THE CREATVRES PRAYSING GOD:

OR,

THE RELIGION OF dumbe Creatures.

An { Example and Argument, } { For the ſtirring vp of our deuotion, and For the confuſion of Atheiſme.

Benedicite omnia opera Domini Domino; laudate & ſuperexaltate eum in ſecula.

G. G.

LONDON,
Printed by FELIX KINGSTON.
1622.

To the Reader.

GOod Reader, The Authour himselfe not vouchsafing his name, title, or preface to this his worke, and very vnwilling that it should be publisht, I thought fit to let thee vnderstand, that the booke it selfe containes no paradox, notwithstanding the title: for the naturall seruice of God in dumbe Creatures, when they obey God, in their owne kinde; and follow their owne naturall course, this is it, which he calls *The Religion of dumbe Creatures*: and as it is frequent, and vsuall, to make comparisons in particular instances, so here in generall their seruice is compared to our Religion.

To commend the worke, seeing I am so farre ingaged, as that against the Authors will, it was my importunity to publish it, were in effect to commend mine owne iudgement, I will here onely acquaint you with the reasons that moued me;

First, to take away grose Atheisme, which denies any God, he vseth no Sophistry, no perswasion, not the testimonies either of God, or of men, but herein craues aide of the dumbe Creatures, and in effect desires them to beare witnesse, who instantly acknowledge a God, and discouer many excellent, and admirable attributes in God, and this he calls their confession, or the naturall implicite faith of the Creatures, *pag.* 9.

Secondly, that this knowledge of God, which we learne from nature, is an imperfect knowledge, though otherwise, it was the sole knowledge of the ancient heathen Philosophers, he brands it with this imputation, that it is no more in effect then the religion of dumbe beasts; but as reason is aboue sence, so faith aboue reason: reason points out mysteries, faith discouers them; by vertue of which faith, we ioyne with the Angels in their seruice, as the dumbe beasts doe ioyne with vs in nature: and here he takes away all naturall obiections against the mysteries of religion, beating downe mans curiosity, *pag.* 16.

Thirdly, how the Creatures praise God in their voices and sounds, which in effect are their prayers; in their naturall law, which is their decalogue; in all their qualities and affections, both naturall, and as they are sometimes meanes and conduit-pipes of grace, whereby nature is sanctified, *pag.* 23.

Fourthly, how all naturall Sciences may be reduced to Theology,

suppose the Metaphysicks, naturall Philosophy, morall Philosophy, which are indeed the branches of naturall Theology, and are incorporated into the body of our diuinity. And hence you may as well exclude the morall law, the decalogue, and the whole state of nature, as to exclude humane learning; which shewing the perfections and excellencies of nature, doth therein shew the praise and commendations of the Maker. *pag.* 31.

Fifthly, this naturall religion not only comprehends in it selfe all naturall sciences, but it is further a supposed ground and foundation in all religions. Thus Iudaisme, Turcisme, Gentilisme, as well as Christianity, acknowledge God in nature; though the Iudiciall, and Ceremoniall law began with *Moyses*, the Gospell with Christ, yet the naturall law, together with the state of nature, began with *Adam*, not by any reuelation, but by ingrafted and inbred principles, and therefore is common to all nations, to all religions. Hence he gathers these two notes, first, that different and opposite religions may notwithstanding ioyne together in such things as are good, and alike approueable in both: for so we ioyne with dumbe Creatures in their naturall seruice, and that the bounds of the Church are not to be hedged in, according to mens priuate phansies and imaginations; or according to the Prouinces, and iurisdiction of Prelats, but according to the vnity and concent of faith. Secondly, that be the religions neuer so opposite and contrary, yet all agree in the naturall law, and therefore are bound to performe to each other, all naturall rights, suppose the discharging of trust, where it is reposed, to vse morall honesty in our actions, obedience to our superiours, allegiance to the Prince, and the like; thus may different religions liue quietly and peaceably vnder one iust gouernment. If this were obserued, surely it would cause much peace in the Christian world, so much distracted and disquieted at this day, with infinit and innumerable sects and religions, *pag.* 34.

