The sign *Gemini* was formerly called the *Kids*. Now, the eastern nations bred many goats, and because the females yeaned after the sheep and cows had brought forth, they were honoured with the third constellation.

The fourth sign begins the summer quarter, and is called *Cancer*, that is, the *Crab*; because the sun having reached the tropic line (called the tropic of Cancer) begins to creep backwards or sideways, as both land and water crabs will frequently do.

The fifth sign is called *Leo*, that is the *Lion*; because the sun in the latter part of July, begins to pour his violent and sultry heat upon the northern hemisphere with a lion-like authority.

The sixth is *Virgo*, that is the *Virgin*; the ancients chused to represent the season of reaping or harvest, by a maid bearing a handful of ripe corn in the ear; they were pleased also to palm her



name (virgin) upon that constellation into which the sun entered at the beginning of their harvest or vintage.

The seventh is called *Libra*, that is, the *Scales* or *Balances*; because the sun when coming to the equinox, divides his favours of light and heat to both hemispheres, with as much exactness as if he weighed them in balances, there being equal day and night over all the world.

The eighth is *Scorpio*, that is, the *Scorpion*; now the sting of a Scorpion is in its tail, and as it is common for many people to indulge in various kinds of riot and pleasure during a fruitful and warm summer, and thereby contract diseases which in the end leave a sting, so the Scorpion with a sting in his tail, was placed at the tail end of the summer as an indication of the diseases which summer leaves behind it.

The ninth is *Sagittarius*, the *Bowman*; (derived from *sagitta* an arrow) because the ancients used to shoot wild beasts and some other game, with bows and arrows, guns being then unknown: therefore the constellation or group of stars in which the sun entered at that time, was called the *Bowman*, because it proclaimed the season for shooting.

The tenth is *Capricornus*, that is, the *Goat*, or the *horned Goat*; because the sun having reached the southern tropic, called the tropic of *Capricorn*, at the bottom of winter, begins to climb up the sky again; in the same manner as goats when grazing on the side of a mountain, which are generally observed not to browse downwards or sidewise, but upwards.

The eleventh is *Aquarius*, that is, the *Water-carrier*, or *Waterman*; because, this sign taking place somewhere about the twentieth of January,

and ending sometime about the same day in February, includes the time of the falling of much snow and rain, and consequently of much *water*. Aquarius, is derived from *aqua*, *water*.

The twelfth and last sign, is *Pisces*, that is *Fishes*; because in the country where the names of these signs were invented, the season for fishing commenced the latter end of February when the sun entered this last constellation.\*

Now these are the names and derivations of the twelve signs of the zodiac, which make such a conspicuous figure in all astrological predictions! The sun continues in each of these signs one with another thirty days within a fraction, they comprising one with another thirty degrees in the zodiac; and twelve times thirty being three hundred and sixty, makes up the whole circuit of the heavens. The nation therefore, who invented this method of measuring time, meant no more when they said Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, &c. &c. than we mean when we say March, April, May, June, &c. &c.—Whereas designing men, have by degrees, and for sinister ends, attached to these signs or constellations, something of the quality of the persons, things or animals, whose names they respectively bear; and some of these signs are always rising above the horizon, by reason of the earth's diurnal revolution, so the man child, for instance, (if we may believe Astrologers) who is born when

\*Dr. SIBLY, and some others, I am aware, have stated the origin of these characters with some small variations from what I have done; but neither Dr. Sibly, nor any one else, could know any thing of subjects so ancient, but by written testimonies. My best way, therefore, was to read all I could meet with on the subject, and chuse that which I judged to be best: I have done so—but the reader may rest assured, that in all these variations alluded to, no *essential* doctrine of Astrology is thereby injured in the smallest degree.

The sign Aries, the Ram, is ascending the horizon, will be rich in cattle, &c. if under Leo, the Lion, he will be courageous and warlike; if under Cancer, the Crab, he will always be mortified with finding his affairs and enterprizes going crablike, sideways or backwards, and so of all the rest!!

But after all this turmoil and noise about the ZODIAC and the SIGNS, the terms and phrases are no better than fiction; for the *Zodiac* is only a kind of starry zone or girdle round our world: this starry girdle being limited by north and south latitude in such a manner as to include the aberrations of the Sun, Moon and Planets. The imaginary formation of the *Zodiac*, and the division of it into *Signs* were primarily intended to accomodate the dignified science of Astronomy; and for that purpose they are well enough adapted; but still they are *imaginary*, or at the best merely scientific: for nature never marked out a *Zodiac*; much less did she divide that imaginary *Zodiac* into twelve *Signs*!

And as for the entrance of the Sun, Moon, or Planets into those *Signs*, or *Houses*, as they are called by *Astrologers*, this is fable and fiction altogether; for in reality, neither Sun, Moon, nor Planets ever came near those *Signs*, or *Houses*; they being even at their nearest approaches, hundreds of millions of miles from them. With regard to the Sun, it is nearly stationary, and has been so from the foundation of the world. How then, in the name of common sense, can a stationary body, enter every month a Constellation, which is also stationary, and at an immeasurable distance?

Now, plain reader, by a plain supposition I will shew thee the nature of *Planetary entrance*, and *Planetary Houses*. I think it is said, that the City of *Coventry* stands about the center of

England. Let us then suppose a Coach road made round that city, at the distance of a mile; and let us also imagine a Coach running upon it. We must now imagine a *Man*, an *Observer*, standing upon the highest building in Coventry. Let us again suppose that this *Observer* perceiving the Coach to be in a right line betwixt himself and London, should cry out to the people below, "Now the Coach enters London!" The Coach proceeding northward comes very speedily into a straight line between the *Observer* and the County of Norfolk; the *Observer* then cries out "Now the Coach enters Norfolk!" By and bye it comes in a straight line with Yorkshire, and then he cries out "Now the Coach enters Yorkshire."

After this manner it is easy to perceive that the Coach would *enter* Lancashire, Staffordshire, Devonshire, Cornwall &c. &c. Let us now suppose that some persons standing in the streets of Coventry, should take all in good earnest that fell from the lips of the *Observer*, and believe that the Coach did actually *enter* London, Norfolk, Yorkshire &c. would not such persons expose themselves to much ridicule; and would they not either deserve blame for their ignorance, or pity for their weakness?

But supposing the *Observer* should attempt to persuade people that when a child was born whilst the Coach was in a right line with London, it would be very rich, because London is a large and opulent City; and that another child born whilst the Coach was in a line with Scotland, would be poor, because there is much barren land in that country, would he not expose himself to much reprehension and sarcasm: and yet would he not have as much and apparently more reason on his side than those who pretend to shape men's fortunes by the position of the Planets?



O ye Sign-Mongers, ye Planet Rulers, why do ye impose your ridiculous jargon upon the credulous and the unlearned? You know, unless you are ignorant, that the Sun, truly-speaking, never enters any *Sign*, neither do any of the Planets! You know, or you ought to know, that when it is said that the Sun, Moon or Planets, enter this or that *House* or *Sign* in the Zodiac, that the language is adapted to Astronomy, merely scientific, and not real! The truth is, neither the Sun, Moon, nor the Planets are ever in any House or Sign; they never were since the world began, and we have reason to believe, they never will be to the end of time! Why then will you continue this deceitful jargon to the utter undoing of many of the simple and unlearned?

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#### ANALYZATION OF THE PLANETS.

**H**AVING analysed the twelve Signs of the zodiac, by shewing their origin and end, in their first denomination and arrangement, I shall now endeavour to do the same by the PLANETS.

When ancient nations viewed the heavenly bodies, they perceived that they were nearly all of them stationary, as if fixed to something, and those that were immoveable they called *Fixed Stars*.— But those of the stars that changed their position, and seemed to wander, they called *Planets*, from the Greek word *Planon*,\* or, *Planao*,† which signifies *to wander*; the word *Planet*, therefore, signifies nothing more than a *wandering star*, and is not, as too many imagine, a term indicative of celestial influence!

\* Encyclopædia Perthensis.

† Dr. Astr.



Of these Planets, the ancients discovered no more than five, besides the sun and moon, which are always reckoned in the Astrologers' catalogue of Planets, and make up their mysterious number seven. These Planets are much diversified in their nature and influence, if we may take the Astrologer's word. But how came they by this diversity of nature and influence?

The Heathens (I think the Greeks in particular) forged to themselves a fabulous hero, and then deified this child of their imagination. This imaginary god they at length personified by the image of an old man with a long beard and grey hairs; they put also a large scythe into his hand: and this is the same image, I believe, by which *Time* is personified; the large scythe which he bears, intimating that he cuts down days, months, and years, old, young, rich, and poor, families, cities and empires.

This ideal deity, they were pleased to call *Saturn*, and afterwards to lodge him in one of the superior Planets, and then call the Planet by his name, and ascribe to it the imaginary qualities of this imaginary being! Hence, forsooth, and for no other reason, Astrologers reckon *Saturn* in their mysterious cant, an *infortunate*! In the name of truth, what has that Planet to do with the good or bad qualities of an heathen god? And a god, too, who never had an existence! They might as well have called the Planet a *goose* or a *snail*, the folly would indeed have been as great, but the mischief would have been less! If a child happen to be born when this planet is ascending the horizon, there's a poor look out for it in this world. *Saturn* is an *infortunate*! But this is not the worst, for if the planet Saturn should ascend the horizon under the fourth sign, that is *Cancer*, the *Crab*, or

under the eighth sign, *Scorpio*, the *Scorpion*, then there is nothing but misfortune upon misfortune, and sorrow upon sorrow!

*Jupiter* is another of those Grecian deities who never had an existence, he is the same with the Egyptian *Osiris* and the Roman *Jove*; but they did not all ascribe powers and properties to him alike; in regard to this they pleased themselves respectively. In his origin, however, he was only considered as the imaginary father of life and of the seasons, or year. But being increased in fame and favour, he must not dwell on earth but must have his abode in the sky, and therefore they placed him (in their imaginations) in one of the brightest planets, and then called the planet for his sake, *Jupiter*! Whoever then are born under this planet are intitled to sceptres, grandeurs, long life, &c. &c.!

A pretended warrior called *Mars*, was placed in the next planet, and then the planet was called *Mars*, after him; therefore whoever is born when he ascends the horizon, is of a military and warlike disposition! Strange! they might as well have placed him in the North-pole star, and it was ten to one but they had done so.

In ancient times when sacrifices were offered in groves and high places, girls were employed to bring baskets of flowers to the ceremonies; these girls were soon used for *other* purposes! and the avarice of Priests and the corruption of Rulers, suffered that to become a law at length, which was at first a transgression. The groves were soon filled with young women, who had the sanction of the law, and the precedent of custom. These young women were called *Venoth*, that is the *Girls*, or in plain English, the *Wh—res*. Most of Europeans could not pronounce the word *Venoth*, but called it *Venos*, and from thence came *Venus*!

But time has added many qualities to this Venus, (who is now personified in the singular number only) besides those originally her own. She is, to be sure, the mother of pleasures, and has the peculiar privilege of making men either voluptuous or happy! She is the goddess of beauty, and makes those women who are under her influence, fruitful. But all this influence is now in that bright and beautiful planet, whom men have, without even the shadow of reason, called by her name! In the name of goodness, what has that glorious morning and evening star to do with the *wh—res* of the Heathens? or any *wh—res*?

*Mercury* is the most inferior planet, that is, he is nearest the sun. It appears that the name originated among the Phœnicians; and though it can be proved to have had its origin in the Egyptian *Dog-star*, yet its name signifies the *cunning*, or the *dealer*. He was, however, in length of time metamorphosed from one thing to another, till he had the honour ascribed to him of inventing *polity*, or those maxims and rules by which cities and empires are governed. He has been made a messenger with wings; and he has been made an orator also. All this nonsense might have been passed by, had not the folly of mankind given him an imaginary residence in that planet which now bears his name; and then to complete their wickedness, ascribed to it those qualities which he was supposed to inherit. The consequence of all this is, that the man-child which is born under this planet, will make an excellent Legislator, Merchant, or Ambassador; or indeed, what you please!

The Sun and Moon have also their influences, if we may believe Astrologers, which are for the most part, good, but yet circumstances alter cases;

for though conjunctions with planets are mostly favourable, oppositions are often pernicious and fatal!

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OF THE DOG-STAR.

**B**ESIDES all these influential bodies, I have only one more to mention, which is the *Dog-Star*. It is this Star that gives the name to those days in July, called in Almanacks, *Dog-days*; and ignorant people are of opinion, that this star is the cause of the sultry and unpleasant weather which is generally experienced at that time; besides being the author of many misfortunes, such as madness, broken bones, loss of property through fire, and loss of cattle by the biting of mad dogs! Now observe the origin of all this: The overflowing of the river *Nile* in Egypt, always commenced when the Sun was in the sign *Leo*, which it enters towards the latter end of July; and they not having Almanacks to conduct themselves by, as we have, were obliged to make the heavens their guide of the seasons. They therefore carefully watched the situation of the Sun and stars at that momentous period when the country was going to be inundated; and they found by observation, that a certain bright star shewed itself in the east, a little above the horizon, and a little before sun-rise, a week, or something more before the flood took place. Now this star being found by experience to be a certain sign, it was called *Thot*, that is the *Dog*: because as a faithful dog will alarm his master's house, on the approach of thieves or danger, so this *Thot*, or *Dog*, that is, *Dog-star*, warned the Egyptians of the over-flowing of the Nile, and thereby gave them an opportunity to retreat to



places of safety. The same star is sometimes called *Anubis*, that is, the *Barker*. This star was also anciently called by way of emphatical distinction, the *Nile-star*, for the reason just now stated ; and sometimes for brevity's sake, it was simply called the *Nile*. Now, one of the ancient Latin names for the river *Nile*, is *Sirius* : hence this star is frequently called "Sirius, or the Dog-star!" Is it not, then, exceedingly strange, that this star should be friendly to Egypt, and envious to us ? A *warning dog* to *Egypt*, and a *mad-dog* to *Europe* ? We accuse it of being the *cause* of hot and dry weather ; now in the southern hemisphere, the inhabitants, at the very same time, experience cold and wet weather, and commonsense must acknowledge that they have equal right to lay the blame on the *Dog-star* for *causing* the cold and the wet ! Between such unreasonable accusers, then, what must the poor *Dog-star* say to excuse himself ?

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#### ASTRAL AND PLANETARY INFLUENCES.

**A**STROLOGERS explain the doctrine of *astral* and *planetary* influences, by saying, that there is in nature a kind of thin, subtil and occult matter or fluid, on which the heavenly bodies operate and act ; and that this thin fluid acts again upon every thing in this world below : that with regard to man, this fluid makes an imperceptible impression upon the fine fibres, which are in infinite numbers all over the human body : these fibres affect the brain, and the brain the soul, and thus the man in his moral capacity is influenced ; and therefrom his life and manners take their direction !



With regard to this *hidden fluid*, its real existence has not, that I know of, ever been proved; the science, therefore, which hangs wholly on its reality, may well be called an *occult*, that is a *hidden science*! But even admitting the existence of such a fluid; the sun being so much nearer the earth than the planets at some seasons, and so much nearer than the fixed stars at any season, we think his powerful rays sufficiently strong to blast and thwart all their feeble operations, with as much ease and certainty as an East Indian tornado, or a West Indian hurricane would overpower the breath of an infant. The quantity of clothes, also, which a person wears, must have some share of influence (if there be any) in this matter; for it is but natural to suppose, that those persons who are thinly clad, would be more powerfully influenced than those who are warmly attired. Besides, if there were any influence in the stars and planets, it would be seen in its general effects and uniform operations; whereas we see in the same town, or village, the virtuous and the vicious, the pious and the profane; and in the same house there frequently dwell together the good and the bad. — Now, is it possible for stars to cull and chuse, and produce such contrary effects even in the same house, and not unfrequently on those who sleep in the same bed? If the stars were to influence this world at all, they would act with a general impulse, as the sun in warming, the rain in falling, and the wind in blowing, upon millions at once. To this the Astrologer will answer, that “it is the influence of the stars and planets at a person’s birth, that gives the main cast to their life:” but by what rule will he prove that persons are more affected by astral power at their birth, than at any other time of their life? And when was it proved

that persons are affected at *any time*? Let those prove it that can!

Astrologers, not content with the general doctrine of astral *influences*, have descended to all the minutiae of particulars; they have placed the twelve signs of the zodiac over the human body; they tell us that *Aries*, the *Ram*, governs the head and face; *Taurus*, the *Bull*, governs the neck and throat, &c. see the Almanacks. The planets they have placed over the days of the week. The *Sun* (they say) is the planet for *Sunday*—the *Moon* for *Monday*—*Mars* for *Tuesday*—*Mercury* for *Wednesday*—*Jupiter* for *Thursday*—*Venus* for *Friday*—*Saturn* for *Saturday*. They have also placed planets over every hour of the day and night; these planetary hours, are longer or shorter, according to the length or shortness of the days or nights. It is needless to explain them. These, then, are the materials with which Astrologers work, when they make their *Horoscopes*,\* or plans of the heavens, by which they pretend to foretel future events.

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#### BIBLE ASTROLOGY.

**B**UT has not Astrology the *Bible* in its favour? Gen. i. 14. is frequently quoted by Astrologers: speaking of the celestial bodies, it is said, “*And let them be for signs and for seasons;*” True, let them be for *signs* and for *seasons*; but not for *causes* and *influences*! Can common sense see no difference between a *cause* and a *sign*? Those who first studied the stars, particularly the Babylonians, & after

\* *Horoscope*; from the Greek words, *Ora*, an *Hour*, and *Skopeo*, to *view*; because the *hour* of a child's birth is the time when the Astrologer takes a *view* of the heavens; or of the *Signs* and *Planets*.

them the Egyptians, had no design whatever, but to divide time and ascertain the seasons: the stars answered this purpose admirably well, and therefore they served one great end for which the great Creator had placed them within the sight of men.

The other purpose for which God has exhibited the heavens to our view, is, that we may contemplate in them his wisdom, power, and Goodness. *The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handy work!*

When a traveller on his way to London sees a mile-stone on the road side, which informs him that he is a *hundred* miles from the city, does he call the stone a *cause* or a *sign* of his distance? He travels on, until coming near the metropolis, he sees another mile-stone which tells him that he is *one* mile from his journey's end. Now, suppose this traveller should say, "I admire and esteem this stone for its excellent *nature* and kindly *influence*, because it has *caused* me to be within a mile of London; whereas I hate the other *unlucky* and *malignant* stone, because it *caused* me to be an hundred miles off." Would not every sensible person ridicule such a one, and say to him, "Sir, the mile-stones were not *causes* but only *signs*; for if there had been no stones upon the road, you might have reached the city just as soon, although not quite so agreeably!"

Now, we have only to consider the twelve signs in the zodiac as the mile-stones of the seasons and the year, and then we shall derive from them all the assistance which God ever intended, when he placed them in the heavens *for signs and for seasons*.

There is another scripture which Astrologers quote with great emphasis, which is, Judges v. 20. *They fought from heaven; the stars in*

*their courses fought against Sisera.* The *stars* here mentioned, are by many thought to signify *angels*; because when the church or people of God are interested in the event of a battle, there is no doubt but that both God and angels preside and over-rule: see Kings vi. 17. and ch. xix. 35. And we find *Job* saying, chap. xxxviii. 7. *When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.* Every one allows that the *morning stars* here mean *angels*. The verse therefore, quoted above, from Judges, has been translated thus, by some. *They from heaven fought; the stars, (angels) in their paths fought against Sisera.*

Others, perhaps with still more propriety, have asserted that the *stars* above alluded to, signify the confusion of elements, by which thunder, lightning, hail, and rain are produced; because God sometimes did discomfit the enemies of Israel by such means, see 1 Samuel vii. 10. and the next verse. Judges v. 21. also highly favours this opinion, for it intimates, that the river Kishon, which was otherwise a fordable river, was now so overflown, as to drown many of the enemy: *The river Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon:* and it is remarkable, that *Josephus* confirms this opinion, for speaking of Sisera's fugitive army, he says, that those who attempted to effect their escape by crossing the river Kishon, were drowned in consequence of its being unusually high, through the rains that had fallen. Wherefore it is more than probable, that the *stars* which fought against Sisera, were storms of thunder, hail, and rain by the ministration of angels. But even admitting the most, the expression, *the stars in their courses fought against Sisera*, could only be considered as



a poetical rhapsody, which was breathed out in conformity with vulgar opinion, just in the same manner, as that notable circumstance in the book of *Joshua* is related chap. x. 12, 13, where it is said that the *sun and moon stood still*. Now this latter expression was vulgarly true, but philosophically false; but, considering to whom it was spoken, it could not have been better expressed.

Many examples of the same kind might be adduced from the Scriptures, but my narrow limits do not admit of all the argumentative amplifications which present themselves to view. But I will say, I can never believe that the Almighty would teach and sanction Astrology in one part of his word, and forbid and execrate it in another.

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THE DOCTRINES OF ASTROLOGY CANNOT BE  
MAINTAINED BY EXPERIENCE.

**A**STROLOGY, it is allowed by those who profess it, admits not of a demonstration of its principles. The science is said therefore, to be wholly founded on EXPERIENCE: by which it is meant, that men have made a sufficient number of observations on *causes and events, births and deaths, natiivities and complexions*, to leave satisfactory evidence of the reality of stellary influences and their effects. But to all this we reply, that observation and EXPERIENCE have convinced many learned men on the other hand, that the events of men's lives who have been born under similar aspects, and under the same planets and signs, have frequently been as diverse in their fortunes and ends as possibility could make them. If then *experience* be a sufficient ground for Astrologers to *believe* their science, is not *experience* an equally plausible reason for

others to *disbelieve* it? The following extracts, from *Gassendus*, and others, will shew, then, how little advantage Astrologers can derive, from their last shift, **EXPERIENCE!**

“ I plainly affirm, (says *Gassendus*,) in the first place, that Astrologers neither have, nor can pre-sage those events which concern any man’s life or death. As for ancient times, we have sufficient testimony from *Cicero* ( 2. *de Divinat.*) in these words : ‘ *How many things do I remember, were by Chaldeans predicted to Pompey, to Crassus, to Cæsar himself, and that each of them should not die, but in full old age,—in their own houses,—in peace, and undiminished honour? And yet behold, their fates were violent, immature, and tragical. So that I cannot but very much wonder, how any man living can give credit to their divinations, when he cannot but observe, that their predictions are falsified by contrary events.*’

“ For modern times, *Sextus ab Heminga* hath sufficiently cleared the matter to our hands; for having proposed thirty eminent Nativities, and reduced them to strict examination according to the best rules of art, he declared, that the experiments did in no wise agree with the rules; sad events befalling such as were born under the most happy and promising positions of the Heavens; and good befalling such as the Heavens frowned upon and threatened all the mischief and ruin unto that can be imagined. And thereupon concluded, that Astrologers, when they give judgment of a Nativity, are generally the whole Heavens wide of the truth; portending things that never come to pass, and pretermittng such as do come to pass. Let us be contented with one eminent example.

“ All histories assure us, that *Henry the third of France* died in the fortieth year of his age com-

plete, of an unfortunate wound in his eye received in tilting: and yet see the prophecy of *Gauricus*, an Astrologer, concerning him, in his prognostication of the year 1556. ‘*Because in the Scheme of his almost divine Nativity, he had the Sun almost partilely conjoined to Venus, under the degrees of his altitude; and also the Moon and Venus advancing through his horoscope, under the constellation Aries: therefore he shall live most happy and glorious, till the seventieth year of his age, deducting only two months; and if by the favour of God, he escape the dangerous years, sixty-three and sixty-four, then Semper vivet terris pientissimus, it will be very long before there be an end of his renowned life.*’ Now you’ll not say, that this came very near the truth: and yet I could fit you with other examples of the same *Gauricus*’ predictions, that came not nearer, as *Sextus ab Heminga* hath exactly noted.

“ See, likewise, the prediction of *Cardan*, a famous Astrologer, when speaking of the same King Henry: ‘*He shall be, (saith he) in his old age, so much the more happy, by how many more difficulties he hath passed through before.*’ And how acutely, I pray, do these famous prophets foresee those things which are proved by the event? Most admirable, indeed they are, when they demonstrate, that those events ought to have befallen men, in respect of their genitures, which have already befallen them: but when they predict that those events are to come, can any thing be more foolish, or indeed, more grossly knavish?

“ Observe, I beseech you, how rightly *Cardan* predicted the lamentable misfortunes of men that were his dear friends, *Cheek of England*, and *Raconet of France*, and sundry others, all whose Nativity schemes he erected with all possible ex-

actness, and afterwards printed them! I cannot hold from noting, that *John Rudolphus Camera-rius*, when writing against the aforesaid *Sextus ab Heminga*, he had, to declare the certainty of Astrologers, collected an hundred several genitures, and among them put those of our late Kings of France, *Henry III. and Henry IV.*; conjoining, also, the judgment of *Frederick Rutelius*; as to *Henry III.* the business succeeded accordingly, *sed fatum post fata canebat*, “he foretold his disaster after it had befallen him!” But as to *Henry IV.* who was then living, when his century was published in the year 1607, nothing was less foretold by him than the time of his death. For though that best of Kings was murdered by a sacrilegious hand in the year 1610, and that in the month of *May*, our famous prophet never suspected the least danger to him in that year or month, but cast his death upon the year 1613, and the month of *October*, as threatening some imminent danger to his life in the nine and fiftieth year of his age, nine months and one and twenty days, he being born on the 24th of December, at two o’clock after midnight, in the year 1553, and that because the Sun would then come by direction to the body of Saturn, the horoscope to a quartile of the same, and the middle heaven to a quartile of the Sun.— But truly as the fate of that Prince was deplorable, so was the harriolation ridiculous.

“It will not be amiss for us here to reflect upon somewhat of *Michael Nostradamus*, my own provincial, that relates to our present argument; for of those so famous *centuries of Tetrastichs* composed by him, I have another opportunity to speak. I shall give you only a taste of the Astrology he made use of; and if according to that he failed most shamefully in his predictions, I hope



we may well believe that he was not inspired by any divine spirit or genius, such as might suggest falshoods to him, or put lies in his mouth.

“ Being some years since at Salona, (says Gas-sendus) in company with that worthy person, Franciscus Bochartius Campinius, President of the High Court of Justice in Provence, and that truly noble man, John Baptista Suffredus, Judge of that city, I remember Suffredus shewed us the Nativity Scheme of Antonius Suffredus, his father, with the judgments thereupon given, under Nostradamus’s own hand writing. We were much pleased to inquire of him concerning his father, whom he knew well; as not dying till his son was almost arrived at man’s estate.

“ The father, according to that scheme, was born in the year 1543, on the 13th of January, twenty-two minutes after high noon, the altitude of the Pole being supposed to be 44 deg. which is more by the third part of a degree, than it ought, but that is no matter. There were no degrees of the Signs inscribed on the Scheme; but the bare Signs divided into houses after the old Chaldean way, beginning at *Aries*, pertaining to his horoscope; nor was there any mention of the five wandering Stars, but only of the Sun referred to the second degree of *Aquarius*, and 36 minutes, and of the Moon related to the sixth degree of *Taurus*, without any minutes at all.

“ Now the son, John Suffredus, being not able to give us any account of those accidents, which Nostradamus had foretold should befall the father in his youth, as that in the 16th year of his age he should fall into a dangerous Dysentery, or Bloody Flux; that he should be afflicted with an acute and violent Fever in the 17th year of his life, and in the 20th fall in love, and relinquish

his studies, &c. I shall relate only such as he could more certainly inform us of. Among other of the Prophet's judgments, these are the most remarkable. *That he should wear his beard long and crisped,* (but he always shaved his chin bare)—*that in the middle of his age, his teeth should be rotten* (but he had very white and firm teeth to his dying day,)—*that in his old age he should go almost crooked and double,* (but he went to the last upright and straight, as any young man whatever)—*that in the 19th year of his life, he should become exceeding rich, by inheriting a stranger's estate,* (but besides what his father left him, he never had any wealth or estate)—*that he should suffer by the treachery of his brethren,* and again, in the 37th year, *be wounded by his own mother's son,* (but he never had any brother, nor had his father more than one Wife)—*that he should marry a Foreigner,* (but he married a French woman of Salona)—*that in the 27th year, he should be charged with a bastard son,* (but no man ever heard of that)—*that in the 25th he should be overwhelmed with the Theological Doctrine of some of his Tutors; and that he should be so addicted to Natural Philosophy and the secrets of Magic, as no man more; as also to Geometry and Arithmetic, in an extraordinary manner,* (when yet it is well known he never had any particular affection to, or care of any of those studies, but entirely devoted himself to the knowledge of the Laws, of which Nostradamus never dreamt, nor of the Dignity of a Senator, which in that respect was worthily conferred upon him at Aix, in the 25th year of his age)—*that in his old age, he should apply himself to Navigation and Music,* (but he never delighted much in Music, nor was ever at Sea in his whole life)—*that he should not pass the 75th year,* (but he

passed not the 54th, of which Nostradamus said not a word.) And these things I am the more particular in, to the end that men may judge what credit is to be given to such predictions!

“ We must allow, that some one thing of those many that Astrologers presage, may perchance come to pass, now and then; and yet for all that, it is free for us to maintain our opinion, that those events have other causes to depend upon, than such as justify Astrology.

“ *One is Fortune, or mere Chance.* For when they tumble out so many judgments concerning future events, no wonder if one or two of them hit right. No man, as the old Proverb is, who shoots all day, but he may sometimes come near the mark. Gamesters playing at dice, usually in a few throws cast in and in. Why, therefore, may not our Gamesters playing with the Stars, among a thousand predictions light upon one true one?—Old women, children, and fools, sometimes foretell truth, and why should not Astrologers have the same luck?

“ But, you’ll say, that others make their predictions hap at a venture, but Astrologers *from the rules of art.* We grant it; but yet those *rules* were made by mere chance, at random, without convincing reasons: and change them how you please, still they shall pretend to foreshew the same events.

“ Will you have an illustrious example hereof? *Cardan* in his *Geniture*, had Saturn in the 21st degree of Gemini, which yet, according to the *Rudolphine tables*, was in the 18th degree; Mercury in the 23d of Libra, which was in the 26th. and so of the Moon and other Planets. Now if events ought to be predicted from the true places of the Planets, and yet those predicted from the false

places come to pass as certainly: you may plainly perceive, that it matters not in what places soever the Planets be, whatsoever be predicted!

“ Again, Cardan sometimes mistakes the places of the Planets, not only by a few degrees, but even by whole signs. For example, in the Geniture of his dear friend, John Cheek, he mistook the true place of Mars by more than one whole Sign.— Will you have something yet more worthy the wonder? Tycho Brahe (*lib. de nov. Stella*, p. 177) tells us, that both Cardan and Gauricus enquired into the fortune and manners of *Martin Luther*, by calculating his Nativity, which both of them fixed upon the 22d of October, but differed about the year; Cardan taking the year 1433, and Gauricus the next year following: Cardan took also the hour of ten at night, and Gauricus the hour of one after-noon, when the true hour was 11. And that you may not think they were in the right as to the day of the month, I assure you they both missed it by 19 days; for he was born upon the tenth day of November, (being the Eve to St. Martin’s day, from whom he took his name) as Tycho sets it down out of Erebus. Now, I beseech you, how great variety was there of the Heavens, in so different schemes, and neither of them near the truth: and yet the accommodation of the events (forsooth) must be convenient? Can you choose but think this whole artifice to be a mere delusion; a toy more vain than the canting of common rogues and gypsies, as they call them? Doubtless, if mere chance did not bear all the sway in these matters, Astrologers could not either so frequently or so duely be deceived in their divinations!

“ *Of forty things* (saith Cardan, *lib. de judic. cap. 6.*) *scarce ten happen right*, as they are pre-



dicted : so that you have the confession of a most learned Astrologer, which the force of truth extorted from him in spite of his confidence. And indeed, had not too much doting upon the art bewitched the man, he might more truly have said, that *of four hundred predictions, scarce one is verified.* But supposing his supposition to be true, that of forty scarce ten succeed ; and it will follow of necessity, that chance hath a main hand in all Astrological predictions, when the truth of them is four times less than their falshood. I must not omit to advertise you, that Cardan himself (*lib. de Genit.*) much commends that saying of Marlianus ; *Si vis divinare, contrarium ad unguem dicito ejus quod Astrologi aut pollicentur, aut minitantur* : “ if you have an itch to be divining, be sure you foretel quite the contrary to what Astrologers either promise or threaten.” For however Cardan would have this be understood only of unskilful and ignorant Astrologers, yet you may perceive what truth is to be expected from the most learned and diligent of them all, among whom he challengeth the chair to himself, nor do the multitude deny him that honour.

“ You may find this same man glorying, that he spent one hundred hours about the Geniture of King Edward the Sixth of England, which he made the first of twelve eminent Nativities : and notwithstanding all that pains and care, he predicted nothing resembling the events that befel that worthy Prince. For (to omit other things) the Records of England assure us, that King Edward died in the sixteenth year of his life ; whereas Cardan had predicted, that he should be very sickly in the 23d, 24th, and 25th years. ‘ After which ‘ time (says he) he shall be afflicted with sundry ‘ diseases, and (Mars being then his Anereta, or

' Regicide) he shall die of a Bloody Flux, and a violent Fever.' Now doth industry gain the better of chance or not? O if Cardan had had the luck to have foretold that this King should fall into some dangerous disease in that year wherein he died, what joy, what triumph, what boasting would there have been among Astrologers? And how would the diviner have magnified himself and his art?"

*Extracts from Mr. Rowland.*—"The great Galen, the Physician, says of Astrology, 'Tis a 'sophistical thing, contrary to experience.'

"*St. Austin*, famous for learning and godliness in his time, having been addicted to Astrology, afterwards repents of it, and renounceth it, in his *Treatise, De. doctr. Christiana, lib. 2, cap. 21. in fine & initio capitis 22.* His words are these. 'It is *magnus error, & magna dementia, superstitio,*' &c. That is, *Astrology is a great error, a great madness, a superstition easily refuted.*

"*Mr. Perkins*, famous for learning and godliness, as his works shew, hath not only a *Treatise* against Astrology, (though once much addicted to it) but also gives us his *repentance and renouncing* of it in his Preface to the reader, before his *Resolution to the Country-man*. His words are these: 'I have long studied this art, and was never quiet, till I had all the secrets of it; but at length it pleased God to lay before me the PROFANENESS of it; nay I dare boldly say, the IDOLATRY; although it be covered with fair and golden shews:—therefore that which I speak with grief, I desire thee to note with some attention,' &c.

"*Mr. Geric*, known to me to be a godly and learned man (being Collegians in the University) hath a learned *Treatise* against Astrology (which

if men read well, they dare not, if they have any truth of grace, give themselves to Astrology.) His Treatise is called *Astrologia Mastix*.

“ *Mr. Gerec*, states the case of a *Mr. Briggs*, some time Geometry Reader at Oxford, an eminent godly man. Of this *Mr. Briggs*, *Mr. Gerec* gives us this account : ‘ This loving friend of mine, says *Mr. Gerec*, upon a question moved to him by me, touching Judicial Astrology, told me this remarkable story of himself : when he came to Cambridge first, he thought it to be a fine thing to be of God’s Counsel, to foreknow secrets, and resolved to have that knowledge, what labour soever it cost him ; and so early applied himself to the study of Mathematics, beginning with Arithmetic, and so to Geometry and Astronomy ; and to lay a good foundation, he left none of these arts till he had attained exactness in them. The foundation thus laid, he then applied himself to his main scope, the search of Judicial Astrology ; but there he found his expectations frustrate : THERE WAS NO CERTAINTY in the rules thereof ! When he had tired his body and wits in vain, he was much dejected with the frustrating of his expectation. At last he repaired to a man in Cambridge, famous in that Art, and a practitioner in prognostications by it : to him he made his moan what pains he had taken to be expert in Astrology, and how the uncertainty of the rules of that art did now defeat his hopes. The Astrologer’s reply was, that THE RULES OF THAT ART WERE UNCERTAIN INDEED, NEITHER WAS THERE ANY CURE FOR IT : whereupon *Mr. Briggs* relinquished that study ! And he did then affirm to me, that *he would undertake to the most skilful Astrologer in the world, that let him set down any conclusion touching any man or state,*

‘*yea or WEATHER, and he would prove it CONTRADICTIONALLY; that is, both that it would fall out so, and that it would not fall out so, from their own rules and principles; whence, says he, you may see evidently that there is no certainty in the rules of that art. He further added, that his opinion was, to those that addicted themselves to the practices of Divining Astrology, the devil did at first secretly lend his assistance; and at length, gradatim (that is gradually) did (unless God prevented) entice them into contract.*’ ”

*Extract from Mr. John Gaule.*—“ St. Augustine confessed (says Mr. G.) that he was very much inclined to the study of magic and Astrology; but, after his conversion, he utterly abandoned, and condemned them. A friend of his (one Firminius) and he, walking together, both of them being addicted to the constellational way, Firminius asks his opinion of his constellation, about a secular business he had then in hand. St. Augustine, somewhat changed in his general opinion of it, told him, that he conceived that way to be vain and ridiculous. Firminius proceeded, and told him a story from his father, and his father’s friend, two genethliacal Astrologers, and so precise observers, as that they calculated the births of the very brute beasts in their families. And so it fell out, that his mother bare him, and the other’s maid brought a son also in one day, hour, & minute as near as could be guest. But now these two (so born alike) proved to be of various and contrary both fortune and manners, in every respect. Upon this relation of Firminius, Augustine abhorred the falsity of natalitial prognostications more and more; and so resolved to cast off Astrology without all scruple: and not only so, but was instant to con-



vince the other of this vanity, from his own narration, and thus to withdraw him from it also."

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#### THE MOON.

**T**O all the preceding arguments against Astrological *experience*, I ought not to forget the repeated experiments that have been made on *Lunar influence*.

According to common opinion, the *Moon* has great influence over many things, and particularly over the minds of those unfortunate people, called *Lunatics*, from *Luna*, the *Moon*. Now, all this supposed influence originated in similar unmeaning causes with those of the various planets, and which I could explain at large, were it not that I wish to avoid prolixity.

A Gentleman in the county of York, who has for many years kept an asylum for Lunatics, and has been honoured with a great number of patients, has made particular observations on the subject; and he declares, that after many years minute attention, which he has paid to the *fulls* and *changes* of the Moon, and the state of his patients, "he never could discover any degree of sympathy, or antipathy, or influence, between the state of the Moon, and the condition of his patients; their intermissions of sanity and insanity happening in any or all the days and hours of the lunar month." This testimony is farther confirmed by a similar declaration from another respectable Asylum Keeper in Norwich. Here, then, is *experience*! To say, therefore, that the full or changing Moon makes a madman, is as void of truth as saying that a madman can make the Moon be at full or change.

In addition to all these facts and arguments which prove decidedly that Astrology has no claim to the Plea of EXPERIENCE, it may be generally observed, that *experience* is founded on *trial, experiment* and *comparison*. Now, to make the *experience* of Astrologers valid, it must be shewn that the same position of the *Planets* and *Signs*, uniformly produce the same effects. Therefore we must see the posture of the heavens to be exactly the same, at least in *two* instances, before *experience* can have *one* confirmation! But have the *Signs* and *Planets* ever been *twice* in the same position? No, reader, never since the foundation of the world; nor is there any probability that they will for fifty thousand years to come! *Kec-kerman*, a learned Prussian, has stated, that the variations of position between the Sun and Fixed Stars alone, though but very small, and effected in an almost imperceptible manner, would require a period of time not less than *forty-nine thousand* years, to bring them *twice* into the same relative position!

And moreover, hear what the learned Gassendus says, in relation to the whole system of the starry and planetary heavens:—Speaking to Astrologers of the groundlessness of their last shift, *experience*, he says, “ *Each single Precept or Rule (of Astrology) ought to have been constituted upon many experiments had of the certain variety thereof; whereas we have plainly seen, that it was not possible for them ever to make the same experiment so much as only twice: because the same position of the heavens cannot return again, not only after many hundreds, but also many millions of years!*”

## SEVEN MORE ARGUMENTS AGAINST ASTROLOGY.

**W**E will, then, in order to bring this theory to the test, submit seven more arguments to men of unbiassed reason.

*First Argument.*—In both ancient and modern history, we read of dreadful earthquakes, some of which have instantly swallowed up twenty thousand people: now, amongst so many people, there must have been rich, poor, old, young, and middle-aged, male and female, pious and profane. There being amongst these pitiable people, an almost infinite diversity of ages, there must have been also a vast variety of good and bad *planetary aspects* at their respective births; and if an Astrologer had been consulted by some of them, only one day before their destruction, there is no doubt but they would have been soothed with favourable aspects, benign influences, and lucky conjunctions; and consequently would have been taught to hope for *prosperity* and *long-life*!

*Second Argument.*—Again, we know both from history and experience, that the world has been afflicted with dreadful wars; and we know that in these wars myriads of people have perished. In the present war between the French and the allies, 'tis probable that not less than *five millions* of people have lost their lives; now, amongst all these people there could scarcely be a day within the compass of eighty years, nor an hour within any day, which did not give birth to one or more of them; from whence we may fairly infer, that they were born under almost all possible positions of the *signs* and *planets*. Yet notwithstanding these people were born under various aspects, in the general, they all died the same death! Nor can it be for a moment denied, that there are now millions in the

world, in peaceful countries, and comfortable circumstances, who were born in the same hour and minute with most of the unfortunate persons, who fell victims to the sword, or at least to a violent and untimely death !

*Third Argument.*—Farther, supposing we examine a ship's crew, we shall find men of various ages and complexions, and that they were born under various stellary configurations, some favourable, and others the reverse, according to astrological interpretation ; yet we sometimes see this ship and crew go to sea, and soon after hear of her and crew being entirely engulfed in the great deep !

*Fourth Argument.*—Once more, we are informed by that same Bible which the "Admirer" quotes, that all the inhabitants of the world were drowned at once, except one family ; by which one would have supposed that they were all born under the sign *Aquarius*, the *water-carrier* ! Now, it is said by some, that there were far more inhabitants in the world at that time than there are at present ; be that as it may, it is probable that there were hundreds of millions, consequently they must have been born under almost every imaginable posture of the signs and planets. The same may also be said of the thousands of people who die of the plague, or other epidemical distempers in cities and countries. From all these observations, which are founded on unquestionable facts, it is evident, that *all* kinds of aspects may be followed by the *same event*, and that therefore they ought *all* to be regarded alike, that is, *not regarded at all*.