To conclude: What can be more glorious to God, then that his praise should be set forth by all his Creatures? what greater charity, then to comprehend them, not within the walls of our Christian Church (though once they were contained in the Arke) yet within the compasse and circuit of religion? what greater deuotion, then by their example to stirre vp thy selfe? though the Angels be out of sight, and thou canst not heare their hymnes, yet the beasts may awaken thy dulnesse; what greater humility, then to stoope to the basest wormes, and together with them, to associate thy selfe in Gods seruice?

These reasons (I confesse) did moue me to publish it: and as I had no other intent, but Gods glory, so I beseech him to giue a blessing to thy reading hereof, that it may tend to the increase of thy deuotion.

THE CREATVRES PRAYSING GOD:

OR, THE RELIGION OF dumbe Creatures.

PSALL. 148. 7, 8, 9, and 10, Verses.

7. *Praise the Lord vpon earth, yee dragons and all deepes:*
8. *Fire and haile, snow and vapours, stormy winds, fulfilling his word:*
9. *Mountaines and all hilles, fruitfull trees and all Cedars,*
10. *Beasts and all cattell, wormes and feathered fowles.*

TWo absurdities may here seeme to be committed at once, with one breath; either that man should speake and exhort such Auditors, who are without sence, and therefore not capeable of exhortation, or that Creatures dumbe in themselues, should be exhorted to praise God, which seemes to be a thing proper to Angels and men.

How God is praised.

Both these are easily satisfied, if we rightly consider that the praises of God doe not necessarily imply the most exact and magnificent order and forme, such as might well beseeme the Maiestie of a Deitie (both men and Angels come short in that excellent seruice) but the praises of God require no more in effect, then the power and ability wherewith God hath first inabled the Creature: for he accepts our imperfect prayers, and descends to our weakenesse. Thus the stocks and the stones in their silence, and in their naturall properties; the beasts in their sounds and their cries, in their sence and in their motions, all serue to praise him: for God requires no more then he hath first giuen, the right imployment of his gifts is indeed to praise him.

Now man exhorting them to this their bounden duty, ioynes with them in their seruice, and as it were seemes to congratulate their praises of God: notwithstanding his owne disobedience and sinne, yet he reioyceth in their seruice, and exhorts them still to continue their praises of God.

Dumbe Creatures speake, and Man is strucken dumbe.

And though they seeme dumbe, yet in verity and truth they speake in their silence: for obiecting or presenting themselues to our view, shewing their excellent nature, their rare and wonderfull properties, therein they speake their Maker. Man perceiuing and apprehending this, falls instantly to admiration, which is a kinde of naturall trance, wherein his speech failes him, as if he were for a time strucken dumbe together with the dumbe Creatures, to shew his fellow-feeling and symbolizing affection with them; at length he comes to himselfe, begins to breathe, then is he tied to his vtterance, as it were to comment vpon their silence, or to be their interpreter; for as God requires no more then the ability of the Creature, so he will admit no lesse, but expect, the vtternost extent of our power: In the dumbe Creatures their silence did suffice: Man hauing the free vse of his tongue, is therefore tied to adde Speech to their silence, Reason to their sence, and perswa-

perswading them not to any impossibility aboue their condition, as to beleeue the mysteries of Grace, and the like, but applauding them in their owne naturall course, therein he seemes to exhort them, and thus exhorting them, stirs vp himselfe, and magnifies the Diuine prouidence, who first appointed the course: As God speaking the Word, all things were made: God speakes to nothing, and by vertue of his words, behold a Creation: so wee speaking to the dumbe Creatures, and in them approuing Gods workes, wee shew the conformitie of our wills to the Diuine institution.

The end why man exhorteth beasts.