*Fifth Argument.*—But lest it should be said, that I have taken an unfair advantage of this science, I will place the subject in another point of view : We will dismiss the dead, and call the living to the bar. Let us then call into view all the



private soldiers in the service of Great Britain ; we will pass by the myriads of private soldiers in other parts of the world ; these private soldiers have all the same station in life to a tittle ; their salaries are all the same to a fraction ; they face to the right and the left at the same time ; in their marches they almost take the same number of strides ; and in their pains and pleasures, hardships and enjoyments, there is an universal uniformity. Supposing, now, we were to examine the nativities of these soldiers, we should find some of them born under the planet *Saturn*, some under *Jupiter*, or *Mars*, and in short, one or other of them under every planet ; and likewise one or other of them under every sign in the zodiac. Let us in like manner call under our inspection all the day-labourers and husbandmen in this nation ; of these there are beyond doubt, several hundred thousand : these men, whose fortunes and enjoyments in life are so nearly alike, can lay claim to all the variety of planetary configurations. Let us next bring into view all the prosperous tradesmen and merchants, in this realm, and we shall see what an endless variety of signs, aspects, and configurations attended their respective births : or should we single out an individual firm of merchants, consisting of only four men, 'tis ten to one but they were each of them born under a very different position of the heavens ; and yet it must be allowed that there is a critical similarity in their enterprizes and fortunes. Take also, for an example, the East India Company ;—or take all the villains recorded in the Tyburn Calendar—or all those, who, for their crimes, have been sent to Botany Bay—or all the kings in the world—or all the poets—or all the chimney sweepers—or all the *tall* men in the world—or all the *short* men—or all the *white* looking or *black*

looking men in the world ; and let the Astrologer, if he can, make his *aspects, causes, and influences*, correspond with circumstances and events !

But if after all this, it should be asserted that planetary influence does not so much affect men's fortunes as their dispositions, this would be to deny in great measure what Astrologers uniformly state ; yet we are willing to rest the whole credit of the science upon this issue. Let, then, persons born under the same aspects be contrasted and compared one with another, and it will be found that their tempers and dispositions are as various as their sizes and their faces.

*Sixth Argument.*—In all *Horoscopes*, or plans of nativities which have been drawn during hundreds and thousands of years, (except, perhaps, a few very lately drawn, though indeed I have neither seen nor heard of any) there are but SEVEN Planets exhibited, including the Sun and Moon ! And the following is a list of them, namely,

- 1 The *Sun*
- 2 The *Moon*
- 3 The Planet *Mercury*
- 4 ————— *Venus*
- 5 ————— *Mars*
- 6 ————— *Jupiter*
- 7 ————— *Saturn*

Now, reader, it so falls out, that since the year 1780, Astronomers have discovered *Five* more planets ; and who dares say that there may not be *Fifteen* more yet undiscovered ? The following therefore, is the present list of known and acknowledged Planets, namely,

- 1 The *Sun*
- 2 The *Moon*
- 3 The Planet *Mercury*
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_ *Venus*
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_ *Mars*
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_ *Jupiter*
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_ *Saturn*
- 8 The new Planet *Herschel* discovered in 1781
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_ *Piazzi* \_\_\_\_\_ 1801
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_ *Olbers* \_\_\_\_\_ 1802
- 11 \_\_\_\_\_ *Harding* \_\_\_\_\_ 1804
- 12 \_\_\_\_\_ *Olbers the second* \_\_\_\_\_ 1807

Here then are *Twelve* Planets: if then *any* of the Planets have any *influence*, why not *all*: and if they *all* have *influence*, how was it possible for the Astrologers to give true interpretations without the use of *all*? And, as I have already observed, there may be many more Planets yet undiscovered. If then we were to allow that Planets have influences, yet we must clearly perceive that it would be impossible to give proper interpretations unless we included the *whole* of them; and at the same time we must be certain that we had the whole of them! For, if it be true, as Astrologers would make us believe, that *Oppositions* and *Conjunctions* are of very material consequence in Horoscopical interpretations, then it is self-evident upon *their own* principles, that no Geniture can be valid without the whole! It follows, therefore, that even admitting the truth of Astrological principles, there has never yet been a proper Geniture, or Horoscope, drawn, from the days of Babylon to the present time. For, is it not evident, that whilst *Venus* and *Jupiter* might be in *conjunction*, that *Herschel*, *Piazzi* or *Olbers*, one, or all of them might, be in *Opposition*, and so counteract their *precious* influence?

Besides all this, Pray Messrs. Astrologers, what natures or qualities do you ascribe to those New Planets above-mentioned? Is *Herschel* to be an *infortunate* or otherwise? And what qualities are *Harding*, *Piazzi* and the two *Olbers* to have? Pray, Sirs, let us know as soon as possible. Nor need you be long about the business, because you can easily do as your predecessors have done by the old number *Seven*, namely, ascribe to them what qualities you please, and then say and swear that it is so, because it is so, which is said to be a woman's argument!!!

*Seventh Argument.*—The next circumstance which I would have the reader particularly notice, is, the annual *precession of the Equinoxes*\*; some say that precession amounts to about 50 seconds per year, perhaps it may be more than that, one year with another. By the precession of the equinoxes, is meant, the receding or falling back of the ecliptic where it intersects the equator. Now, three or four thousand years ago, when Astronomy was first reduced to a science, when the sun crossed the equator at the vernal equinox, he entered at the same instant the sign or constellation, called *Aries*, the *Ram*; and it has ever since been the custom of Astronomers to say, that the sun enters *Aries*, when he crosses the Equator; and when it is considered that they have nothing in view but to regulate time, there is no manner of harm in their

\* The *precession* (or as some call it, *procession*) of the *Equinoxes*, is the westerly movement which the Ecliptic annually makes where it intersects the Equator at the Spring and Autumn Ingresses: and it is called a *precession*, or forward motion, in reference to the *West*, towards which it continually inclines. But as the twelve signs of the Zodiac are reckoned from West to East, the westerly movement of the Ecliptic's intersection of the Equinox, is sometimes called, in reference to the signs, the *recession of the Equinoxes*,



statement, though it is a false one. I say a false one, because in a long series of ages, the sun has receded thirty degrees, that is, a whole sign, amounting also to about thirty days of time; the consequence of which is, that, when the sun crosses the Equator, he does not enter *Aries* the first sign in the zodiac, but he actually enters *Pisces* the last sign; when he is said to enter *Libra* at the autumnal equinox, he actually enters *Virgo*: the same may be said of all the other signs, for the sun is really always one sign behind the Almanack statement.

Now, thoughtful reader, the evident consequence of all this is, that the man who is said to be born under that *auspicious* sign, *Leo*, the *Lion*, is in good truth born under the *malignant* sign, *Cancer*, the *Crab*! and he, also, who is said to be born under *Sagittarius*, the *Bowman*, is really born under *Scorpio*, the *Scorpion*! In short, a man is never, now, born under that sign which he is said to be born under, but always the sign before it. It follows, therefore, that all Astrological horoscopes which we see, are nothing better than a cunning device of lies from end to end! If *Astrologers* be not aware of the *precession*, or *westerly inclination*, of the *equinoxes*, which so manifestly deranges their science, they are but bunglers in their profession; but if they do know it, then they are designing knaves for publishing falsehoods, and deceiving the unwary! For every one must see, that if one sign will serve instead of another, then *none at all* may do instead of the whole, which indeed is the real truth!

## THE REV. W. PERKINS.

*Judicial Astrology analysed and refuted, by the Rev. W. Perkins, a learned Divine, who had ardently studied the whole System: Published by Mr. P. as an answer to a Countryman, who applied to him for Astrological counsel.*

“GOOD reader, I have thought it convenient (for some special causes) in this short Treatise to disclose a part of my mind to thee concerning the making of *Prognostications*, if possible to persuade thee not to spend thy money in buying any of them.

“*I have long studied this art, and was never quiet until I had seen all the secrets of the same: but at the length, it pleased God to lay before me the profaneness of it, nay, I dare boldly say, the Idolatry of it, although it be covered with fair and golden shews. Wherefore, that which I will speak with grief, the same I would desire thee to mark with some attention. My reasons shall partly concern thee, partly the Prognosticator himself.*

“1. First on *thy behalf*, I reason thus.

“1. As a man doth see the blessings of God upon him, so he must also labour with a careful diligence to maintain the state of this life. But because the affection of man is carried headlong unto a greedy covetousness, this desire of overmuch carping and caring, must be bridled with two strong bits. First, all our care must extend itself no further than the present day. Secondly, in caring we must not trust unto ourselves, but ~~ax~~ all our confidence in the mercy and providence

of God who blesseth all, and without whose goodness nothing can come to pass, do what we will.

“ As touching the first, we have the direction of our Saviour Christ ; who teacheth us to pray on this wise, Math. 6. 11. *Give us this day our daily bread* ; whereby we are given to understand, that we are only to seek for the present time, resting with this persuasion, that he which hath blessed us this day, will also to-morrow, and the next day, shew his like goodness unto us. Again, in the same place, our Saviour Christ speaketh on this wise. Math. chap. 6. v. 34. *Care not then for to-morrow, for the morrow shall care for itself: sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.* By this we learn, that God will provide for every day all things necessary, though we do increase the present grief with caring and casting in our heads how we shall live in the time to come.

“ Now tell me what is the cause that thou yearly dost buy a *Prognostication*, and one of those which tells the strangest things : Is it because thou hast a delight to read the style of *Prognostications* ? Or because thou wouldest learn to *Prognosticate* ? Or because the pictures, and characters, and hieroglyphics, which they make, delight thy mind ? It were folly to be persuaded of this, seeing the very cause itself is manifest. Thy whole desire is to fill thy coffers, and to heap up wealth : thou art afraid lest thou shalt become poor, therefore thou greedily buyest the *Prognostications*, and continually searchest all the corners of them, to see the state of the year to come, even thus in mind reasoning with thyself. ‘ I can never be quiet, nor ‘ take my sleep, until such time as I have known ‘ the state of the year ensuing, that I may frame ‘ my business accordingly. This next year there ‘ will be much rain, it will rot corn upon the

‘ground, it will be spoiled, I will keep my corn  
 ‘until the next year following. I find that corn  
 ‘will be dear about half a year hence, I will not  
 ‘sell my corn now, but keep it, that I may have  
 ‘plenty of money for it, and sufficient besides, to  
 ‘maintain my house. The sea and land is calm  
 ‘and quiet this year, the next year many ship-  
 ‘wrecks and troubles in many countries will fall;  
 ‘now I will freight my ships, that then I may be  
 ‘quiet.’

“These imaginations are lively arguments of thy diffidence, and despair in the goodness and loving kindness of God. If thou fear God, love God, put thy whole trust in God, thou art content to refer thy whole preservation unto the hands of God: now, these proling and ranging conceits of the time to come, argue that either thou never thinkest on God, or at the least persuadest thyself, that either he will not, or cannot help thee. Wherefore seeing the having of *Prognostications*, cometh of *so wicked causes*, as is the greedy desire of prosperity, and wealth, and argueth some kind of diffidence in God: when thou readest these my words, examine thine own heart, if thou find my sayings true (as certainly thou shalt) never hereafter desire to know the state of the year beforehand, except it be for the seasons of the year, which I am persuaded, *thou mayst in some part without any skill, even by thine own experience.*

“2. Concerning the contempt of God’s providence, thus much I say. The *Prognosticator*, if he be asked whether he confess the *providence of God*, he will with all his heart *confess* it: but by *his deeds he doth deny it*, for all the things whatsoever, which can happen in a whole year, he attributeth them to the *stars*. And so he publisheth his predictions, always mentioning stars, never



or very slenderly, making any signification of the power, and justice, mercy, and everlasting wisdom of God. And surely even for the very paring of thy nails, for the cutting of thy hair, for the putting on of thy shoes, for taking a journey two or three miles from thine house; for obtaining at God's hands at thy request, for making thy bargain with thy neighbour, for all thine actions be they never so small: these wise men (if thou wilt ask their advice) will give thee counsel from the stars.

“Now when these, their religious predictions, shall be had in thy bosom, and read of thee daily, thou being a man unlearned and worldly given, never hearing any mention of the special providence, and hand of God in every thing, but long discourses of the virtues of Planets, and signs, dost never think upon the wonderful and most infinite power of God, working after a special manner in every matter, but art drawn straightways into an admiration of the *Astrologer*, and a great fear of the constellations of heaven. An experience of this I found in thee, some few years ago. A learned man (yet in this case far deceived) wrote an *Astrological discourse of the conjunction between Jupiter and Saturn*, wherein he shewed of great alteration in every thing to fall.—At this thou wast sore aghast, thy mind was incumbered with settling thy goods to set them in order against that day; thy song for half a year was nothing else, but, “the conjunction—the conjunction:” the day being come, what staring was there and gazing into Heaven, to see the meeting of those two Planets: Now all this while, where was God's providence? where was that trust and rejoicing in him? Wherefore methinketh that in a Christian Common-wealth, those only books should

be published for thy use, which might beat into thy head, and make thee every hour and moment to think on the providence of God: Contrarywise, to tell the means which God doth use, to thunder out the aspects and constellations of stars, and seldom to mention of his providence, maketh thee to fear, and admire, and love the means, quite forgetting the work of God in the means.

*“This fault was very rife amongst the Israelites, who came yearly unto Astrologers and wise men: Wherefore that which is spoken by Jeremy chap. 10. v. 1, 2, unto them, is also spoken unto thee. Hear ye the word of the Lord, that he speaketh unto you, O house of Israel: Thus saith the Lord, learn not the way of the heathen, and be not afraid for the signs of heaven, for the heathen are dismayed at them. In like sort, God forbiddeth his people of England to give credit, or fear the constellations and conjunctions of stars and planets, which have no power of themselves, but are governed by him; and their secret motions and influences are not known to man, and therefore there can be no certain judgment thereof. If thou wilt not hear and follow this which I say, see what will ensue.*

*“Thou seest that the greatest matters which these Diviners and Prognosticators foretell, fall out flat otherwise than they say, to their perpetual shame. Truly I am persuaded; that it is the judgment of God upon them (although they cannot see it) who maketh them, when they think they are most wise, to be most fools. For so the Lord used the wise men and Astrologers of Chaldea, as he speaketh by his prophet Isaiah, chap. 44, v. 24. I am the Lord that made all things, that spread out the heavens alone and stretch out the earth by myself, I destroy the tokens of Soothsayers, and*

*make them that conjecture fools, and turn their wise men backward and make their knowledge foolishness,* Dost thou, then, O careless and miserable man, think to escape the same, or greater punishment being a cause of this fault; for if none desired to know what is to come, none would busy themselves in that vanity. Wherefore read the word of God in the 18 of Deut. verse 9. *When thou shalt come (saith the spirit of God) into the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.* In the words following, Moses numbereth nine abominations.

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|------|-----------------------------------------------|
| As { | 1. To make his child go through the fire.     |
|      | 2 To use witchcraft.                          |
|      | 3. To regard times. <i>This is thy fault.</i> |
|      | 4. To mark the flying of fowls.               |
|      | 5. To be a Sorcerer                           |
|      | 6. To be a Charmer.                           |
|      | 7. To counsel with Spirits.                   |
|      | 8. To be a Soothsayer:                        |
|      | 9. To ask counsel at the dead.                |

All these horrible abominations being rehearsed, mark what followeth. Deut. 18, 12. *For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord, and because of these abominations, the Lord thy God doth drive them out before thee:* now seeing most of these abominations, and especially the third, are used of us, why should we not fear the like judgments upon us, unless we will repent, and that with speed.

2. The reasons which concern the *Prognosticator*, and may avail to the persuading of thee, not to buy any of their unprofitable books, as these which follow: First, their *inability* in *Prognos-*

*teating*:—Secondly, their *manifest untruths*:—Thirdly, their *impieties*:—Fourthly, their *tricks of deceit*. What? can they not foretell that which is to come? can they not make conjectures of that which is likely to ensue? No surely. And I will use arguments to confirm it unto thee.

The true use of the heavens consisteth in many points. 1. To declare the glory of God. *The heavens* (says David, Psalm, 19, 1) *declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work*. It is an alphabet written in great letters, in which is described the majesty of God, and that by these four special points: First, the majesty of the work itself. 2. The infinite multitude of Stars. 3. By the wonderful variety of Stars. 4. By the greatness of the stars.

Secondly, it maketh sinners and wicked men inexcusable before the judgment seat of God.—Rom. 1, 20. *For the invisible things of him* (says St Paul) *from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-head, so that they are without excuse*.

Thirdly, they serve to the appointment of times, as day, night, month, year, which are both measured and described by the course of the Sun and Moon, and other Stars. Gen. 1, 14. And so the feast of the Israelites, and the computation of the year in our Church, dependeth thereupon, and without them there would be great confusion both in the common-wealth and Church.

Fourthly, they serve to be signs, that is, to foretell things to come. And they are signs either of *extraordinary* things, or things which be *ordinary*. When they are signs of extraordinary things, then there is and appeareth in them some extraordinary work of God: as appeareth in these examples.



which follow, At the suffering of Christ, not only *the veil of the temple rent, and the dead rose forth of their graves, Matth. 27.* But also the Sun was wholly eclipsed, the Moon being in the full. At which sight, *Dyonisius Areopagita, a good Astronomer* spake these words: “*Either the frame of the world is destroyed, or the God of nature suffereth.*” The Prophet *Ezek. cha. 32. v. 7, 8.* being commanded to prophesy the destruction of *Egypt*, he first putteth down such extraordinary signs: Before the second coming of our Saviour Christ, there shall be signs in the Sun and Moon, and in the Stars. Lastly the extraordinary going back of the Sun signified the lengthening of the life of the King *Hzechiah.*—*Secondly*, the Stars are signs of general things, which happen ordinarily every year in nature among us.

“I say *general* because *the particular estate and affairs of men can in no wise be fore-signified by the stars.* I say *ordinary*, because the things that fall out seldom, and are besides the common course of nature, as plenty of all things, famine, plague, war; eversions of Kingdoms, &c. *Do not depend upon the stars.* For the confirming of this, I have three reasons:

“First, in the *1. of Genesis v. 14. 15.* God saith, *that he made the lights to be signs,* and yet the same God in *Jere. 10. ii.* saith, *Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven:* flatly forbidding us to use stars, as means to judge of any thing to come, saving only of those, of which they are expressly made signs of God in the creation: all which are put down before.

“Secondly, this is manifest by the order of the creation: *Gen. 1. 12. 14.* *The third day God created upon the earth herbs and trees, and the earth brought forth fruits and was fertile: the fourth*

day God commanded lights to be made in the firmament of heaven, to separate the day and the night, and to be for signs and for seasons, and days, and months, and then it was so, and then God saw it was good. Out of which I gather that it cannot be a sign causing famine, or plenty, or fertility, because fertility went before the creation of the host of heaven. Also of wars, and plagues, and the particular estates of men, they can be no signs, because man was not yet created, and yet even then they were signs.

“Some will say, they were no signs of those matters in the creation, but now they may be, and are: No, for the works which God created, he now preserveth, neither increasing nor diminishing any thing in them. *Philo Judæus*, in his book *de opificio mundi*, says, ‘he was persuaded that God foreseeing the minds of men, given to search strange matters to come, did in this order create the heavens, to confute and disprove their imaginations.’

“Thirdly, the heavens and stars were made for the use of man, and man is their end? so that it is absurd to imagine they have any force in the affairs of man. Now then *Prognosticators*, if they will foreshew of strange things to come, they must undo the work of their creator, and give unto it new uses, otherwise they shall not be able to prognosticate as they yearly do.

“The providence of God is his decree by which he appointeth how every thing shall come to pass. The continuation of this decree, is ordinarily by means, but often without means. The means which God useth are either general or special.—General are these by which he governeth all the whole world, and every particular thing which concerneth this life: unto this kind are referred

spiritual creatures, called Angels, by whom the Philosophers say the heavens are governed, and we see that whole kingdoms, provinces, and cities have been kept and defended by them, as also consumed and destroyed.

“ Again, the stars and heavenly bodies are used of God to govern and order things here below, as it is in the 19th Psalm, ‘ Nothing is hid from the heat of the sun.’ And by the Prophet Hosea, the Lord speaketh thus, ‘ I will hear the heavens, the heavens shall hear the earth, the earth shall hear the corn, the corn shall hear Israel.’ But this instrument is only a *general* instrument, and hath his work in *ordinary* matters of *nature*.— Beside these means, there be many other by which God ruleth the world. In the beginning he set *man* over the whole world, that he might have rule over fishes, fowls, and beasts, and all things else. He appointed *husbands* to govern their wives; he set the *first-born* before their brethren, as Cain before Abel. Princes over cities, kingdoms, common-wealths, and therefore, by reason of their dignity, calleth them Gods. There be *Governors* of families, *Fathers* over their children, *Masters* over their servants.

“ Yet God hath more near care in preserving and governing his chosen, as appeareth in the 43d of Isaiah: ‘ Thus saith the Lord God that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel; fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by my name, thou art mine: when thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the floods, that they do not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the very fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee: for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour.’

This is also manifest by that sympathy which is in the Lord when his children are afflicted, as appeareth by Zechariah, 2, viii. ‘He which toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye.’ And in the 9th of the Acts, ‘Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?’ that is, my elect. Wherefore there be also special means by which he more carefully governeth the elect. As be Angels, whom Paul to the Hebrews calleth *ministering spirits*—it is certain they defend every one of the elect particularly. Hitherto may be referred the preaching of the Word of God, the ministering of the Sacraments.

“All these means God’s providence useth, first that he might shew his goodness towards us : secondly, that he might be known to be the Lord over all : thirdly, that we might be thankful, because he not only himself governeth us, but also maketh his creatures to serve our turns. But this must be noted (as I said before) that in all these secondary causes, beside their natural work which God hath given them, there is also the special work of God, his special hand shewed. God worketh not by second causes, as Magistrates govern their common-wealths by their inferior officers. For they so govern by them, that they do nothing or very little themselves, and peradventure, never know what is done. God governeth not the world so, but in every particular work, he hath his particular stroke. That the thunder burneth, moveth, hurteth, it is the general providence of God ; but that it burneth or hurteth this or that man, on this or that part, in this or that manner, it is the special providence of the same God. The special providence of God is clearly expressed in the following words :—*For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew him-*



*self strong in behalf of all them whose heart is perfect towards him. 2 Chron. 16. ix.*

God governeth the world immediately, and his providence worketh without means, and many things he bringeth to pass against all means, which is manifest by that of Jere. 10 xxiii. *O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.*

“Now to come to our *Prognosticators*, and *Moon prophets*, how shall they be able to know what will come to pass hereafter? For first, the heavens being only one particular instrument of God’s providence, amongst many, they cannot certainly and truly say, this thing or that thing proceedeth from the heavens Secondly, they cannot determine whether God in extraordinary matters, as plague, famine, barrenness, distempered weather, earthquakes, wars, &c. doth work immediately, or with means; if with means, they cannot determine, whether the heavens, or angels, or men, or any other things be the means of his providence. Thirdly, if they were able to know what the heaven worketh naturally, yet they were never the better; for God, besides the power of the heavens, hath in all things his particular working providence, altering, and framing, and bending as wax his instruments to his good will.