For in our speech wee doe not alwaies respect others, but sometimes our selues. The most learned Preacher speaking to the most iudicious Auditory, yet cannot promise vnto himselfe happy successe; wee must looke to the discharge of our owne dutie, and not to the euent. Man speaking to the dumbe Creatures though they vnderstand him not, yet his owne bounden duty, together with the strength and vehemency of his affections, (that he can doe no lesse then speake in a cause which concernes Gods glory) this makes it no fruitlesse labour, and surely some profit thereby redounds: for whereas otherwise man were a stranger to beasts, and they seruing God in their owne kinde, their seruice should no way concerne him; yet now by vertue of his exhortation, he hath a part and portion in their obedience, and thus very cunningly, what is wanting in himselfe, he desires to supply it in them, to make their seruice seeme as his owne, as if forsooth they had beene rebellious, had it not beene for his perswasion; though himselfe be dissolute, yet it is he, that keepes all in good order: a pretty policy.

The vse of the creatures.

Thus as they were ordained for his naturall vse, for his food, clothing, labour: so it should seeme, they were appointed for his spirituall vse, to serue him in the nature of Chaplaines, that they should honour and praise God, while their master, sinfull and wretched man, dishonours him, yet their seruice might seeme to be done by his appointment.

Though I will not excuse our selues, yet suffer mee to speake in their behalfe, who being dumbe, cannot speake for themselues, I know not how powerfull and effectuall mans words are, but surely in them I can doe no lesse then admire their obedience; the most dumbe and senseleſſe Creatures, the very Rocks and the Caues, if we speake vnto them, and speake aloud; instantly they make a reuerberation of our breath, whereby our owne words are renewed, as if they vnderstood, and did answere vs in our owne speech and language; suppose I should stretch out my voice, and cry vnto them *to praise God*, instantly you should heare them answer, *Praise God*: or if they faile in this Eccho, yet sure they will not faile in their conformity; herein they are not so properly our schollers, as presidents and examples to vs of obedience.

The obedience of the Creatures is set foorth by a similitude.

Then let vs conceiue that all the workes of God make one corporation, and are as members of one body, vnder one common gouernment. As then it appeares in man, that the heart giues direction to the dull hands, to be lifted vp in deuotion, and the dull hands knocke the sleepy heart, to awake her out of drowsinesse; And thus they doe mutually prouoke and stirre vp each other to ioyne in the seruice. As this befalls the parts of Man in respect of himselfe, so the like befalls Man and the Creatures in respect of the Vniuerse.

A corporation of all Creatures.

And that it may no way seeme strange, that dumbe Creatures should bee said to praise God, to speake most properly and most exactly of the praises of God, which surely consist in a religious worship and seruice of God; if, then I should say, that in the stocks and in the stones, in the foure-footed beasts, and generally in all the dumbe Creatures, that there is some obscure shadow, or some resemblance of religion, or rather indeed some proper kinde of religion: For there are diuers and seuerall kindes of religions, religions of all sorts, of all sizes, of all fashions (witnesse the diuersity of religions in these our daies) If then I should say that the dumbe Creatures haue likewise their

The religion of dumbe Creatures.

their proper kinde of religion as well as men, and that they are very deuout, godly, zealous, strict and most religious in their owne kinde, euen farre aboue men; if I should say this; I would humbly craue your patience a while. Let mee bring my reasons and labour to proue it, that the naturall seruice of God in dumbe Creatures, howsoeuer wee may esteeme it, yet in verity and truth, it is a kinde of naturall religion.

Morall vertues we may suppose to be onely competent to man, as being grounded in the reasonable soule, yet therein the dumbe Creatures instruct vs, *Goe, sluggard, learne of the Pismire*; religion wee may conceiue to be mans owne proper inheritance, yet behold, wee are stirred vp by the example of the dumbe beasts, *The Oxe and the Asse acknowledge their Lord & Master. The Windes and the Seas obey him.* It should seeme, that as there is a religion aboue man, the religion of Angels, so there may be a religion beneath man, the religion of dumbe Creatures. For wheresoeuer there is a seruice of God, in effect it is a religion. Thus according to the seuerall degrees and difference of states, the state of nature, grace and glory, religion may likewise admit degrees, and difference.

The seruice of God in dumbe Creatures, is their religion.

Religion then, if I doe not mistake, consists of these foure parts, *A Creed* for our beliefe, which is the obiect of our Faith; *A set forme of prayer for our supplication*, which is the anchor of our Hope: *A decalogue* or law for our practice, which is the rule of our Charity: Sacrifice and Sacraments for the vpshot and consummation of all, to season and sanctifie all. These are in effect the briefe heads of religion, as well appeares in our ordinary Catechisme, consisting of these foure parts, and therein is contained the summe of Religion. Now if all of these, or at least, if some of these can no way appeare in the Creatures, yet how great the similitude and analogy is betweene both, if you please to obserue with patience, and to condemne nothing vnheard, I doe well hope, that many things will be for our instruction, and all for our example and imitation.

The parts of religion.

 And

How we come to know the Creatures.

And first, of that knowledge which wee haue of the Creatures, how there should be such a mutuall intelligence or correspondency betweene vs, as that we should truely know them and their religion, as if wee vnderstood their language, & were thorowly acquainted with all the secrets and mysteries of their Church and State. The first notice then which wee haue of the Creatures, it is by an information of sence, wherein the Diuine prouidence hath so fitted and porportioned things each to other, suppose the faculty to the obiect, sence to things sensible, that wee instantly receiue them, not with any difficulty of learning, but by a naturall instinct: Thus it is betweene the sensible man, and the visible world, being Creatures of like condition, we doe easily conceiue them.

Sence is the mother of Idolatrie.

Thus sence first serues to informe vs: but if wee should here rest onely in the information of sence, this were most dangerous: from hence grew our first error: whereas beauty was giuen to the Creatures, to point out the incomparable beauty of God, many beholding them, haue so doted vpon them, and so farre enamoured with their beauty, that they could goe no farther, but haue taken the Creatures for God, supposing that God himselfe could not be more glorious.

The vnderstanding reacheth beyond sence.

Thus whereas a right vnderstanding would conclude, great is the beauty of Creatures, therefore how great and incomparable is the beauty of God! sence, as being of a lower straine, not able to aime at such a high pitch, rather inferres, Such is the beauty of Creatures, that our sence cannot possibly comprehend any greater beauty; therefore the Creatures are God. Thus sence and sence alone, without other information, is indeed the mother and nurse of idolatry; and if wee should proceed to no further search and inquisition, then the Creatures might seeme to blaspheme, to make themselues Gods; being onely witnesses to the Deity, they might seeme to assume vnto themselues the right of the Deitie: yet herein let me excuse them, they are innocent, they doe it not of themselues, but

but through our corruption some sensuall men haue ascribed it: for being not able to conceiue greater perfection, it is naturall to man to acknowledge God in the highest. Thus some haue worshipped the Sunne, the Moone, the Starres, diuers and seuerall Creatures, and the like.

The good vse of Idolatry.

By the way giue me leaue to make some vse of their error, and here to crie out, O what an excellent workeman is God, that euen his owne common and meanest workes should be of that excellency, as that they should be taken for God! And thus Idolatry which seemes wholly to detract from God, and to ascribe all to the creatures, yet by an ouer-ruling prouidence of God, contrary to her owne intent, in so much magnifying the Creatures, doth in them and by them set foorth the supereminent greatnesse of *God the Creator*.

In reason we cannot consider the effects without their cause.