*The third Reason, the want of Experience.*

“If our *Prognosticators* have any means to foretell things to come, they have those means either *without experience*, or *with experience*; if they have them without experience, then must thou account all which they do to be foolish dreams, and deceit. For all kind of human learning which is profitable, and hath use in the life of man, is taken from often observations, and experience.

If it be said, that they have their directions in *prognosticating* from experience, and that of all times; true experience of the causes of things is an often observing of the effects of the same causes, with this ground, that they can proceed from no other thing. The *Physician* saith *Rhubarb*, doth purge *Choler*. Well, how knoweth he this? he hath often tried this, and that in old men, young men, children: and hath found that in the bodies of all men, the cause of purging this humour, could be ascribed to nothing else. Wherefore he may peremptorily conclude *Rhubarb* purgeth *Choler*. Our *Prognosticators* in the heavens can have no such experience. For they cannot observe often the same position of stars in the heaven.—The order and cause of the fixed stars and planets which we find in the heavens one day, the next day will be changed, *and never the like again*.

“ They will say, indeed, although the same position of the whole heaven never happen, yet the same conjunctions of notable stars, the same risings and settings, and the same constellations of the chiefest stars are marked often. I say again, that when these eclipses & great conjunctions happen, the rest of the stars being otherwise affected than they were before, and having new positions, may either increase or diminish their effects, or else hinder them, and quite take them away. As we see when the Sun casting his beams into a chamber, the light of candles, and torches, and fires, do make it shine dim, yet these being absent it will shine bright.

“ Again, they are not able to say that constellations which they have marked, are causes of those effects which follow; as wars, diseases, distempered weather, earthquakes, famine, &c. For in those things which happen together, the one is

not the cause of the other. When Nero played upon his harp, Rome was on fire, yet Nero's playing on the harp was no cause of the burning of Rome.

“ Also these effects may have other causes in the heavens than those which they mark ; and they may come immediately from God, or they may come only from the will of man : wherefore seeing that they cannot assure themselves that those eclipses and conjunctions are the causes of such effects upon earth, and as they cannot have often observations of the course of heaven, their rules of predictions are feigned and supposed, and not built upon true experience.

“ Let a man which knoweth not one herb, take all kinds of herbs, and put them into a great vessel, yet so that there be more of some herbs, and less of other some ; let him beat them all together, and make a compound virtue of all their virtues ; can he now tell the nature and operations of every particular herb ? can he divide and sever by any help the virtue of one herb from another ? No, indeed. The same thing may be said of the stars of heaven ; all their lights, and all their influences (as they term it) are in the lower bodies. More plainly, every earthly body hath in it all the secret powers, and working of every particular star ; so that they make (as it were) a compound operation rising of all, or of the most of their virtues joined together. For the Astrologers hold, that although the light may be hindered by the thickness of the body, yet the heavenly influence pierceth through all. Therefore they are not able to sever, and learn the nature of these stars, except they can stop the influence of any star they list, and bring them into what compass they will.

“ Yet thus much I will grant them, that they

may have a little knowledge of the virtue of the sun and moon, and some other stars; as we see those herbs in the former composition, whose virtues be the chiefest, though not fully, yet somewhat do represent their nature, and shew themselves above the rest. But what is this to the purpose? If I confess the operations of the sun and moon, if I shall grant that Saturn is in his nature cold and dry, Jupiter warm and moist, Mars hot and dry, Venus cold and moist, Mercury in nature mixed, the notable fixed stars in the zodiac to be of the nature of the planets, and to have manifest operations, as the rising of the Dog to make heat and tempestuous seas, the rising of Arcturus to make rain and showers, Pleiades to be of the nature of Mars, and the Moon, &c. what will all this suffice to make a prognostication? for seeing all stars have their own powers, and peradventure also the least stars, which we make no account of, have great effects among us, (as one grain of musk in the Apothecaries shop maketh a greater smell than all other powders, be they never so many) nothing will the knowledge of the operation of some stars prevail, the rest being not known, and never regarded. They will say, they have some experience, but yet imperfect. I have shewed how they have no true experience at all: and their imperfect experience maketh them perfect liars.

*The fourth Reason, the ignorance of causes.*

“ A man which will judge rightly of any matter by the causes, must not only consider the *common* causes, but he must also with them confer the *particular* causes of all things which happen amongst us, so he shall judge aright. In heaven the stars be common causes of all things amongst us, be-



cause they shew their virtue on every matter, one way or other. The same things have their peculiar efficientes, and matters, and forms, by which, and not by the heavens, they are made that, whatsoever they are. These proper causes, because their natures be unknown unto us, I cannot see how the Prognosticator is able to foretell any thing to come, in good and convenient manner, laying aside all deceiving and forging of untruths.

“ To make this more plain, I will use this similitude. Suppose an hen to sit upon many eggs, some of her own, some of divers other fowls; she imparteth her heat equally unto them all; at length she hatcheth, and some of her chickens are cocks, some hens, some crows, some partridges, some doves, some black, some white, some like and live; some die, some are killed of the kite, some are roasted. No man (I think) will profess so much skill as to say, that he by considering of the hen and her heat which is a common cause of the chickens, and all that befall them, is able to tell, why of this egg came a partridge, of that a crow, why this egg had no chicken, why that had a dead chicken, &c. except he do therewith-adjoin the consideration of their particular natures.

“ The heaven is, as it were, an hen, fostering under her wings all earthly things, imparting his virtue and heat unto all. Can our Prognosticator, by the *erecting of Figures*, by considering the *disposition of every planet in their houses*, and the significations of every thing, judge why this man is wealthy, that man a beggar; why this nobleman dieth this year, none the next year; why it is good to travel this way, naught to travel that way; why these diseases abound, and not the other; why corn shall be dear this quarter, not the next; why this week is fair and temperate, that

week, that month, unseasonable and tempestuous. Truly, it is a thing *flat impossible*. They must hereunto adjoin the particular nature of the country, the particular causes both as to men's minds and bodies, as education, place, honesty, birth, blood, sickness, health, strength, weakness, meat, drink, liberty of mind, learning, &c, and all other special circumstances; which they never do, as we may see in their Prognostications: and if they would do it, yet they could not. Wherefore I must needs say this, that their folly is great in publishing their Prognostications: and thou also greatly to be blamed, which by thy greedy desire givest them great occasion to be unprofitably occupied.

“To shew more briefly and plainly of their inability in Prognosticating, Dan. 2. although I should grant that the stars have great force, yet I say they cannot judge of things to come. And there be six impediments.

“The first impediment is, imbecility of wit: for as man's eye from the earth beholding the heaven and the stars, perceiveth them not in their just quantity, but as very small lights: for indeed the Sun is more than a million of times larger than our earth: *Jupiter* fourteen hundred; and *Saturn* nine hundred and sixty-six. With regard to the *Moon*, it is far smaller than the earth. The largest fixed stars are above an hundred times bigger than the earth, the stars of the second magnitude ninety, the third seventy times, the fourth magnitude fifty four times, the fifth magnitude thirty-five times, the sixth magnitude eighteen times. So the weakness of man's understanding is not able to conceive and learn the things which the heavens do bring to pass on earth.

“ The second impediment is the infinite number of stars, which, it may be have great power, although we do not find it. For the Prognosticator only maketh one thousand and twenty-eight stars, and of these he taketh heed only unto a very few. Which is as though a man should judge the power of an army, by the power of one or two soldiers and captains, not by the power of the whole company.

“ The third impediment is, the infinite varieties of the virtues of stars, and the parts of heaven, which Astrologers grant to be, yet they do not know them. As touching the nature of the Fixed Stars, they know nothing but by colour, which is red, leady, white, pale, &c. resembling some planet. And because they know not the virtue of all stars, and every part of heaven, they are not able to judge any thing but to their own shame; no more than the Physician is able to know the nature of the compound medicine, without the knowing of every simple.

“ The fourth impediment is, the manifold and daily change of the motions, positions, and configurations of the stars: for if a man could tell both the number and nature of stars, yet the variety of positions breedeth trouble, and hindereth right judgment: because by this means the powers of stars are increased, diminished, and changed.— And these rules which served for ancient times to foretell things, will not serve us, because all the Fixed Stars have changed their places, and the rest are daily changing.

“ The fifth impediment is, the infinite variety of inferior things, which do hinder, pervert, change, receive, or not receive the virtue and influence of stars; as the nature of the soil, the disposition and nature of air, orders and constitutions of the com-

mon-wealth, occasions, education, institution, kinds of meat and drink, &c.

“ The sixth impediment is, the will of man, which freely in common matters chuseth this, and refuseth that. There are many things which are caused without any work of stars, only by the will of man, as we see in Socrates, Demosthenes, and others.

“ Thus much shall suffice to shew that they cannot prognosticate of things ensuing; now follow their manifold untruths, and most false rules; in disclosing them I will keep the same order they use in their Almanacks.

“ In the first or second leaf of their books thou shalt find a picture of a man’s body, with the 12 Signs round about it; they call it the *Anatomy of Man’s Body*, shewing how the twelve signs have the Government of the same, for the Moon or any other signification of any thing being in the Sign, they say, that it is dangerous to box, to sear that part, or to let blood in it, which is subject to the dominion of that Sign. All these are nothing but vain Fables, as I will manifestly prove.

“ 1. Whereas they call it an *Anatomy*, methinks it is a butcherly *Anatomy*; nay that of the Butchers is far better, for they join head and appurtenance together; these men being sparing, give *Aries* the head; *Leo* and *Cancer* the heart and lungs. As for the liver, I know not which sign has it, peradventure in old time, men had no livers. At the *Anatomy* of a carrion, crows deal friendly, for every one has somewhat; but in the division of man’s body, signs play foul play, for *Capricorn* hath got nothing but a pair of knees. It is like that the signs scramble for their portions, *Capricorn* being slow, got nothing, hereupon compassion being had, there was a gathering made,



and *Sagittarius* gave the lower part of the thigh, *Aquarius* the higher part of the leg, which both together make the knee.

“ But to deliver thee without all doubt, mark these reasons which follow. First. The signs cannot have any such dominion over man’s body: I make it manifest thus. There is no corporeal heaven in reality above the firmament, yet because the firmament, or eighth sphere hath many motions, to give reasons to those motions, the Astronomers have feigned two heavens above the firmament, the crystalline heaven, or the first moveable or tenth sphere, which they divide into twelve parts, which parts they call signs. Now, I pray you tell me, is it possible to conceive that an imagined part of any imagined heaven, void of all stars, shall either have in itself, or give unto other stars, power to govern the parts of man’s body? More reasonable was that man, who, being asked what was the cause of the sands in Sandwich haven, he answered the building up of Tenterton steeple.

“ Secondly the government of signs in the body is not taken from experience in nature, but feigned long ago by some drowsy pate, and now because it hath the cloke of antiquity it is allowed. More natural was this kind of way, that hot signs should govern hot parts, cold signs cold parts, earthly signs earthly parts. So Aries should govern the heart and the vital blood, not the head; and the rest of the signs those parts which are of their nature and disposition.

“ Thirdly, great experience of many men daily confuteth this rule. For many learned physicians and expert chirurgeons have by infinite examples found, that if a man be let blood in the sign, or lanced, or boxed, or seared, no harm ensueth, nay they have given testimony that the patients

have found even then great comfort. Wherefore let not these things trouble thy mind any more, but let them be numbered even amongst vain and unprofitable fables.

“ 2. Next after followeth (elections or choice) of days & hours necessary for all matters, as followeth.

“ Special days to prepare humours—let blood—purge with vomit, electuaries, potions, pills—cut hair—comfort the virtue attractive, digestive, retentive, expulsive—bathe—put children to school—travel—marry—hunt, hawk, fish—plant—geld cattle—lay foundations.

“ here I pray thee, mark their naughty dealings, how they abuse thy ignorance to make themselves skilful and to do more than they can do. For, if the judgments of the best Astrologers may be taken, certainly most of these elections cannot be prescribed to thee, unless they know before-hand the figure of thy nativity. For all elections which concern thy person, must be moderated (to speak as plainly as their toys will suffer me) by the direction of the root of thy nativity, and by the monthly and diurnal progressions of thy present revolution. If any of these pretend some evil, the particular election may be a means to increase & to bring it to pass.

“ For example; suppose thou being a man toward marriage, in the Almanack thou findest a good day noted by the prognosticator to marry in; thou takest thy opportunity; after a while, thou art weary of thy life; the first day of thy marriage was the last day of thy joy. What is the cause of this? All the planets which were signifiers of thy marriage in thy nativity, were then badly affected, and peradventure also, at the instant thou wast born, they received some disgrace. So then thou mayest lay all blame partly upon thy-

self for believing, and partly upon the prognosticator who deceived thee.

“ But to come unto particulars ; the elections of days to purge the body with any kind of purgation, and to comfort the same, are most ridiculous. Why do they not also prescribe hours of eating meat? Why do they not appoint the kinds of meats and drinks which we must eat and use daily? If thou see that God doth daily bless the enterprises of those Physicians which never regard those elections in ministering to their patients, never esteem of them, let them go as lies to the devil from whence they came.

“ Concerning the election of days to sow, to set, to plant, to lop, they are also foolish: the general observation of the season of the year in which these things are to be done is sufficient. And St. Augustine in his book *de civitate Dei* laugheth at the folly of them which choose particular days to do their husbandry, as though some certain positions of stars had some special influence to the things which are sown then. His reason is, because many grains of corn being cast into the ground together, springing up together, and ripening all at one time, yet some of them are blasted, some are eaten of birds, some are trodden down under foot, some stand and are never touched.

“ The rest of the elections, and especially that of laying foundations, are most absurd. They say, that if a house, a city, a town, have its foundation laid when the stars be well affected, the inhabitants shall have prosperous and quiet living: if when the stars be evil disposed, then trouble and disquietness. They have no experience of this, but that only which is most false, for they know not the foundations of cities and towns, neither the positions of the stars when they were built. Let

Rome and Venice be examples, because these are most alleged of Astrologers. The time in which they were built is uncertain, and the planets are falsly set in the figure of the foundation of Rome, because Mercury is contrary to the Sun, a thing flat impossible.

“ Again, the folly of this is thus manifest, that a house, or city, or commonwealth may remain, the people being gone; as it is in the time of plague, banishment, and conquests of Princes.— And the inhabitants also may be safe and remain, the building quite overthrown, and beaten down, as we may see in Carthage, the people and commonwealth remained, the city quite defaced. That all elections, or choice of hours, days, &c. are unlawful: St. Augustine, writing unto Januarius, proveth out of the fourth chap. to the Galatians, by these words: *Ye observe months, and times, and years,* (therefore, saith he) *let us not observe days and years, and months and times, lest we hear this of the Apostles: I am afraid lest I have taken labour in vain with you:* for he rebuketh them which say, I will not go, because the Moon is thus or thus situated; or I will take my journey that I may have good success, because there is such a position of the stars; I will not do my business this month, because such a star governeth this month; or I will do my business this month, because such a star ruleth.

“ How then shall a man do, not to break the word of God? Art thou a man that desirest to lead a Christian life? Then take the example of Paul, Rom. 1. x. as a pattern to govern all the actions of thy life: *without ceasing* (saith he) *I make mention of you in my prayers: beseeching that by some means, one time or other, I might have prosperous journey by the will of God to*



*come unto you.* So thou, if thou hast any business in hand, any journey to take, any thing to buy or sell, or any other matter: never regard the constellations of heaven, commit thyself to the only providence of God, in whom thou hast thy life, and motion and being, who directeth all thy steps: pray unto him privately with thyself to bless thee and all thy actions, that they may tend to his glory and thy welfare: thou shalt find that thy whole enterprizes will have better success, than if the whole host of heaven and all the Prognosticators of England had promised thee never so much prosperity.

“Now let us shew their absurd folly in prognosticating of the state of the year, of which their predictions are either general for the whole year, or special for every day. In their general predictions are considered either the grounds of them, or the matters which they foretell. Their grounds are especially two. 1. The figure of the revolution of the year, erected when the Sun entereth the first minute of Aries. 2. The figure celestial for the time of the eclipse of the Sun and Moon: for upon these twain, say they, dependeth the whole state of the year. In their celestial figures they consider the erecting of them, and the finding of the Lord of the figure. The erecting of the figure containeth very many absurdities.

“1. They follow that way which Regiomontanus did invent, and which was never as yet proved by any experience, and flatly differing from those ways which the ancient Astrologers used: and were invented by Gazulus and Campanus. Nay, oftentimes it maketh a planet or fixed star to signify a flat contrary thing to that which these two others do.

“ 2. The casting of the heavens into twelve parts, signifying twelve distinct kind of matters is ridiculous, because it being imagined, and void of stars, can have no force. Yet (some will say) other stars being in those places may have or signify such or such effects. I answer, that if stars of divers natures coming to such an house always signifying some one kind of thing, then the house must of necessity give some force unto the planet; and so it shall have not only an augmenting, but also an effectually working power, which Astrologers deny, and no reason can prove.

“ 3. They make the twelfth and eleventh houses being higher above the horizon then the first, to be of lesser force than it: and the fourth house to be of greater power than any above the horizon not cardinal; and the end of the ninth to be more in power than the beginning of the eleventh house; all which are against reason, because a planet the more perpendicular his beams are, the more his force. They answer although the force of the light be greater, yet the secret influence is less, and the first house hath more forcible influence than the twelfth or eleventh. If the influence be secret, how can they know it? Again, they can by no good experience shew that those houses have more influence than the rest: this influence maketh against them. I say they cannot prognosticate because they know not one star's virtue. For whereas they say, that the Sun and Moon and planets have most force, I answer that it is by reason of their light, not their influence which is small, and there is far greater in the smallest fixed stars. So that the fixed stars although they have no light, or very small light perceived, yet they have most influence. And so these men must needs dream because they judge by wrong causes. Well, their

figure being framed, and distinguished by fair characters, then go they on to find the Lord of the figure, that is, that planet which has most dignities in the figure.

- The dignities of the Planets, are found out by these means especially,*
1. Houses of Planets.
  2. Exaltation.
  3. Triplicity.
  4. Terms.
  5. Stars.
  6. Houses.
  7. Freeness from combustion.
  8. Directions.
  9. Velocity of course.
  10. Cazimi.
  11. Some aspects of other planets.

“ These toys be so foolish, that a reasonable man would not vouchsafe to refute them ; yet a word or two. If the houses of the planets shall be battered and pulled down, all the rest of their worship and divinity will lie in the dust. Aries and Scorpio, are appointed the houses of Mars ; Taurus and Libra, the houses of Venus ; Gemini and Virgo, the houses of Mercury ; Cancer, the house of the Moon ; Leo, the house of the Sun ; Sagittarius and Pisces, the houses of Jupiter ; Aquarius and Capricorn, the houses of Saturn.— What reason do they give for all this ? Leo and Cancer, say they, are the houses of the Sun and Moon, because they resemble the nature of these planets, and because they come most near our heads : such reason they give of the rest. What feeble grounds are these . As in the North part of the world, Cancer and Leo resemble the nature of the Sun ; so in the south part, in the contrary cli-

mates, Capricorn and Aquarius do resemble their natures. Also in every country some divers signs be either vertical, or else come near the top of the country : and so all signs shall be the houses of the Sun and Moon. Now then, the Sun being displaced, I cannot find how the rest of the planets can keep their hold.

“ To go further, the exaltations of Planets in like manner are very dreams. They suppose *exaltations* be those degrees in which the planets were at the beginning of the world. But why should those places give more force than any other ? And if they could give more force, yet they have falsly assigned them : for the Sun was not in Aries when it was created by God, but was placed in Libra ; which I prove by this reason — God created man and beast in perfect age, giving unto them all kinds of fruit being then ripe, so that in the beginning was the time of the year which we call harvest. Now, because God never after changed the seasons, and we find that in the time of ripeness the Sun is always in Libra, we must need also say that his place in the creation was in Libra. In the 23d of Exodus God commandeth that the feast of In-gathering should be celebrated in the end of the year when the Israelites had gathered their fruits out of the fields. Wherefore it must needs be that harvest was in the beginning of the year (the beginning and the ending being both together) and so by counting backwards, we shall find that the Sun was in Libra in the beginning of the world. To this agreeth *Josephus de antiquate*, Lib. 1. cap. 3. *Rabbi Eleazar* upon *Genesis* ; and *Rabbi Abraham Aben Esra*, upon the 7th of *Daniel* :

“ The rest of the dignities of the planets consist of principles more weak than water. First, what



is more unreasonable to a reasonable man than this, that swift motion should give unto a planet two dignities, and slow motion two debilities; it seemeth to be plain contrary. For a swift course hindereth the force of the planet, a slow course helpeth the same; and the stations of any planet make an effectual and sensible operation. A coal of fire in a man's hand if it be shaken about very much, it heateth very little, if it be shaken more slowly, it heateth more; but if it lie still, it burneth violently.