This were sufficient, if mans whole knowledge were plunged and puzzled in sence, and that hee had no other guide or direction saue onely sence; but man hath further a reasonable soule, which taking information from sence, as it well beseemes his condition, vseth degrees of discourse, and in this reasonable soule wee shall finde this ingrafted, as a first ground and principle, that in all our knowledge, we must first search out the cause of euery effect; for euery effect naturally points out his cause: and there is no relation so necessary, as is that which is betweene the cause and the effect. As it is the truth of things, that nothing can subsist without a cause: so in our apprehension, that we cannot conceiue the one without relation to the other: there is no knowledge without the knowledge of causes, and therefore we striue and endeuour to discerne the cause in the effects, and the effects in the cause.

Reason as apt to discourse, so to search and enquire.

By vertue of this ingrafted principle, wee cannot consider the creatures alone, and by themselues, but together with them and in them wee must search out their cause. Here then Reason would faine know, whether the Creatures be the effects of another, or causes of themselues? This

This is the first proposition, or *Quare.*

Reason lea nes of the dumbe beasts.

Now you shall vnderstand, that euery search and inquisition, when we know not things of our selues, but that wee take our information from others, wee seeke them from others, and learne them of others; this is a kinde of demand: of whom then should reason demand this? not of her selfe, then surely of none but the Creatures; or who should make answer to this demand? not reason to her selfe, then surely none but the Creatures. Marke then the answer of the Creatures, to this demand of reason; their answer as giuing an account of their faith: for faith is the ground and foundation of religion, and without faith, religion cannot subsist. Marke then the faith of the Creatures in their answers: their answers, I say, not in expresse termes, for this is not necessary: men that are speechlesse and dumbe, may notwithstanding make a confession of their faith, *Digitis nutu q; loquuntur*, so may the dumbe and speechlesse Creatures, they may likewise vse outward signes and tokens, to giue a confession of their faith; their answer is answerable to their nature, their silent nature, and their still properties giue this resolution, and make this answer, and that without any difficulty.

For their bounden nature must necessarily imply, that the limitation of their nature proceeds from another.

The answer of dumbe creatures vnto reason.

Here is their *answer*: their composition and dissolution must necessarily presuppose first a compounder: here is their *answer*: their seuerall times of rising and setting must argue, that there being a time, when they were not, needs they must want a cause first to subsist; being not by themselues, or for themselues alone, but carrying a mutuall respect each to other: suppose the heauens to the earth, the earth to the heauens, the faculty to the obiect, the obiect to the faculty: this must needs inforce, that they could not thus seuerally ordaine themselues, but that there was some other extrinsecall cause, which knowing both, and making both, appointed each for other. To conclude, that vnreasonable creatures should mooue, according to the rules

rules of reason, and such as want vnderstanding, should be guided by the direction of an vnderstanding; this must needs argue that some intelligent cause did first ordaine them, which now preserues them in their naturall course.

The beasts acknowledge a God, and deny all fortune.

This in briefe is their answer; for they intimate thus much, the Creatures acknowledge themselues to be no more then effects, they pointed out a cause, an intelligent cause. Here then we must exclude blind fortune, for that things by great chance should fall into such an excellent order, reason it selfe seemes to oppose it, which admits no fortune, but deemes it as a base-borne childe of ignorance: which if wee should yeeld, it would rather prooue the cause of disorder and confusion, and it would vndoubtedly imply a contradiction, to ascribe the workes of foresight and prouidence vnto a blind guide.

Thus then the Creatures being true, reall, positiue effects, they seeme to confesse, or rather to challenge vnto themselues a true, reall, positiue efficient cause, which in effect is to acknowledge *a God, & a Maker*. And this their knowledgement of God, as it is fitly gathered from the Creatures, so it is in verity and in truth no lesse then a naturall implicit faith of the Creatures: all of them testifying the same truth, doe in a sort make one common confession of their faith: *Accedentem ad Deum oportet credere quod sit Deus*; this is the first article of their Creed, that they acknowledge a God; thus they cannot be iustly taxed with infidelity. Herein they farre exceed the Atheist, who denying his Maker, must therefore make himselfe liue of himselfe, and so consequently should preserue himselfe. Surely of all others he is the greatest and the most notable Impostor, denying the true God, he makes himselfe God, for he made himselfe. But I will as easily beleeue, that man either should not be borne, or being borne, that he should not decline in yeres, not be subiect to sorrow, griefe, or infirmity, and that he should neuer taste of death or corruption, as that he should first subsist without a Maker.