“*Combustion*, is in like sort a feigned thing. What reason can Astrologers give, why it should give unto a star five debilities? They talk how that experience teaches them, that planets being under the beams of the Sun, do lose a great, nay (say some) all their force. It is a manifest untruth. For Mercury being of the nature of that planet with which it is conjoined, if he go from conjunction with Saturn unto the Sun, he getteth no debilities thereby, but rather losing the feeble and unfortunate nature of Saturn, receiveth a more strong and fortunate nature of the Sun.

“A planet also being in *Caximi*, that is, being within sixteen minutes of the Sun's middle, hath thereby five dignities, which cannot well be, if that Combustion give five debilities. For the planet is in the middle of his Combustion, and the Sun casteth his beams and force very vehemently upon it. These Suns shew how absurd a dream Combustion is: yet if it were a good and sound principle of Astrology, and gave unto every planet five debilities, still it could not be proved, that liberty from combustion should give five dignities, being only a mere absence and privation of the other. A magnet at the presence of the adamant is hindered from drawing iron, yet if the adamant

be taken away, the attractive virtue of the Magnet is not increased. Here I might with ease confute the triplicities of planets, directions, aspects, applications, preventions, refrenations, with many such like; but my intent at this time is only to shew thee some untruths of our Prognosticators

“ Thus much of the grounds of their predictions, now follow the matters of which they prognosticate, and they are very many: nay, there is no matter, almost, of which they will not give their verdict: but how they do this I will briefly make it manifest unto thee, that their lies and their unchristian dealing may be more loathed by thee.

“ 1, They by comets, foretel earthquakes, famines, and plagues, &c. but they do it as the blind man casteth his staff, he knoweth not where. No man as yet ever knew the true causes of these. As for comets and blazing stars, they do not rise of the influence of any stars, neither are they any earthly things, but are in heaven, most commonly far above the Moon, as by Geometrical and Astronomical demonstrations may be proved: how this cometh to pass the Lord only knoweth. And surely they do thee great injury, that when as no doubt, God doth lighten them, and send them forth extraordinarily, as threatening tokens of his sore displeasure, yet they will rock thee asleep in the cradle of security, by telling thee that such tokens come from the ordinary course of the heavens.

“ 2. They foretell all things which happen in civil affairs amonget men, as these which follow: viz.

“ *Love and hatred of kinsfolk—marriages—*  
*increase of farms and livings—injuries and quar-*  
*rels—raising of rents—exacting of subsidies by*  
*officers—false rumours—imprisonments—hard*  
*intreating of Ecclesiastical persons—buying, sel-*

*ling, undermining—the studying of sciences—friends fall out for trifles—Solemn progresses—favour of noblemen—men shall fall, body and goods, into the prince's hands—merchandise unprofitable, &c*

“These and such like proceed only from the will of man: the constellations of stars are neither signs nor causes of them. Some will say, *Non imponere necessitatem, sed inclinare Stellaras*, that is, that stars do not constrain, but only incline the minds of men: a most wicked saying; though very commonly asserted and defended. For the inclining of the will of man is only the work of God, as the Holy Scriptures do teach us. *A man's heart* (says Solomon) *deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps.* Proverbs, 16. ix. *O Lord*, (saith the prophet Jeremiah) *I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps:* Jeremiah, 10. 23. He speaketh this, because that Nebuchadnezzar purposed to have made war against the Moabites and Ammonites, but hearing of Zedekiah's rebellion, he turned his power to go against Jerusalem, therefore the Prophet saith, that whereas he had otherwise purposed, yet this was the Lord's inclination and direction. Again, in the Proverbs we read this; *that the heart of the King is in the hands of the Lord, as the Rivers of water he directeth it whither he will.* Pro. 21. i.

“It will be said, that although God properly and immediately inclineth the will of man, yet also some small inclination must be given unto the Stars, and that immediately. For say some,

*“Constellations work upon the Elements by the four first qualities.*

*“Elements work upon, and alter the compound bodies and humours of the human frame.*

*“Compound bodies by their qualities change the senses.*

*“The senses being altered, the understanding is altered.*

*“The understanding lastly altereth and inclineth the will of man.*

*“Therefore constellations incline the will.*

*“This reason is not much unlike that which the drunken man maketh, serving as well for the defence of his vice, as the former for approving of truth in divination.*

*“He which drinketh well, sleepeth well :*

*He which sleepeth well, thinketh no harm :*

*“He which thinketh no harm is a good man :*

*Therefore the drunkard is a good man.*

*“The deceits and untruths which be in their reasons, are very many.*

*“The stars work upon men’s bodies, yet so that the nature of the country and soil, the meats and drinks have most commonly greater force. Why are the bodies of Gentlemen of England and poor labouring men of divers dispositions? Are they not both in one country? Do not the stars shew their force in them all alike? Yes truly; but the kind of life and diet prevaieth. In the same region—Why are they which dwell upon hills, of other temperatures then they which dwell upon plain and champaign ground? Why do not the same influences of stars make them of like natures? Is it not because the nature of the soil prevaieth? So then, seeing there be many causes effectual, and differing in altering men’s bodies, to build an argument upon one cause is most unreasonable.*

*“In one word, the judgments which are set down of the weather, they are more tolerable than the rest : yet as long as the world endureth, no man*



shall be able to prognosticate truly what weather shall be in every day of the year. The causes of this I have set down before, and need not now to repeat. Wherefore they might leave off any longer to busy themselves in this kind. And it shall be sufficient for thee, leading a christian life, to know the general and ordinary state of the parts and seasons of the year.

“ But if any man refuse the grace of God, and will not embrace the true religion, it proceedeth from the hardness of his own heart, and wilful rebellion. Seeing, therefore, *the rebellion of man cometh from his own will*, how can Astrologers presume without great impiety to adjoin the constellations as assistants either unto man or God in this divine work

• “ Again, these predictions are very perilous, for if a man be wickedly given, they hinder him from the acknowledging of his sin, because they make him lay part of his faults upon the stars, whereas all indeed come from his own soul: and if a man be a penitent sinner, and feel the grace of God, yet being weak in faith and conscience, they make him not to put his whole trust in God, and to love him with all his soul, with all his strength, but allure him in some part to attribute that unto the stars which is the only work of God, and not of any creature.

“ A Juggler which taketh upon him to do strange things, must use many sleights, least if the stander by shall see his tricks of legerdemain, & he be described, and all his former cunning turn to his shame. Our Prognosticators understanding this, have thought it convenient to use in their kind some tricks of deceiving jugglers: I can call them by no better name, for so they are indeed. First, publishing their predictions in thy behalf, they

use such absurd, unknown, and insolent words, as (I think) never the like were read or heard amongst us in England: as are these which follow:

“ 1. A Prognostication Astrologically calculated for the Pole Arctic for such a city whose longitude and latitude is thus.

“ 2. Quartile revolution.

“ 3. Rectified for the motions and aspects of the meridian and elevation.

“ 4. Capricorn in nature cold and dry, melancholy, in taste bitter, nocturnal, feminine, meridional, of the earthly Trigon.

“ 5. Mercurialists, Jovialists, Martialists, Hiema Solstice Æstival, Vernal, Autumnal.

“ 6. Pars torturæ, coupled with Dragon's tail.

“ 7. Taurus a Sign of the earthly Trigonism, naturally cold in the sign horoscope; and Virgo of the same stamp, the sign of the prevention preceding.

“ 8. A sign of the same triangularity; Jupiter Lord of this revolution resident with Venus in domicilio ab Angula cadente.

“ 9. Planets retrograde.

“ 10. Cardivalor a succedent position.

“ 11. Lunary defect.

“ In his Dodecatimorian.

“ 12. Names of strange authors; *Proclus, Alchindus, Messahala, Zael, Albohazen Italy, Albumacer, Albubater, Guido, Bonetus, Hispaleusis, Firmius, Abraham, Arneezra, Trismegistus*; with many other wondrous doctors, having a great deal of small learning, and being far born, as in *Chaldea, Persia, Arabia, Jewry, &c.*

“ Thou wilt say, what means all this? Here is great learning no doubt, it passeth my capacity: who would not have an Almanack, if were it for

nothing but for this, to see and hear how profound our Prognosticators are.

“Thou far deceivest thyself; for they perceiving well, that their deceits and lies may be soon espied, have invented strange terms to colour them, and to cast a mist before thine eyes, that thou mayest not see their naughty dealing. For any man the more true and honest he thinketh his matter, the more desirous is he to speak plainly to the understanding of all.

“It was a point of the knavery of the devil, otherwise called *Apollo*, when the heathen men asked his counsel, to answer doubtfully; because though he was ignorant of the event, yet would not but seem to know; as in this answer:

“*I tell thee Pyrrhus the Romans may conquer.*

“It is understood two ways; either that *Æcides* might vanquish the Romans, or the Romans *Æcides*. Our Prognosticators have chosen a very good pattern to follow, their dealing with thee is the like: when they doubt, and cannot tell what to prognosticate, then they use two ways of foretelling: either to speak that which is true *every way*, or that which is true *every year*! For the first, amongst many other examples, I will put one or two, that thou mayest see their dealing in true, not forged examples.

“1. The conjunction of Mars and Saturn threaten wars, but Jupiter will mitigate the same,” as if a man should say, the Prognosticator telleth true, except he tell a lie!

“2. This year we shall have a very dry winter; but if peradventure any floods and store of rain do fall, they shall proceed of former causes.

“3. This summer quarter is like to be for the

greatest part dry and hot, yet it is neither too hot, nor too cold, but indifferent.

“ 4. Neither fair nor foul, but both together.

“ 5. Fair and calm, but a little misling.

“ 6. Clouds portending rain and snow.

*“ Examples of those predictions which may agree to every year, are common to them, as these following :*

“ 1. This year artificers must take heed of too much straining their backs.

“ 2. Take heed of venturing in slippery places boldly, in building.

“ 3. Old men shall die.

“ 4. Death of sheep and other cattle this year shall be.

“ 5. Sundry diseases are like to reign amongst men, which will sweep away many.

“ 6. False rumours, imprisonments, tortures.

“ 7. Brethren and sisters shall love one another.

“ 8. Sundry men and women shall be troubled with pains in the eyes.

“ 9. Much strife amongst men and women.

“ 10. Small love amongst kinsfolks.

“ 11. Much unlawful lust this year, and secret fornication.

“ 12. Some ecclesiastical person shall be in trouble, and some nobleman shall die.” N.B. This is ever at one place or other!

“ 13. Many shipwrecks and other stirs on the seas.

“ 14. Many shall addict themselves to the study of necromancy.”



# ANECDOTES OF FORTUNE-TELLING, FORTUNE-SEEKING, &c.

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## THE CONJURER, AND THE POOR MAN AND HIS PIG.

**I**N the Spring of 1803, a Poor Man, living near Halifax in Yorkshire, wishing to imitate the industrious ant, by laying up something in the warm Summer against the cold Winter, exerted himself to the utmost of his ability to raise money for the purchase of a pig, with which, no doubt, he intended to feast his family the ensuing Winter. Having by industry, parsimony, and the help of friends, amassed a sum of money sufficient for the accomplishment of the much-desired and long-meditated object, the Poor Man went to some distance to make his purchase. The purchase being made, he set out for home with much more haste than prudence;—for, contemplating his purchase with great apprehensions of future feasting and felicity, he gave way to the reveries and whims of an inflated imagination to such a degree, that he forgot the walking abilities of the poor little short-legged animal, and therefore he drove it at the rate of *four* knots an hour, instead of *two*! On his arrival at home, all was exultation and joy: the wife praised the little pig for its handsome ears and pretty curled tail; the children laughed, patted it with their little hands, and the Poor Man himself, stood over the whole with a smile of complacency.

But, alas! this world is remarkable for its short-lived joys, and its long-lived sorrows: all the joys of the Poor Man's house were quickly turned into

mourning—for—the poor over-driven pig lay down and refused to eat! The Poor Man and his wife knew full well that it is not the practice of pigs to refuse meat when they can eat it: for, whatever else may be said to the disgrace of the “Swinish Multitude,” they are not hypocrites.—The alarm for the pig’s life now became very great: the wife was distracted, the children were frightened, and the Poor Man looked pale!

In this *awful* state of things, something must be done: the Poor Man and his wife had just fortitude sufficient left to hold a consultation. The result was, that the Poor man should take the few remaining shillings in the house, and go to a *wise-man*, alias a *planet ruler*, who lived in that neighbourhood, and enquire of him what would be the fate of the pig; and also what means might be used for its restoration to health and eating. He accordingly, and immediately, went to the Star Gazer.

The Poor Man having stated to the *wise-man* the purport of his application, the latter immediately looked over his books: examined the posture of the heavens in the *horoscope*; and having duly considered the *Ascendant*, the *Succedent*, the *Cudent*, the *Dignities*, the *Debilities*, *Quartiles*, *Triplicities*, *Cazimi*, *Combustion*, &c. &c. he, like a truly *wise man*, was still too *wise* to give a decided opinion respecting the fate of the poor pig! But the conjurer knew better than to appear any ways puzzled with the business: he therefore wrote something on a scrap of paper, aye, who knows what! and having folded it up, he looked wondrous wise, and then presented it to the poor Man, with this very *interesting* counsel and information—“Take this (said he) and go home, and immediately hang it about the pig’s neck, with a

string; and if after that, the pig should take to eating again, it will live; but if it should not take to eating again, it will certainly die!!!” For this very *important* information, the *wise-man* charged the Poor Man only *seven shillings*!

It has been said by moral philosophers, that nothing suspends the functions of reason more than excessive fear; and I think it is *Hudibras* who says, that

“ *Fear does things so like a witch,  
’Tis hard to find out which is which.*”

If fear were not a befooling passion, the Poor Man might have seen himself the silliest dupe upon earth, for paying *seven shillings* to know that a *pinning* pig would die, and an *eating* pig would live. However the poor man took home the wonderful *amulet*, and, according to the instructions he had received, he hung it about the pig’s neck! In this business he very little resembled *Hudibras*’s “*Witch*.”

The poor fatigued animal being well refreshed with rest, rose on to its feet, and began to eat in a pig-like manner. The Poor Man, then, fear being removed, began to feel that reason resumed her empire, and that he had acted the part of the veriest idiot, in paying seven shillings to know what mere common sense could not but have known.— He therefore went again to the *wise man*, and requested that his money might be returned: but he found that the *wise-man* was not such a *fool* as himself had been: the Conjuror kept his money; and, no doubt, the Poor Man would in future understand both the nature of pigs and the value of money better than he had done. With regard to the pig, it lived till it died a violent death, as fat pigs commonly do.

THE SHEFFIELD FORTUNE-TELLER, AND THE  
WASHING-TUB.

A FEW years ago, there lived at Sheffield a grinder of cutlery, who had rendered himself famous by his knowledge of Astrology, Fortune-Telling, and their various accompaniments. In consequence of which, he had many applications from the *curious* and the *distressed*, but particularly from the latter. Many who had the misfortune to have an article stolen of the value of five or ten shillings, feeling themselves chagrined at their loss, and burning for vengeance against the thief, made immediate application to this *wise-man*, for information, both respecting the person of the thief, and the probability of regaining what they had lost. These applicants were seldom dismissed without some kind of an enigmatical answer, for which they generally paid a *shilling*. These answers were commonly couched in some such language as this, "The person who has stolen your goods does not live at a great distance from you." "It is a person whom you have often seen, though you have not any friendship with them." Or, "The person who has robbed you has a thin visage, dark coloured hair, and is about the middle stature." &c. &c.

It fell out, however, in the vicissitude of events, that some vile wretch, being under the *influence* of a bad *planet*, no doubt, and by no means in *conjunction* with, but in *opposition* to *honesty*, stole the *wise-man's* wife's Washing-Tub, from the door. All the neighbours were astonished at the temerity of the thief, in stealing from one who could with so little trouble detect him, and bring him to shame; besides, they naturally expected that the Astrologer would ransack his whole science,



and display his utmost powers, not only to regain his wife's Washing-Tub, but likewise to justify his pretensions to a superlative knowledge of the mysterious art of *planet-ruling* and *fortune-telling*. These expectations were natural, from the consideration that every one is most affected by, and most assiduous to repair his own losses, and rectify his own grievances.

But, they were all mistaken; for, no sooner did this *wise man* hear his wife announce the loss of her Tub, than he fell into a paroxysm of rage, began to swear, and, "wished he knew who had taken the tub;" and swore "if he could but find them out, he'd be d—d if he would not prosecute them!!" And, in order to pursue the most likely means to recover his loss, he immediately gave the Bell-man a shilling to cry the loss of his Washing Tub through the neighbourhood, together with the offer of a reward to any informant!

This affair, as might be expected, drew upon the whole science of Astrology, much ridicule; and upon the *wise man* a declension of reputation, and a diminution of revenue.

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THE ASTROLOGER, AND THE MAN AND HIS  
MAID.

NOT long ago, a certain married man, now living, who was a great admirer of the *Planetary Science*, having placed unbounded confidence in a Female Astrologer, was told by her that his wife would assuredly die at a certain specified time. The man having no doubt whatever of the skill assumed by this She Conjuror, and, as the sequel will shew, feeling no regret at the contemplation of losing his present partner, began in good time to

look out for another help-mate. His servant Maid being more accessible, and perhaps in his opinion, more worthy of his attention than any other female, he fixed his eyes upon her, and to her he paid his addresses!

The time drew nigh when his wife was, according to the *Rules of Astrology*, to pay the debt of nature, and quit this world. He, therefore, in full confidence of the truth of Planetary Predictions became too intimate with the Servant Maid, and she was pregnant by him before her Mistress was dead! By some this will be called a business of *speculation*: so it was: but, like many other speculations, it tended to infamy and ruin; for the incumbent wife was quite alive when the Servant Girl was delivered of her first-born!

Those who understand the female character, know well enough, that it is not the way of wives, when they are parties concerned, to wink at such transactions as these! The sweet words and affable looks necessary to render the conjugal state happy, could not abound, nor even exist, neither under nor after such circumstances as these before us.

But, the evils of this affair did not terminate here. Every one knows that poor Servant Girls in a state of illegitimate pregnancy, are frequently forced to some distant and obscure habitation, there to bring forth the fruits of their illicit commerce. The Servant Girl in question, was obliged to take up her residence at a distant place provided for her by her wicked seducer: but at that place the Small Pox were at that time very rife. The unfortunate young woman brought forth her child in Nature's time. Almost immediately after her delivery she was seized by the Small Pox, and of them she died! The poor infant was thus left

without a Mother, and with a Father whose greatest joy would be to hear of its dissolution !

Here, then, we behold a most deplorable instance of the cursed effects of *Star-gazing* and *Fortune-telling* :—The *She Conjurer* deceived a silly and wicked Man—the wicked man ruined the Servant Maid—the wicked man's wife was made an unhappy woman—and, the wicked Man himself, had the deserved mortification to find his name made the Shuttlecock of reproach and defamation !

The above affair occurred at no great distance from the County of Norfolk, and is of very recent date. To mention the names of the parties concerned would be no difficult matter, but is omitted for obvious reasons : It is, however, highly proper that such occurrences should be hung up on the gibbet of infamy, as beacons, for the warning of those whose minds are not yet besotted by the devilish science of *Astrology* !

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#### THE PREGNANT LADY AND THE FORTUNE-TELLER.

“ A LADY near London, being in a family way, was weak enough to enquire of a female *fortune-teller* if she should be safely delivered.—The answer made was this : ‘ If you are delivered ‘ of a boy you will do well : but should it be a ‘ girl, you will die in child-bed.’ During the remainder of her pregnancy, she was under great anxiety for fear it should not be a boy. When brought to bed she enquired, with great emotion, as to the sex of the child ; but when told it was a boy, her mind was perfectly at ease : and she recovered her strength very fast, so that in little more than a week, she was supposed to be out of

all danger. Her husband then laughed at her for her weakness, in believing a fortune-teller, and informed her that they had deceived her in saying the child was a boy, as it was in reality a girl.—On this information she was taken very ill, and died soon after.”

*Lackington's Life.*

☞ Should it be asked how the fortune-teller came to know that the Lady would die in child-bed, I answer, that the fortune-teller knew nothing about it, (except, indeed, she had seen the curse of God follow her former predictions,) but the Lady asking an opinion of the devil, through the medium of the fortune-teller, instead of praying for the blessing of God, a curse came upon her, and therefore she who would not seek to become a monument of God's mercy, became an example of his vengeance! See 2. Kings, i.—2, 3, 4.

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*The Unhappy Young Man and the Fortune-Teller.*

A CERTAIN young man, a few years ago, feeling himself unsettled and unhappy in his present condition, entered into the marriage state in order to mend himself; but not finding the remedy commensurate with the disease, he went to a *fortune-teller*, before whom he made his *desperate* case known. The fortune-teller, with *occult* wisdom and *planetary-aspect* on his *disk*, told the young fellow, “that he would never *rest* on this side of the water.” This enigmatical information was submitted, it seems, to his own construction. But it still ran in his mind, “that he was not to rest on this side the water.” The “water” might be.



a river, a brook, or the sea; the poor fellow put the broadest construction on the words, and thought that the "water" meant the *sea*. He therefore enlisted into a regular regiment, and went immediately on to the Continent in the present war; and in a rencontre with the French, he, alas! received a fatal muske ball which laid him to sleep instantly; and it is now certain that he will *rest* till that great day when Gabriel shall sound his all-awakening trumpet!

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*The Fortune-teller, the Lady and her  
Elopement.*

“**A** JEWELLER'S Wife in the neighbourhood of Oxford-road (London) eloped from her husband last week in consequence of the prediction of a *fortune-teller*, who had assured her she was destined to be the *chere amie* (dearly beloved) of a Nobleman, whose title and estate she would in a few days legally inherit. Desirous of anticipating this splendid elevation, she had taken the resolution to abandon her husband, in hopes that when separated from him, her charms would attract those offers so necessary to the completion of her ambitious hopes. The coach in which she proceeded, having overturned, her arm was broke.—The husband on being informed of the circumstance, congratulated himself that nothing worse had resulted, has set off for Lichfield to assure his wife in person of her pardon, and to bring her without delay to town.”

[*Traveller (Newspaper) Monday, Oct. 31. 1801.*]

*Fortune-Seeking: Three Servant-Maids  
and the Dumb-cake.*

“**T**HE following circumstance, which ought to operate as a caution to the ignorant and superstitious, occurred about a month ago at the Mansion of Charles Wood, Esq. at Thoresby, near Louth — Three females in the service of that gentleman, entertaining the prevalent notion that by partaking of a cake called a *Dumb-Cake*, which, among the other ingredients composing it, was to contain a portion of the juice of leaves of a certain tree, not named to us, but perhaps the *Magic Mistletoe*, they should enjoy the pleasure of dreaming of their sweethearts, wedding-days, &c. went in search of this love and joy inspiring plant: but not being sufficiently skilled in the occult sciences, and not chusing to consult the gardener or his herbal, they mistook either the hellebore or the laurel (tree of immortal glory) for the still more pleasing and charm fraught tree of earthly love, and gathered a potent quantity of the deadly ingredient, with which they imbued their cake. Of this they all three partook, and to make the spell work, placed also a portion under their pillow. The effect was more sudden than they supposed it would be, for the family had not long retired to rest, when they were awakened by groans and cries of distress; and on repairing to the servants’ room, who were unable to attend the call, a scene presented itself truly shocking to contemplate. One of the girls had expired under the effects of the poison, and the other two were in the most dreadful agonies. Fortunately, however, medical assistance was speedily obtained, and the lives of these two deluded females preserved, who own that they have *once been cured* of their love

fancies. But the third, who had partaken more largely than the rest, had almost instantly, and beyond remedy or resistance, acknowledged the power of the baneful infusion, and paid the forfeit of her folly with her life, as already observed, the victim of a silly and superstitious notion, too prevalent among females.

[*Bell's Weekly Messenger*, Feb. 22, 1813.]

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*The Gypsy, the Credulous Man and his  
Seventy Pounds.*

“**T**HE Hereford Journal of last week says, the following instance of credulous folly and infatuated superstition, we believe has seldom been equalled even in times less enlightened than the present; and must forcibly impress upon the minds of every one, the necessity of putting the law in force against those predatory vagabonds who stroll about the country under the denomination of *Gypsies*.

Early in March (1813) a gang of these people pitched their tents on a piece of waste ground in the parish of Stretton Sugwas, in Herefordshire, and an old woman, one of the party, called at the house of a man of the name of Gritton, whose fortune she prevailed on him to let her predict. After several fine promises, calculated to lull his circumspection and excite his avarice, she contrived to persuade him, an immense quantity of gold coin lay concealed in the premises he occupied, and that it was necessary that a large sum of money should be made into a parcel, and, after being endowed with a charm, it was to be sewed in the side pocket of his coat, and the more money the parcel contained, the more considerable would be the

treasure he should find. A sum of seventy pounds, in gold, bills, and silver, was accordingly made up in a parcel, and, after some preparation, sewed by the Sybil into the pocket of Gritton's coat, where it was to remain nine days, at the end of which time she promised to return, and a coffer of guineas was to arise from the ground, and at once enrich her credulous dupe, who, of course, most anxiously expected the important day. However it passed without his aged guide to wealth making her appearance, when he was induced to open the parcel she had sewn up, and discovered to his utter confusion, the witch had managed to turn gold, silver, and bills, into halfpence and waste paper, leaving them in exchange for his cash, and a reward for his folly. This silly man had borrowed the principal part of the sum lost, of his neighbours, and if he could have procured more, doubtless would have added it to the prize of the crafty impostor he had so weakly confided in, who, we regret to say, is got off with her booty."

[*Ibid*, May 17, 1813.]

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*The Married Woman, the Fortune-teller,  
and the Poor-House.*

A MARRIED Woman, who had her fortune told, felt herself burthened with keeping the secret during a few weeks; but not willing to be pregnant of it any longer, she disburthened herself before her husband; for, when the decoction of some sweet-smelling *souchong* or *congou*, had exhilarated her spirits, dispelled the mist from her brain, and given to her tongue its wonted glibness, she said, "What do's ta think—I've had my fortune told



me, and thou art to die, and I am to marry again, and become rich with my second husband." This was a charming salute for a lady to give her husband over a cup of tea; and as it was evident the good woman anticipated with eagerness her predicted prosperity, it might be plainly inferred also, that she considered the existence of her present consort as a disgusting impediment to her future prospects.

In a few years time the husband died, and then this delicate lady had a fair opportunity of realizing her views of wealth and greatness by a second marriage. She soon entered Hymen's yoke again: and with what she had and her new husband brought, they had jointly a small property, but it was very soon expended, poverty ensued, and, strange to tell, this enterprizing lady has since been making her fortune in a *Poor-House*!

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### *The Felon, the Fortune-teller, and the Gallows.*

**A** FELON who was hung at York in the Spring of 1802, is a notorious example of the fatal mischiefs of *Planet-ruling* and *Fortune-telling*. This unfortunate man acknowledged after his condemnation, that having been told by a fortune-teller he would be hanged, and having his mind deeply impressed with the doctrine of fatality, became so uncommonly unsettled and agitated, as to form a resolution to commit the crime for which he suffered, in order to accelerate that fate which he believed to be utterly unavoidable! This is another deplorable instance of the curse of God attendant on fortune-seeking! When will mankind take warning?

*The Fortune-teller and the Prussian Peasant.*

A PRUSSIAN Peasant accompanied some of his companions to the house of a fellow, who assumed the character of a fortune-teller; and having dis-obliged him by expressing a contempt of his art, the fellow out of revenge prophesied that he should die on the scaffold. This seemed to make little impression at the time, but afterwards recurred often to this unhappy creature's memory, and became every day more troublesome to his imagination. At length the idea haunted his mind so incessantly, that he was rendered perfectly miserable, and could no longer endure life.

He would have put himself to death with his own hands, had he not been deterred by the idea that God Almighty never forgives suicide; though upon repentance he is ready to pardon every other crime. He resolved, therefore, to commit murder, that he might be deprived of life by the hands of justice; and mingling a sentiment of benevolence with the cruelty of his intention, he reflected, that if he murdered a grown person, he might possibly send a soul to hell. To avoid this he determined to murder a child, who could not have committed any sin that deserved damnation, but dying in innocence would go immediately to heaven. In consequence of these ideas, he actually murdered an infant of his master's, for whom he had always shewn an uncommon degree of fondness. Such was the strange account that this infatuated creature gave on his trial; and thus the random prophecy proved, as in many other cases, the cause of its own completion.

He was executed about two miles from Berlin. As soon as he ascended the scaffold, he took off

his coat and waistcoat ; his shirt was rolled down below his shoulders ; his night-cap was pulled over his eyes ; he was placed on his knees, and the executioner, with a single stroke of his broad-sword, severed his head from his body.

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## ON THE VANITY AND IGNORANCE OF ASTROLOGERS.

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*Cardan, Gauricus, and Henry II. of  
France, and others.*

**S**UCH is the inveterate enmity and malice of the devil which he bears to poor man, that from the creation to this day he never was without his engines and subtle contrivances, whereby he might undo him, or at least dangerously deceive and delude him. In subservience to these his designs, he set up his places of oracular residence ; and, though it was a lower way of trading, amused the world with *Judicial Astrology* ; by both which he continually mocked and abused the credulity and curiosity of over-inquisitive men, and still doth (which is no wonder) notwithstanding all ages by their experience have detected his falsehood.

1. Henry the second, to whom Cardan and Gauricus, two lights of Astrology, had foretold a happy old age, was miserably slain in the flower of his youth in games and pleasures of a tournament. The princes, his children, whose horoscopes were so curiously looked into, and of whom wonders had been spoken, were not much more prosperous, as France well knew. *Caus. Holy Court, tom 1. max 5. page 360.*

2. Zica, King of the Arabians, to whom Astrology had promised long life to persecute the Christians, died in the year of the same prediction.—*Id. ibid.*

3. *Albumazar*, the oracle of Astrology, left in writing, that he found the Christian Religion, according to the influence of the stars, should last but one thousand four hundred years: he hath already belied more than three hundred, and it will be a lie to the world's end. *ibid p. 361.*

4. The year 1524, wherein happened the great conjunction of Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars, in the sign Pisces, Astrologers had foretold the world should perish by water; which was the cause that many persons of quality made arks in imitation of Noah, to save themselves from the deluge; all which turned into laughter. *Ib. p. 361.*

5. It was foretold to a Constable of France, well known, that he would die beyond the Alps, before a city besieged, in the eighty-third year of his age; and that if he escaped this time, he was to live above an hundred years: which was notoriously untrue, this man deceasing in his eighty-fourth year of a natural death. *Ib. p. 361.*

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### *King Henry VII. and the Astrologer.*

“AN Astrologer predicted the death of King Henry the 7th, such a year. The King sent for him, and asked if he could tell fortunes? He said “yes.” The King then asked if he did not foresee some imminent danger that much about that time should hang over his own head? He said, “No.” “Then said the king, “thou art a foolish figure-caster, and I am more skilful than thou; for as soon as I saw thee, I instantly prophesied



that thou wouldst be in prison before night, which thou shalt find true;" and sent him thither. He had not been long in custody before the king sent for him again, to know whether he could cast a figure to know how long he should be in prison? He still answered "No." "Then" said the king, "thou art an illiterate fellow, that canst not tell either good or bad that shall befall thyself; therefore I will conclude thou canst not tell of mine;" and so set him at liberty.

*Chetwood's Histor. Col. Cent. 12. page 327:*

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*Brief Memoirs of JEROME CARDAN,  
the famous Astrologer,*

Who is frequently mentioned in this Book.

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**J.** CARDAN was born at Pavia in Italy, Sept. 24, 1501. As his mother was not married, she tried every method to procure an abortion, but without effect. She was three days in labour, and they were forced at last to cut the child from her. He was born with his head covered with black curled hair.

He very early in life became eminent for his knowledge of Mathematics, Medicine, &c. Besides which, he became very notorious for his pretensions to the science of Astrology. Wherefore, whatever disasters befel himself, he ascribed them invariably to the malign influences of the planets. His temper was very fickle; and, according to his own account of himself, he was a great oddity.— He informs us, that when he felt no pain naturally, he would excite that disagreeable sensation in himself, by biting his lips, and squeezing his fingers

till he cried ! He did this, he says, to prevent a greater evil ; for when he happened to be without pain, he felt such violent sallies of the imagination, and impressions on the brain, as were more insupportable than any bodily pain. He says, also, that, in his greatest tortures of soul, he used to whip his legs with rods, and bite his left arm ; and that it was a great relief to him to weep, but very often he could not. He was sometimes tempted to lay violent hands on himself, which he calls *Heroic Love* ; and imagines that several other persons have been possessed with it, though they did not own it. Nothing gave him more pleasure than to talk of things which always made the whole company uneasy ! He spoke on all subjects, in season and out of season ; and was so fond of games of chance, as to spend whole days in them, to the great prejudice of his family and reputation ; for he even staked his furniture and wife's jewels.

This man was a champion among *Astrologers*, and was, in the end, the victim of his own vanity. He calculated his own Nativity, and predicted his own Death at a certain time. When the appointed time drew near, and *Cardan* perceived no signs of sickness, in order to preserve his own reputation, and that of Judicial Astrology, he starved himself to death. *Scaliger* and *Thuanus* vouched for the truth of this fact. The same *Cardan* likewise calculated his Son's Nativity with a great deal of care. He informed his Son in a long writing what his fate should be, but took not the least notice, that he should be hanged at the age of twenty-four for poisoning his Wife !

N. B. The above is extracted from a Biographical Dictionary, and the Philosophical Dissertations of the *Marquis D'Argens*.

*The Fortune-teller Burned*

**A** FIRE broke out in a small Cottage in the Edgeware Road, London, on Saturday night, Nov. 18, which consumed the same; and *Mrs. Helling*, the owner, was burned. The deceased was a *Fortune-teller*, and it was supposed that the Fire was occasioned by her having left a candle burning by her bed-side, as she was seen in a state of inebriation at ten o'clock, at a Public-house in that neighbourhood."

*Taunton Courier, Nov. 30th, 1809.*

QUERE.—Why could not this *Fortune-teller* foresee and prevent her own *Misfortune*? And are not events of this nature to be arranged amongst the strongest arguments against the diabolical practice of Fortune-Telling?

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*Ridiculous Jargon of an Almanack-Maker.*

**W**ILLIAM RAMSAY, a famous Almanack Maker and Astrologer of past days, in his vindication of Astrology, says, "The absence of the sun is not the cause of night, forasmuch as his light is so great that it may illuminate the earth all over at once as clear as broad day; but there are tenebrificous and dark stars, by whose influence night is brought on, and which do ray out darkness and obscurity upon the earth as the Sun does light!" *Vide the Spectator, No. 582.*

*Predictions, Moore's Almanack &c.*

**I**N Moor's Almanack for 1807, we find predicted the death of the Grand Turk, which was to take place in April of that year. On the 29th of May of that year, Selim, the Grand Signor, was murdered by his Janissaries. The accomplishment of the prophecy falling out so near the time predicted, caused many of those who are admirers of Mr. Moore's Almanack, both to wonder and exult, which exultation led the Editor of a London Newspaper, to make the following very judicious remarks:—

“The grave allusion to the casual completion of a frequently repeated prophecy must appear truly ludicrous to all, except the *high* and *low* vulgar, who seem to continue obstinately wedded to all the absurdities of *Astrology*:—Should any of our readers have chanced to preserve Moore's Almanack for so long a period, they will find, if our recollection does not very much misgive us, the same prediction, and in nearly the same words, in some of the numbers from 1786 to 1791.

“In a country where such a miserable wretch as *Powell*, the *Fortune-Teller*, has been committed for trial for casting a nativity, it is certainly somewhat surprizing that the publication of such a tissue of imposture should be permitted. It is the perusal of Moore's, Wing's, and some other almanacks, that prepares the ignorant for becoming dupes of such men as *Powell*. In these they find every contingency of life, even every part of the human body, mysteriously connected with certain constellations, days, and seasons; and being thus led to believe in the reality of the science of *Astrology*, they very naturally resort to any one who makes himself master of its jargon, and dubs himself a Professor!”

*London Paper (Traveller) Oct. 16, 1807.*



The Almanacks above mentioned, with others of a like description, have done, and are still doing infinite mischief to the morals of mankind. For, when men of inquisitive minds and narrow capacities, observe that Almanack-Makers can clearly foretel an Eclipse, and not knowing the distinction between mathematical calculation and mysterious influence, they assimilate the two very dissimilar things, and are bewildered and befooled by the aggregate. But it ought to be known that the calculation of an Eclipse is founded on principles as clear and solid as those on which men make the mensuration of a forest or a field. With regard to Astrology, it has no principles; it never had; no, nor ever will have; unless this be a principle, viz — *It is so, because it is so!*

It is worth the while, however, of Almanack-Makers to reflect a little more on their conduct, than they apparently have done. They are the men who keep alive the stamina of superstition and fortune-telling, and it may be, that at the *last day*, the blood of many poor deluded and ruined souls may be required at their hands.

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### *Lucky and Unlucky days.*

THE notion of *lucky* and *unlucky* days, is, also, a great source of folly and mischief amongst the silly and superstitious part of mankind. The existence of such days is taught by Mr. *Sibly* in his large and pernicious Book which he has published on Astrology and Magic, and also by some others: and those spurious Almanacks which are yearly vended, are scarcely ever without a list of them. The consequence of which is, that some men will hardly proceed on any material business

without first consulting the diabolical table of *lucky* and *unlucky* days !

I knew an old man, who had got a few old Almanacks, and I believe *Culpepper's Herbal*, which, on account of its continual advertence to planetary influence, is a mischievous book ; and perhaps he might have an old book on Astrology ; but if he had, I am certain he had not learning sufficient to understand the *terms*, much less the matter of it. This old man, when going to a fair or market to make a sale or purchase, would stand in his house ready dressed, with his staff in his hand, and the door open ; and when the *lucky minute* arrived by the clock, he would rush out of doors like a hare out of a bush, and then proceed on his important journey !

On one occasion he left home in this style, and went to a fair and bought twelve ewes : he brought them home, and they died one after another very rapidly, so that in a short time he had but *one* ewe left out of the *twelve*, and that one he very appropriately called *Old Costly* !

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*Astrology may be a National as well as an Individual Sin.*

WHEN Astrology has become common and prevalent in a nation, it has never failed to draw down the vengeance of heaven in the shape of national calamities. *Athens*, that famous Grecian city, is said to owe its final ruin to the cursed science of Astrology : and we all know that the ancient Canaanites dealt largely in witchcraft, observing of times, necromancy, and familiar spirits : and that for these and other crimes, they were

either destroyed or driven out of their land. And the pious Mr. *R. Fleming*, in his discourse on Earthquakes, observes, that previous to the dreadful earthquake which took place on the 7th June, 1692, at Port Royal in Jamaica, and in which, as the *Hon. Robert Boyle* says, about 1500 Whites and 700 Blacks perished, besides immense quantities of property being destroyed, the people were mightily addicted to the wicked science of Astrology: hear what Mr. Fleming says,

“As it is the alone *prerogative of the Deity* to declare things to come before they spring forth, and who hath bounded the prospect and evidence of his people as to *future events*, or what he is yet bringing forth of his work in the *last times*, according to the *extent of Divine Revelation* herein, (since this is to be the measure of our light and discoveries, until the *second coming of our Lord*) so it's no less evident and sure, that any pretence or prospect of the events of providence, which have no dependence on any *natural causes*, is beyond the possible reach of *all natural science*, or of that horrid profession which is so much aloft in these times, viz. *Judicial Astrology*, as it relates to *future and contingent events*; wherein men as free agents do act, when besides the known vanity of any such pretence, the *God of Truth* hath put them in the same class with *Sorcerers*, Isa. xlvii. 12. 13. *Stand now with thine enchantments, and the multitude of thy sorceries, and let the Astrologers and Star-gazers stand up and save thee, &c.*

“It is little taken to heart how deep such *real homage to the Devil*, under a splendid shew of a *dependence on natural causes* herein, may draw to a coming under greater invasions of his power, when it's so far a giving up with their *baptismal covenant*. I could speak what has been with too

sad evidence known of its *tragic effects*, but *one instance* leads me now specially to speak thereto; that before this last *tremendous earthquake* at Jamaica, there was so strange and universal a tendency in that place, to *consult Astrologers in their usual undertakings as to the event*, as did inforce a *serious Minister of the Gospel* who was there a little before that stroke, not only to *preach*, and appear against such a contagious wickedness as that which brings some remarkable judgment with it, but also to *publish something in print* against the same; which is *here extant*; But they could not thus foresee their own destiny that was so near approaching. I might further add a very *sad instance of a person who was unquestionably of eminent piety and parts*, who *by a too eager curiosity*, was carried to make some trial of that study, which tended not only to be his snare, but to most *tragic effects* in his own personal lot. Though I forbear to speak more particularly herein, only that *God is a jealous God*, who will not pass some evils without a severe remark thereon."

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### *General Observations on Astrology, Fortune-telling, Familiar Spirits, &c.*

**A**FTER all that has been said, some will say, "I know that there are persons who can foretell some things." This I really believe myself.\* But

\* From this concession let it not be supposed, however, that I allow the dealers with familiar spirits the ability of foretelling *any thing*; for the things which they do foretel are generally trifling and insignificant; and even spirits themselves, may not have this gift from any superior knowledge of futurity, but merely from a better acquaintance than we possess, with the *connexion of natural causes and their effects*. Yet some Divines



the query is, *by what means?* Not, I am sure, by the help of *signs* and *planets*, but by the agency and instrumentality of *bad spirits*; and one part of my design in this public effort is, to extricate God's fair creation from that agency which belongs only to *wicked men* and *devils*. For, from all that I can learn, some foolish men, first begin to seek the knowledge of future events among the *signs* and *planets*, but failing of their end, they at length effect that purpose by means of *familiar spirits*, which they in vain attempted to do by *stars* and *horoscopes*. Hence it is observable that *Astrology* and *Magic* are almost inseparable, though the latter (magic) is the real and effective part; but this part being scandalous to those who profess it, because it implies a *dealing with the devil*, the professors of it always chuse to denominate themselves by the more reputable name of *Astrologers*, that is, *persons who foretel future events by the stars*. Of this description of persons, are some of those who pretend to tell disorders by *urine*; the *urine* has but little part in this business, because it is well known that the *Doctor* does not often give himself the trouble even to look at it! From whence then comes his information?

Now, that there have been *familiar spirits*, the Bible itself will testify; see *Acts* xvi. 16. And hear also what God himself says of such people as apply to them. "And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to

allow that God may suffer on some occasions, positive truths to be foretold by bad spirits, for the delusion and punishment of those who have the wickedness to seek information from them.

The notion of *Familiar Spirits* may appear to some as unreasonable as the doctrine of *Astrology* appears to me; in my defence I have only to say, that I have the Bible on my side; those, therefore, who believe the Bible, will believe me; and to those who do not, I have nothing to say.

go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people." *Lev. xx. 6.* Wherefore if death be threatened to those persons who apply to *Conjurers* for information, what will become of the *Conjurers* themselves?

Hear also the word of the Lord against *Astrologers*: "Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be, thou shalt be able to profit, if so be, thou mayest be able to prevail. Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the *Astrologers*, the *Star-gazers* the monthly *Prognosticators*, stand up, and save thee from these things, that shall come upon thee. Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame," *Isaiah xlvii, 12, 13, 14.*

On the other hand, let all such as are disposed to fear God and keep his commandments, hear what the word of the Lord says to them. "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, nor is there any divination against Israel;" *Num. xxiii. 23.* "Thus saith the Lord, learn not the way of the Heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the Heathen are dismayed at them;" *Jer. x. 2.* "The Lord is thy keeper, the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The Sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the Moon by night;" *Psalms cxxi. 5, 6.*

Should any one wish to see how much *Piety* is better than *Astrology*, let them only take the trouble to read the two first chapters in the book of *Daniel*. And in addition to all these things, it is a curious truth, that some *Astrologers* themselves will acknowledge that the stars have no influence

on persons who fear and obey Almighty God. Therefore the first requisite of one who wants planetary influence and astrological information, must be, that he is a *bad man*! And, indeed, he cannot be a good one, if the Bible be worth a straw!

In every civilized nation in the world there have been men of learning and genius, who have given the science of Astrology a thorough investigation; in order to ascertain its merits and estimate its value; and the wisest and best of these men have generally agreed to give it their decided negative. Some of them have shewn, to a demonstration, the futility of its principles; they have also exhibited many GENITURES, and shewn by a comparison of their pretended indications with the events, that the professor is certain of nothing but uncertainty; and that the whole science is chimerical and void of foundation.

Astrology is a far more wicked science than many persons are aware. The very nature of it goes to supersede and nullify both the promises and threatnings of the word of God; and to dispossess the human heart of that which is its best principle and real glory—*an unshaken affiance in God's Justice, Mercy and Truth, and providential superintendence over all things under the Sun.*

This science has been a curse both to nations and individuals; that great and famous city, Babylon, was brought to destruction partly on its account; *Isa. xlvii.—9.* read the whole chapter. Also, *Deut. xviii.—9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.—also, 2 Kings, i.—2, 3, 4, 5, 6.*

It unsettles men's minds, making many to seek that good fortune from the stars, which they ought to seek by sober industry. It fills vain men with chimerical views of jumping instantaneously into wealth and honour—it makes many expect more

from a few visionary indications in a *horoscope*, than from a thousand virtuous actions—and it causes some to expect more help from the influence of *Jupiter* than from the arm of *Jehovah*. Hence it has been confidently asserted by some authors, that Astrology has done more harm to mankind than Idolatry; because it is said that wherever the former was in use, the latter was in practice.

Astrology is opposed to the Bible, and the Bible to it; therefore those who chuse the one, must of necessity renounce the other. And I will beg leave to add, what I believe but few will deny, namely, that those men amongst us who have been deepest in the science of Astrology, and its counterpart, Magic, have generally carried about with them the visible curse of God; and their estates have frequently exhibited manifest tokens of their infernal profession, and evident marks of the Almighty's indignation!

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## THE FORTUNE-TELLER'S

*Conjuring Cap;*

Or, Questions and Answers about Marriage, and other things, shewing how to be

**WISE, RICH, AND HAPPY.**

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[This little piece is so well written, that I cannot deny myself and the reader, the gratification of inserting it in this publication.]

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“**W**E all want to know what shall happen to us, whether we be man, woman, or child; and some, who don't wish to pass for common fools,



pretend to read the stars, and ask questions of the planets ; but if the stars don't know, they cannot tell. No, let the Astronomer study the stars, to view the glorious works of God who made them : and let the sailor watch them that he may know his way over the ocean : but to ask them to tell us future events, is to lose one's labour. I would as soon ask the blue sky, as the stars. Some old women who cannot tell great A from a broom-stick, yet, forsooth, pretend to tell fortunes : so they make you twirl the coffee cup, to see by the grounds at bottom, how long you are to live, or how soon you may be married. Now if those coffee grounds came again and again just the same, which they ought to do if they tell true, one might think something about it : but when the first dish shews a long life and the second a short one ; in my opinion, the long and short of it is, 'tis all nonsense and folly. So the gipsy looks at the palm of your hand ; but pray look at her's all the while, lest it should slip into your pocket to examine your fortune there. Or the moles about your body must be measured and counted, and then they will tell you such a deal, more than twenty wise men ever could believe. The same may be said of cards and the wheel of fortune : none but knaves pretend to tell any thing by such methods, and none but fools believe them.

“ If you ask, are there no true signs by which persons may give a guess what luck they shall have ? I answer, yes. And as my CONJURING CAP is as deep as any, is made with very large ears, and has a pretty jingle of bells too at top ; I think I can see as far into a mill-stone as any of them. I shall set myself, therefore in my great arm chair, and answer some of the most usual questions.

*First Question—Shall I live to be Old?*

“ To answer this positively—positively is not easy; 'tis too much for a trifle, and nobody can answer it under a crown. But let me ask you a question or two, and we may then give a guess. Do you lie in bed late of a morning, sit by the fire all day, and go tipsy to bed at night? Do you hate work and love liquor? You see I'm a bit of a conjurer by my giving so good a guess. I'll lay the best tassel of my cap, that some day or another when you are drunk you'll fight, and get your brains knocked out; or you'll set yourself on fire; or you'll tumble off your horse, and so cheat the hangman at last. You live long! It is not likely, and indeed if you live such a life, 'twere pity you should.

*Second Question—Shall I be Rich?*

“ I don't know why you should not, if you are industrious, honest, and contented. But do you know what you mean by being rich. Will nothing less than your own horse and gig satisfy you? To keep a cow, or even a pig, will make some people rich; and you may soon do this, if you will save all that your tobacco costs, and snuff; if you will put by all you usually spend in liquor, and leave off keeping Saint Monday. I have known three halfpence a day spent in snuff by a ragged fellow, (no wonder he was ragged) that makes 9d. a week, which comes to more than £2. a year; which for 50 years (for the fellow was more than 70) amounts to £100! If any one were to give him £100. he would think himself rich, and he might have had as much, if he had saved all that he has spent in useless filthy snuff. And as to you, *Molly*, if instead of white cotton stockings, you

were to content yourself with worsted ; if instead of fine gowns, bonnets, and ribbons, which make you look tawdry and soon wear out ; you were satisfied with what is plain, neat and clean, you might soon have a few pounds by you. Nay, Master Ben, if you and your wife had made only one day's holiday at Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas, instead of four or five ; and if instead of getting drunk at the fair, you had merely let the children have a treat, they need not, poor little things, go in rags as they do, and your six weeks confinement with a broken leg would have been saved. I fancy that if all the money you lost in idleness & spent in liquor, and still owe the surgeon, had been put together in some sly corner, you would say you were rich. But if you will take no more care of such things, you can never be rich nor can the stars ever make you so.

*Third Question—Shall I ever get  
Married?*

“ Why, look at your glass, Sally, and see, is there any reason to fear you should not?—A comely face, a lively eye, a fair skin; why what can be the matter with the men? Now, without my conjuring cap, I think I can tell. See how dirty your face is ; how untidily you put on your cap ; and how loosely that handkerchief is pinned. Few men love slatterns. I have known a prettier girl than you die unmarried, though she had had several sweethearts ; for she was such a vixen of a temper that no one could endure her long. All the flames kindled by her bright eyes being blown out by her scolding mouth. Her sister, who to say the truth was plain enough, married at twenty, a young miller, who used to joke her about

her want of beauty; all the time he paid court to the scold : till soothed by her sweetness of temper, as much as he was vexed by the other's ill humour, he at last turned his back on Madam Sulk, and offered himself to good-tempered Jenny. He married her on the 20th of May, just a fortnight before his uncle died, and left him 100*l.* with which he took the Mill himself; where he still lives with half a dozen pretty children around him.

*Fourth Question—Will my Master  
Marry me ?*

“ Is a question put to the conjurer very often, which might be answered by any one else, as well as by him. No, to be sure ! you did not think he would when he first began to take liberties with you, and pull you about, and you soon let him see that he need not marry you unless he pleased. After toying away your own character do you wonder that he despises you ? you have been a fool to yourself, and that has taught him to be a knave to you. It is too late now to think of being married by him or any one else. It has ended just as might have been expected ; just as every body told you it would : and if your good mother dies of a broken heart, you'll feel something of your folly and sin ; especially when your bastard babe begins to prattle, and smile, and to ask, where is daddy ?

*Fifth Question—Shall I get a Farm of  
my own ?*

“ Why how much have you saved of your wages ? aye indeed ! that bag full ! what ? you have put there all your largess money, and Christmas



boxes I suppose ; well that's right. And does your cow get a tolerable living on the common ; do your potatoes turn out well by the hedge-side ; and does the old donkey carry your wife and her eggs to market still ; and does your litter of pigs thrive in the barley-straw ? 'Tis good hearing, friend John. And I can tell you, that Bob Dash, the horse-racer, is hardly able to keep his farm about him. Not only is his house ready to tumble on his head, but he is terribly behind-hand with his rent. And one of the long ears of my cap heard something the other Sunday, as you and your wife and five children were standing in a row after sermon. Ben's landlord, 'squire Oldwood, says to the parson, 'There's an honest industrious man ' now : I wish I had such a one as he for a tenant, ' instead of that drinking hoity toity fellow, Dash. ' To be sure it is rather too mighty for his means, ' but I never grudge help to a man that deserves it.' So keep a good heart, John ; be diligent, frugal, and honest, and with the blessing of God, (I know you pray for that every day), we may see *wonderful things happen*.

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“ A plentiful questioning is kept up about the conjurer's ears to enquire,

*How to recover any thing lost ?*

“ As if all the stars in heaven had nothing to do but to run scampering about to find it. The fortune-teller is sure to make the fools who consult him, lose something more by way of fee. This is just as it ought to be ; he'll not tell fifty lies for nothing. Besides, the money they give him, and the time they lose in going after him, would half pay for what was stolen from them. And if the loss should make them take double care in future, it would

soon make that loss become an absolute gain. And as to the time they lie awake thinking and fretting about it, if they would go to sleep soundly, and get up in the morning so much the sooner to work, they might earn enough to make up their loss in a few days, and perhaps get the habit of early rising, which would be a constant gain, and add much to their health and cheertfulness.

“ There are many other questions, such as  
*Shall I be beloved by my Friends?—Shall I be happy in Wedlock?—Shall any dangerous accident befall me?—Shall I prosper in my new business?*

“ But those who cannot give a good guess concerning these from the hints which I have already dropt, must be very dull and stupid. It is not worth my while to write for such. I don't think any conjurer can do them any good. I am sure they are no conjurers themselves.

“ There is, however, another question, and that of great importance, not often put to the fortune-teller, and totally left out of all conjuring books; but upon which a man's happiness so much depends, that it ought never to be forgotten. I mean,

*What shall become of my Soul when I die?*

“ Die you must, and your body be laid in the grave. Then it will be of small importance whether you were married or not; whether you were rich or poor; happy or miserable, as to this world. The grand point will be, what reception will your soul have with the great judge of quick and dead?

Will he receive you to heaven, or cast you headlong into hell; into outer darkness, where there is weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth;—where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched! Do you say, nobody can tell where they shall go. I deny it. Many know very well where they are going, though they pretend they do not. The drunkard, the whore, and the whore-monger, the thief, the swearer, and the sabbath breaker, know very well in their own consciences that hell was made for such; and is filled with such. And one reason why they hate the Bible so much is, because it tells them that none of them shall enter into heaven, nor any thing that loveth and maketh a lie. If you never read your Bible, never come to worship on the Lord's Day, live without prayer from one week's end to another; if you trifle with religion, or perhaps laugh at it; it is easy to see where you will go, and what will become of your soul. I can only say, may God give you true repentance, and lead you as a broken hearted sinner to seek mercy from God through the merits of Jesus Christ; his grace will make you forsake every sinful way; and while it makes you a better man, a better husband, a better neighbour, a true Christian; it will give you a good hope, that when you die, you shall be received into heaven, and inherit eternal glory.

“To sum up the matter, hear what the Bible says concerning those who consulted fortune-tellers, and endeavoured by unlawful means to look into futurity in former times. *When they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and that mutter, should not a people seek unto their God?*—Isaiah, viii. 19. Again, *Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels; let now the astrologers,*

*the star-gazers, the monthly prognosticators, (the Moore's Almanacks of those days) stand up and save thee from those things that shall come upon thee. Isaiah, xlvii. 13.*

“No, none can instruct thee, like the Bible :— this is the only book in the world to let every man know his future destiny, and therein it is written, *there is no other name given under heaven, whereby thou canst be saved, from sin, and death, and hell, but the name of Jesus!* May he instruct thee, and bless thee, and save thee that thou mayest be made wise, and holy, and happy for ever.”

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### *The Best Fortune-telling.*

**T**HE best, and the only true *fortune-telling*, is to be found in the Bible. Hear, ye inquisitive *fortune-seekers*, the word of the Lord : *God is angry with the wicked every day. Psalm vii. 11. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God. Psalm, ix. 17. The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked. Proverbs, iii. 33. But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow ; because he feareth not before God. Eccles. viii. 13. Woe unto the wicked ! it shall be ill with him : for the reward of his hands shall be given him. Isaiah, iii. 11. For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven ; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble : and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of Hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.— Malachi, iv. 1.*

On the other hand, hear the good fortune of the Righteous : *Blessed is the man that walketh*



not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. Psal. i.—1. 2. 3. For the Lord God is a Sun and a Shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of Hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee. Psalm lxxxiv. 11. 12. Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Isaiah, iii. 10. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.—Daniel xii. 3.

Here then, reader, is a short sample of Bible Fortune-telling, which might easily be enlarged an hundred-fold: And that which adds to the value of the whole, is, that the *Holy Spirit* is the *Fortune-teller*!

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### *Eminent Testimonies against Astrology.*

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ROHAULT.

“**W**E do not own any other virtue to be in the stars by which they can act here below, but that of the light which comes from them to us:—We cannot allow them any further power or virtue in those effects produced upon the earth, but in proportion to their light. And because the light of

the sun alone is infinitely greater than that of all the stars put together, we ought to look upon that as the cause of all celestial effects. And if we do not always experience the same constitution of air whenever the sun sends forth his rays in the same manner upon the earth, we must not seek for the cause hereof in the stars, but look upon it as the effect of the present disposition of the air or earth.

“ I am persuaded that the ancient philosophers had no other notions of the influences of the stars but such as these : But because the Egyptians who were very good Astronomers, thought fit to distinguish divers days of the solar year, by the different fixed stars which rise immediately after sun-set, and took care to give notice to the people of the temperature of the air which they observed in certain seasons, and of what was proper for them to do in agriculture, when certain stars rise after sun-set ; they took that for the *cause*, which was intended only for the *sign* : And hence came the notion of moist stars whose rising produced rain, of others that caused drought ; and of some that made plants to grow, and of others which had a particular dominion over certain animals !

“ The experience we have of the temperature of the air being not always the same every year, tho’ the same fixed stars never fail to rise when the sun sets, is enough to undeceive those who affirm that all things here below depend upon the stars : But because the planets alter their situation in the heavens every year ; under this pretence they have excused their mistake, and taken occasion from hence to ascribe to the rising of the planets, or to their different situation in the heavens, all those powerful efficacies which they before ascribed to the fixed stars.

“ And as the vanity of men’s minds is always increasing : after they had once suffered themselves to be prejudiced with this false notion of the virtue and efficacy of the planets, knowing that they could be certain of the situation of the planets for the time to come, by astronomical calculation, they puffed themselves up with the invention of an art, which could tell things to come : as rain, fair weather, wind, thunder, tempests, plenty, famine, war, and such like things. This art is what they call *Judicial Astrology*, which some boast themselves masters of, and are got to such a pitch of vanity as to promise to predict the most particular actions and fortunes of persons.

“ In order to avoid being deceived by such vain promises as these ; we ought to consider in the *first* place, that this Astrology has no foundation ; and that it cannot be proved by any reason, that any such powers are in the stars as Astrologers ascribe to them.

“ *Secondly*. It is certain that they have not even *experience* on their side, which however they appeal to, and upon which they build their art : For, as it would be ridiculous to affirm, that experience shews us, that Socrates going out of town, produced thunder, because it was observed to thunder once, at the moment that this Philosopher was got into the road to go into the country ; so, likewise, is it ridiculous to affirm, that we have the experience that such a constitution of the stars produced for example, the sickness of a Prince, because it was once observed, that a Prince was sick when they were in that disposition. And indeed, so far are Astrologers from having many times observed, what the dispositions which the stars will be in tomorrow in the heavens is capable of producing, that strictly speaking, we may affirm, that they

have not the least observation at all; because it will take up several thousand years before such a constitution of the stars as we have remarked, can happen twice. So that we may affirm, that such a constitution in the heavens as will be to-morrow, has not been yet since the creation of the world.

“ We may add to this, that if we allow Astrologers to have made some observations of what has happened in former ages, under certain positions of the stars: yet they would be of no use but in the countries where they were made; for it is certain that whatever the disposition of the heavens be, the same clearness or the same tempest does not reach over the whole superficies of the earth, but many times it rains very hard in one country for a great part of the year, when in another country not far off, it is dry.

“ Further, I cannot forbear taking notice here, of the vain credulity, or rather foolish error of most Europeans, about the star called the *Dog*, who believe it to be of a *hot* nature, and that it is the *cause* of the *heat* that commonly happens about the time that it rises when the sun rises, and which is called the *Dog-days*. For the people that live in the southern parts of the earth, and over whose zenith this star passes, have much greater reason to believe that it is of a *cold* nature, because at the same time when this star rises with the sun, which is the season wherein we often feel the greatest heat they find the greatest cold, and are in the depth of Winter.

“ Perhaps it may here be said, that Astrologers do sometimes hit upon the truth, which I do indeed allow: But this does not at all establish their science; because there is no person, be he ever so ignorant, but if he undertook to foretel things to come, he would by chance hit upon some things



that come to pass, as well as upon some that did not, in the same manner as the greatest Astrologers in the world."

*Syst. of Nat. Philosophy.*

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ABBE PLUCHE.

"**T**HE history of the origin of this pretended science, is the refutation of it, since the whole of Astrology in its rise is still nothing but a false interpretation of a few signs, taken in a wrong sense.

"The Egyptians had insensibly and by degrees looked upon the names of the zodiacal signs, and of many others, as memorials of what had happened to their founder, to their common mother, and to other heroes of their country. The history of these assumed another form in other places. The worship of the great king, the queen, and the heavenly host, had indeed passed from Egypt into Phœnicia, thence into Arabia, Assyria, and almost every where else; but with the luggage of the figures, all nations did not equally admit of the absurd tenet of the metempsychosis, much less the histories of Egyptian gods, which were of no concern to other people. Nations were generally contented with honouring the sun as the great mover of nature. The moon had the second rank in the class of powers; then each sign and constellation had its proper district and measure of influence assigned it. But what function shall the *Ram*, the *Lion*, and the *Balance*, obtain in the heaven? Why, men imagined that their names were indications of their several offices, and specifications of their influences. The *ram* therefore had a strong influence over the young of the flocks. The *balance* could inspire nothing but inclinations to good

order and justice. The *scorpion* was fit to excite none but mischievous dispositions. Each sign in short caused the good or the evil intimated by its name.

“ But on whom are these influences to fall? Shall they turn and set every thing topsy-turvy upon the earth? This was provided against. A speculative and systematic genius conceived that the critical moment for the exercise of the power of each sign, was that at which it ascended the horizon, and that the child born at the self-same instant was he who found the strongest impressions from it. Thence, by an argument, which, silly as it was, made a speedy progress, our philosopher concluded that the child who came into the world at the exact instant when the first star of the *Ram* ascended the horizon, would infallibly be rich in cattle, and so of the rest. This was a sorry abuse of the emblematic relation which is between the sun under this constellation, and the beginning of the spring in which the lambs come to be saleable, and of advantage to their masters. This was a way of arguing nearly like that of a man, who should imagine that in order to have good wine in his cellar, it would be enough to hang a cork at his door, and who should mistake for the *cause* of a thing what would be only the mark and *sign* of it.

“ They ran into the same extravagance as to the power of the *Bull* and the *Kids*. They understood (pray admire the conceit) that the enterprises of him who should come into the world under the sign of *Cancer*, should always go backwards and downwards. The *Lion* was to inspire courage, and produce heroes, or, if you will, quarrelsome fellows! The aspect of the *Virgin* carrying the celestial ear of corn, was to inspire chastity, and unite virtue and abundance. Happy the people

whose king should be born under the sign *Libra*. Vengeance to all that should light under the horrid sign of the *Scorpion*! The fortune of him who was born under *Capricorn*, and especially when the sun ascended the horizon, together with that sign, was always to get upwards like this animal and the *sun*, which then ascends for six months together. All these little trifling subtilties were often contradicted by quite contrary events. But people in this case insisted much upon the conformity of several other events with the prediction, and they found means to get out of the briars, and avoid contradictions, by alledging the concurrence of the moon, the other planets, and the stars, which by either their opposition or conjunction, as it were, blunted the goodness of certain influences and mitigated the malignity of others,

“The nicest part of the art was to know how to combine these situations; to observe whether the influences proceeded in parallel lines; whether the fall of some was oblique and perpendicular upon others. They must have known how to measure portions of circles, how to calculate angles by the tangent and signs, and study the œconomy of the heavens, in order to know the diversity of the aspects. The Astrologer took a pride in a mere outside of learning. Geometry and Astronomy, the finest of sciences, thus served to introduce into the world all the insipidities of Astrology. Nor is it useless here to observe, that a system, which more than any pretends to be connected with Astronomy and Geometry, may very well prove a mere learned chimæra.

“But the greatest of the evils caused by Astrology is, not only to feed men’s minds with frivolous promises, trifling operations and influences void of reality. The error was itself great indeed: but

it had consequences still more dismal. The celestial signs, or the points of the heaven designed to mark by a certain denomination certain effects proper to each season, were no sooner taken for the causes of these effects, but this pitiful mistake obtained credit, because men fancied they found the reasons of every thing therein, and an infallible means of avoiding the evils they are threatened with. They pitched upon such a month, day, hour, and aspect, to begin a voyage, a ploughing, a piece of stuff. They forbore doing any thing, till they should be under a favourable point. The ascendant point of such a star produced this, and the culminant point of the same or another star corrected that. Men were no longer employed about any thing but studying with anxiety the decisive seasons, days, and critical months. Astrology, in some sense, did more mischief than idolatry itself! The latter, criminal as it was, yet permitted some remains of gratitude for favours received, and of a religious awe for the infinitely just who punishes wicked actions, to subsist in minds seduced with regard to the object of their worship. But Astrology completed the ruin of every virtue! To prudence, to experience, and wise precautions, it substituted superstitious set forms, and puerile practice. It enervated men's courage by apprehensions grounded on a few puns and quibbles. It abolished the practice of virtue almost every where, and quieted criminal minds, by making them cast upon the unavoidable impression of the predominant planet, the evil which was but the result of their natural depravation: And this dismal facility of quieting and lulling the conscience asleep, doubtless is the secret reason why ambitious and voluptuous men, while they are altogether insensible of the beauty of the



Gospel, and the multitude of proofs which support it, yet receive with a blind credulity the predictions of Astrology, and the arguments that are most desitute of probability !

“ *Influence of the Moon.*

“ **N**OW the remarks of our fishermen, of our judicious gardeners, our surgeons of integrity, and a thousand trials made and carefully repeated for some years last past by Messieurs of the Academy of Sciences, and by other most cautious and attentive men, have convinced us, that the Moon has neither heat nor any kind of influence whatever on the generation of any terrestrial or aquatic animal, nor on the generation or alteration of any living or vegetative being that exists. What will then become of the malignity of *Saturn*, the favourable aspect of *Venus*, and the riches of *Mercury* ? All these distinctions and systems are a pitiful consequence of the character and inclinations whom Egypt, Phenicia, and Greece, have imagined to be in certain stars, in which they had equal reason to imagine the reverse.

“ All practices grounded on this persuasion, can therefore be nothing but superstitions destructive of *piety*, *sciences*, and *society*. Of *society*, since they tie men up to no manner of purpose ; of *sciences*, since they stop the progress of them by busying us about causes productive of no effects ; and of *piety*, since, without being professed idolaters, we nevertheless commit idolatrous acts, and since, after having renounced all these gods of antiquity, we do not abjure the virtues and operations, the belief of which they had introduced.”

*History of the Heavens.*

## MONSIEUR ROLLIN.

“AS to the Babylonians, and other Eastern Philosophers, the study of the heavenly bodies was so far from leading them, as it ought to have done, to the knowledge of him who is both their creator and director, that for the most part it carried them into impious practices, and the extravagancies of *Judicial Astrology*. So we term that deceitful and presumptuous science, which teaches to judge of things to come by the knowledge of the stars, and to foretel events by the situation of the planets, and their different aspects. A science justly looked upon as a madness and folly by all the most sensible writers among the pagans themselves. *O delirationem incredibilem!* (O the incredible madness!) cries Cicero, in refuting the extravagant opinions of those Astrologers, frequently called Chaldeans, from the country that first produced them; who, in consequence of the observations made, as they affirmed, by their predecessors upon all past events, for the space only of four hundred and seventy thousand years! pretended to know assuredly by the aspect and combinations of the stars and planets, at the instant of a child's birth, what would be his genius, temper, manners, the constitution of his body, his actions, and in a word, all the events, with the duration of his life. He repeats a thousand absurdities of this opinion, the very ridicule of which exposes it to contempt: and asks, why of all that number of children that are born in the same moment, and without doubt exactly under the same aspect of the stars, there are not two of them whose lives and fortunes resemble each other? He puts this further question, whether that great number of men that perished at the battle of Cannæ, and

died of one and the same death, were all born under the same constellations?

It is hardly credible, that so absurd an art, founded entirely upon fraud and imposture, *fraudulentissima artium*, (The most fraudulent of Arts,) as Pliny calls it, should ever acquire so much credit, as this has done, throughout the whole world and in all ages. What has supported and brought it into so great vogue, continues that author, is the natural curiosity men have to penetrate into futurity, and to know beforehand the things that are to befall them: *Nulla non avido futura de se sciendi*; (There is no one that is not greedy of knowing his future fate) attended with a superstitious credulity, which finds itself agreeably flattered with the large and grateful promises of which those fortune-tellers are never sparing.

“Modern writers, and among others, two of our greatest philosophers, *Gassendus & Rohault*, have inveighed against the folly of that pretended science with the same energy, and have demonstrated it to be equally void of principles and experience.

“As for its principles. The heaven, according to the system of the Astrologers, is divided into twelve equal parts, which parts are taken not according to the poles of the world, but to those of the zodiac. These twelve parts, or proportions of heaven, have each of them its attribute, as riches, knowledge, parentage, &c. The most important and decisive portion ‘is that which is next under the horizon, and which is called the ascendant, because it is ready to ascend and appear above the horizon when a man comes into the world. The planets are divided into the propitious, the malignant, and the mixed. The aspects of these planets, which are only certain distances from one

another, are likewise either happy or unhappy. I say nothing of several other hypotheses, which are all equally arbitrary : and I ask whether any man of common sense can give into them upon the bare word of these impostors, without any proofs, or even without the least shadow of probability? The critical moment, and that on which all their prediction depends, is that of the birth. And why not as well the moment of conception? Why have the stars no influence during the nine months of child-bearing? Or is it possible, considering the incredible rapidity of the heavenly bodies, always to be sure of hitting the precise determined moment, without the least variation of more or less, which is sufficient to overthrow all? A thousand other objections of the same kind might be made, which are altogether unanswerable.

“ As for *experience*, they have still less reason to flatter themselves on that side. Whatever they have of that, must consist in observations founded upon events, that have always come to pass in the same manner, whenever the planets were found in the same situation. Now it is unanimously agreed by all Astronomers, that several thousands of years must pass before any such situation of the stars, as they would imagine, can twice happen; and it is very certain that the state in which the heavens will be to-morrow, has never yet been since the creation of the world. The reader may consult the two philosophers above mentioned, particularly *Gassendus*, who has more copiously treated this subject. But such, and no better, are the foundations upon which the whole structure of Judicial Astrology is built.

“ But what is astonishing, and argues an absolute want of all reason, is, that certain pretended wits, who obstinately harden themselves against



the most convincing proofs of religion, and who refuse to believe even the clearest and most certain prophecies upon the word of God, do sometimes give entire credit to the vain predictions of those Astrologers and impostors.

“ St. Austin, in several passages of his writings, informs us that this stupid and sacrilegious credulity is a just chastisement from God, who frequently punishes the voluntary blindness of men, by inflicting a still greater blindness ; and who suffers evil spirits, that they may keep their servants still faster in their nets, sometimes to foretel them things which do really come to pass, and of which the expectation very often serves only to torment them.

“ God, who alone foresees future contingencies and events, because he alone is the sovereign disposer and director of them, does often in scripture revile the ignorance of the Babylonian Astrologers, so much boasted of, calling them forgers of lies and falsehoods : He moreover desires all their false gods to foretel any thing whatsoever, and consents, if they do, that they should be worshipped as Gods. Then addressing himself to the city of Babylon, he particularly declares all the circumstances of the miseries with which she shall be overwhelmed above two hundred years after that prediction ; and that none of her prognosticators, who had flattered her with assurances of a perpetual grandeur they pretended to have read in the stars, should be able to avert the judgment, or even to foresee the time of its accomplishment. Indeed, how should they ? since at the very time of its execution, when Belshazzar the last king of Babylon, saw a hand come out of the wall, and write unknown characters thereon, the Magi, Chaldeans, and in a word all the pre-

tended sages of the country, were not able so much as to read the writing. Here then we see Astrology and Magic convicted of ignorance and impotence, in the very place where they were most in vogue, and on an occasion when it was certainly their interest to display their science and power."

*Ancient History, vol. 2.*

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## ON THE INFLUENCE OF COMETS.

[On the appearance of that awful Comet in the latter end of the Summer of 1811, the following statement was published in several Newspapers; and though it may appear to some irrelevant to the general purport of this Book, yet I presume the singularity of the *influence* which Comets have, and the useful moral deducible therefrom, will be a sufficient apology for giving it a place here.]

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*" Ludicrous Effects of the appearance of a Comet in 1712.*

" **I**N the year 1712, Mr. Whiston having calculated the return of a Comet, which was to make its appearance on Wednesday, the 14th of October at five minutes after five in the morning, gave notice to the public accordingly, with this terrifying addition—that a total dissolution of the world by fire was to take place on the Friday following. The reputation Mr. Whiston had long maintained both as a Divine and a Philosopher, left little or no doubt with the Populace, of the truth of his prediction. Several ludicrous events now took place

" A number of persons in and about London, seized all the barges and boats on the Thames, very rationally concluding, that when the conflagration

took place, there would be the most safety on the water.

“ A gentleman who had neglected family prayer for more than five years, informed his wife, that it was his determination to resume the laudable practice the same evening ; but his wife, having engaged a ball at her house persuaded her husband to put it off, till they saw whether the Comet appeared or not.

“ The South Sea Stock immediately fell to five per cent. and the India to 11 ; and the captain of a Dutch ship threw all his gunpowder into the river, that his vessel might not be endangered.

“ The next morning, however, the Comet appeared according to the prediction, and before noon the belief was universal that the Day of Judgment was at hand. About this time two hundred and twenty-three clergymen were ferried over to Lambeth ; it was said, to petition that a short prayer might be penned and ordered, there being none in the church service on that occasion.

“ Three maids of honour burnt their collections of plays and novels, and sent to a Bookseller's to purchase each of them a Bible, and Bishop Taylor's ‘ Holy Living and Dying.’

“ The run upon the Bank was so great, that all hands were employed from morning till night, in discounting notes and handing out specie. On Thursday considerably more than seven thousand kept mistresses were legally married in the face of several congregations. And, to crown the whole farce, Sir Gilbert Heathcoate, at that time head director of the Bank, issued orders to all the fire-offices in London, requiring them to keep a good look-out, and a particular eye upon the Bank of England.”

*Taunton Courier, Nov. 14, 1811.*

From the above statement, which I apprehend is founded in fact, we may fairly deduce this inference, namely, that there is in the hearts even of most men that are wicked, a sentiment in favour of morality and religion : and that though they may deny it by their tongues and their lives, yet in the extremity of danger they frequently confess it by their fears !

It were to be wished that if the *signs* and *planets* should have any influence upon mankind, it should be somewhat similar to that of Comets : for the influence that would frighten men out of their sins, and into their senses, would be infinitely preferable to that chimerical influence ascribed by *Dr. Sibly and Co.* to constellations and wandering stars.

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## ASTROLOGY AND FORTUNE-TELLING BURLESQUED.

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SAMUEL GARTH, M. D.

“AN inner room receives the num’rous shoals  
Of such as pay to be reputed fools :  
Globes stand on Globes, volumes on volumes lie,  
And planetary schemes amuse the eye.  
The sage in velvet chair here lolls at ease,  
To promise future wealth for present fees.  
Then, as from Tripod, solemn shams reveals,  
And what the Stars know nothing of, foretells.  
One asks, how soon *Panthea* may be won,  
And longs to feel the marriage fetters on :  
Others, convinc’d by melancholy proof,  
Enquire when courteous fate will strike them off.  
Some by what means they may redress the wrong,



When Fathers the possession keep too long.  
 And some would know the issue of their cause,  
 And whether Gold can solder up its flaws.  
 Poor pregnant *Lais* his advice would have,  
 To lose by art what fruitful nature gave.  
 And *Portia*, old in expectation grown,  
 Laments her barren curse, and begs a son;  
 Whilst *Iris* his cosmetic wash would try,  
 To make her bloom revive, and Lover die.  
 Some ask for charms, and others Philtres choose,  
 To gain *Corinna*, and their quartans lose.  
 Young *Hylas*, botch'd with stains too foul to name,  
 In cradle here renews his youthful frame:  
 Cloy'd with desire, and surfeited with charms,  
 A hot-house he prefers to *Julia's* arms.  
 And old *Lucullus* would th'arcanum prove,  
 Of kindling in cold veins the sparks of Love."

*Dispensary.*

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### *Astrology Contemned by Chapman.*

"**I** AM a nobler substance than the stars :  
 And shall the baser over-rule the better?  
 Or are they better since they are the bigger?  
 I have a will and faculties of choice,  
 To do or not to do ; and reason why  
 I do or not do this : the stars have none.  
 They know not why they shine. more than this Taper,  
 Nor how they work, nor what. I'll change my course,  
 I'll piece-meal pull the frame of all my thoughts :  
 And where are all your *Caput Algols* then?  
 Your *planets* all being underneath the earth  
 At my nativity : what can they do ?  
 Malignant in aspects ! in bloody houses !  
 Give me a spirit that on life's rough sea,  
 Loves to have his sails filled with a lusty wind,  
 Even till his sail yards tremble, his masts crack,  
 And his rapt ship run on her side so low,

That she drinks water, and her keel ploughs air.  
 There is no danger to a man, that knows  
 What life and death is: there's not any law  
 Exceeds his knowledge: neither is it lawful  
 That he should stoop to any other law :  
 He goes before them, and commands them all.  
 That to himself is a law rational."

*Byron's Conspiracy.*

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*Astrology Ridiculed by Butler*

"**T**HEY'LL search a Planet's house to know  
 Who broke and robb'd a house below :  
 Examine *Venus* and the *Moon*  
 Who stole a thimble, who a spoon.  
 And tho' they nothing will confess,  
 Yet by their very looks can guess,  
 And tell what guilty aspect bodes,  
 Who stole, and who receiv'd the goods.  
 They'll feel the pulses of the stars,  
 To find out agues, coughs, catarrhs:  
 And tell what crisis doth divine  
 The rot in sheep, the mange in swine:  
 In men, what gives or cures the itch,  
 What makes them cuckolds, poor, or rich;  
 What gains or loses, hangs or saves;  
 What makes men great, what fools, what knaves  
 But not what wise: for only of those  
 The stars, they say, cannot dispose,  
 No more than can the Astrologians;  
 There they say right, and like true Trojans.  
 Some towns and cities, some for brevity,  
 Have cast the 'versal world's nativity,  
 And made the infant stars confess,  
 Like fools or children, what they please.  
 Some calculate the hidden fates  
 Of Monkeys, Puppies, Dogs, and Cats,  
 Some running Nags and fighting cocks;

Some Love, Trade, Law-suits, and the [Stocks,]  
 Some take a measure of the lives  
 Of Fathers, Mothers, Husbands, Wives,  
 Make Opposition trine and quartile,  
 Tell who is barren, and who fertile.  
 As if the Planet's first aspect  
 The tender infant did infect :  
 No sooner has he peep'd into  
 This world, but he has done his do ;  
 Catch'd all diseases, took all physic,  
 That cures or kills a man that is sick ;  
 Marry'd his punctual dose of wives,  
 Is cuckolded, and breaks or thrives,  
 There's but a twinkling of a Star  
 Between a man of peace and war ;  
 A Thief and Justice, Fool and Knave,  
 A huffing Officer and a Slave ;  
 A crafty Lawyer and Pick-Pocket,  
 A great Philosopher and a Blockhead ;  
 A formal Preacher and a Player,  
 A learn'd Physician and Manslayer :  
 As if Men from the stars did suck  
 Old age, diseases, and ill luck ;  
 Wit, folly, honour, virtue vice,  
 Trade, Travel, Women, [Cards] and Dice :  
 And draw with the first air they breathe  
 Battle and Murther, sudden death.—  
 So when your speculations tend  
 Above their just and useful end,  
 Although they promise strange and great  
 Discoveries of things far fet,  
 They are but idle dreams and fancies,  
 And savour strongly of the Ganzas.  
 Tell me but what's the nat'ral cause,  
 Why on a sign no Painter draws  
 The full-moon ever, but the half,  
 Resolve that with your Jacob's Staff :  
 Or why Wolves raise a hubbub at her,  
 Or Dogs howl when she shines in water ;

And I shall freely give my vote  
You may know something more remote." *Hudibras.*

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*The Almanack-Maker and Conjuror  
Ridiculed.*

" **H**E had been long tow'rds Mathematicks,  
Opticks, Philosophy, and Staticks,  
Magick, Horoscopy, Astrology,  
And was old Dog at Physiology.  
But as a Dog that turns the spit,  
Bestirs himself, and plies his feet  
To climb the wheel but all in vain,  
His own weight brings him down again;  
And still he's in the self-same place,  
Where at his setting out he was ;  
So in the circle of the Arts,  
Did he advance his nat'ral parts :  
Till falling back still for retreat,  
He fell to juggle, cant and cheat.  
For as those fowls that live in water  
Are never wet, he did but smatter,  
Whate'er he labour'd to appear,  
His understanding still was clear.  
He'd read Dee's Prefaces before  
The Devil and Euclid o'er and o'er.  
He with the Moon was more familiar,  
'Than e'er was Almanack-well-willer :  
Her secrets understood so clear,  
'That some believ'd he had been there :  
Knew when she was in fittest mood  
For cutting corns, and letting blood ;  
Cure warts or corns with application  
Of med'cines to th' imagination.  
Fright agues into dogs, and scare  
With rhimes the tooth-ache and catarrh.  
He knew whatever's to be known ;  
But, much more than he knew, would own." *Ibid.*



*Astrology Contemn'd, by PERSIUS,*

The Roman Poet, who liv'd in the reign of *Nero*,  
the Tyrant.

“**F**OR men of diff'rent inclinations are,  
Tho' born perhaps beneath one common star.  
In minds and manners twins oppos'd we see  
In the same sign, almost the same degree:  
One, frugal, on his birth-day fears to dine;  
Does at a Penny's cost in herbs repine,  
And hardly dares to dip his fingers in the brine. }  
Prepar'd as Priest of his own Rites to stand,  
He sprinkles pepper with a sparing hand.  
His jolly brother, opposite in sense, }  
Laughs at his thrift, and lavish of expence,  
Quaffs, crams, and guttles, in his own defence.” }

*Satires: Dryden's Translation.*

*Astrology Ridiculed by Shakespeare.*

“**T**HIS is the excellent foppery of the world,  
that, when we are sick in fortune, (often the surfeits  
of our own behaviour) we make guilty of our disasters  
the sun, the moon, and stars; as if we were villains  
on necessity; fools, by heavenly compulsions; knaves,  
thieves, and treacherous, by spherical predominance;  
drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an inforc'd obe-  
dience of planetary influence; and all that we are  
evil in, by a divine thrusting on. An admirable eva-  
sion of whore-master man, to lay his goatish disposi-  
tion on the charge of a star! My father compounded  
with my mother under the dragon's tail, and my na-  
tivity was under Ursa Major; so that it follows I  
am rough and lecherous. I should have been what I  
am, had the maidenliest star in the firmament twinkled  
on my bastardizing!”

*Shakespeare's King Lear.*

## DR. PARKINS,

*Of Little Gonerby, near Grantham, Lincolnshire.*

**T**HIS *Dr. Parkins* has published a Book so lately as the year 1810, which I think is calculated to do as much mischief to the ignorant and superstitious part of mankind, as any book now extant; & it is wonderful, that in an age which boasts of a *Royal Society*—A *Bible Society*—*Philosophical Society*—*Cheap Tract Society*, & *Sunday Schools*; besides its various *Magazines* and *Reviews*, there should yet be found a man of sufficient effrontery to publish a Book bearing the following Title;

“The Universal Fortune-Teller, Or an Infallible Guide to the Secret and Hidden Decrees of Fate. Being a new and regular System of Foretelling Future Events and Contingencies. Containing the Art of Divination, by the Sciences of Astrology, Physiognomy, Geomancy, Palmistry, Moles, Cards, &c. And also how to receive Oracles by Dreams:

“Mathematical Magic; or Divination by Numbers, Birds, and Beasts; Together with the method of conversing with any person, by an Art called the Silent Language.

“Unto which is added, the Use, Virtue, and Description of the *Wheel of Fortune*, Teaching how to Divine and Prognosticate by the same!”

It was my purpose to make several extracts from this wonderful Production, but want of room obliges me to forego my design, I will, however, just favour the reader with two or three of *Dr. Parkins's Dreams*, and his interpretation of them

“To dream you are riding in a Coach, insures you prosperity according to your actions and situation in life; if it is a gilt and very handsome Coach, you will rise in the State; if it is a Hackney Coach, you will get a lucrative employment, but if your Coach should break down, you will be turned out with disgrace!”

“To dream you are eating *Oysters*, shews prosperity, or that you will be married to a person that is really a virgin, and will love you; but if the fish should fall from you in your dream, you will lose the person's affections”!

“To Dream of *Geese*, is a sign that an absent friend will soon return.”!

“To dream you are at a *feast* denotes extraordinary satisfaction.”!

This famous *Dr.* teaches Ladies how to tell fortunes by the *Tea-Cup*, for one Guinea: and by the *Cards* for the same fee! What an *Useful Member of Society* *DR. PARKINS* must needs be!

I have only to add, that since the publication of the above Book, *Dreams*, &c. &c. this same *Dr. Parkins* has published

a Dissertation on VILLANY!!! I hope the Doctor will not fail to give his Dissertation a second and a third reading, for his own edification.

The best of all the wonderful things in the Doctor's Book, is the following couplet, which is placed under his Wheel of Fortune ;

*" The Midwife wheels us in, and Death it wheels us out,  
Thus you may clearly see, how we are wheel'd about !"*

As a motto to the Doctor's next Edition of his *Wonderful Book*, I recommend the following Couplet ;

*" Asses so swarm, that who'd not see an Ass,  
Must live alone, and break his Looking-Glass."*

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**FINIS.**



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