The naturall implicite faith of beasts.

The beaste may teach the Atheists.

Thus then the Creatures agree that there is a God.

Now let vs heare what other Teſtimony they giue of this God; and looke how many Teſtimonies they giue of God, in effect they rehearſe ſo many Articles of their Creed; the firſt attribute of God is, *vt ſit vnus*, as God ſpeakes of himſelfe: *Ego Deus vnus, non habebis Deos alienos, &c.* Let vs then enquire of the Creatures, whether they acknowledge one God, or will admit a plurality of gods in their ſeruice. And heere vpon the firſt view and appearance, they ſeeme vnto me to cry and to teſtifie *one God, one God*, for all nature is directed to one end: whereas if there were many efficients, they would vndoubtedly intend their ſeuerall ends. The world is circular, which beſt reſembleth the figure of one: all the ſtreames are reduced to one head: all the degrees of things ſtill tend to the higheſt, there being in nature a priority and poſteriority; Euery gouernment tends and ends in a Monarchie; Nature will not endure many competitors; order and decency require as much in effect: All heat is reduced to one firſt heat; all bodies to one firſt body. Philoſophy beats vpon this Axiome, that nature deſires to worke with the feweſt inſtruments, and therefore euery thing is to be reduced to the feweſt principles. In the conſtitution of any thing, ſhe requires but a couple; for the effecting of any thing, one will ſuffice; to admit of more, would rather hinder and diſtract the worke, then any way further or helpe the action.

The dumbe Creatures confeſſe one God.

Thus to acknowledge one God: the workemanſhip and fabrike of the whole world will teſtifie as much, wherein the foot-ſteps and impreſſion of one and the ſame God doe moſt eminently appeare, all of them giuing ſufficient demonſtration of one and the ſame wiſdome and prouidence, which appeares alike in all, grounding all his workes, and all his actions, vpon the ſelfe-ſame principles and rules of his owne wiſdome: there are not gods of the Mountaines, gods of the Valleys, gods of the Land, and gods of the Ocean: for the fiſhes of the ſea, the birds of the ayre, the beaſts of the field, haue a like faſhion and forme

The Creatures deny that there can be many gods.

forme for their outward feature, and a like inward inſtinct and prouidence for their courſe and direction, which ſimilitude of nature muſt needs proceed from one and the ſame ground of wiſdome; the voice and verdit of nature will likewiſe teſtifie as much, which being to admit ſome infinit power, tranſcending reaſon, and the courſe of all Creatures, will therefore tie it ſelfe to admit of the leaſt inconuenience, rather of one then of a multitude.

Heere is the ſecond Article of their faith; as they acknowledge a God, ſo they acknowledge but one God, and therefore they worſhip the true God. Thus the inuiſible God viſibly appeares in the viſible Creatures; their multitude altogether concurring to one end, betokens the vnity of their Maker, which Maker being the firſt and ſole efficient cauſe, needs we muſt conceiue in him, whatſoeuer belongs to a firſt mooue; Now behold how many excellent attributes of God doe iſſue out of this one ground, and are hence diſcouered, as wee conſider God to be the firſt cauſe and mooue.

The Creatures point out God, as the firſt mooue.

Suppoſe for his owne abſolute neceſſity, that being the firſt, he muſt ſubſiſt of himſelfe, and can doe no leſſe then ſubſiſt, and therefore ſubſiſt from eternity. And thus ſubſiſting of himſelfe, he muſt be immutable and vnchangeable in himſelfe, that he may likewiſe hold out for eternity. Being thus the cauſe of himſelfe, hee muſt haue the beſt and moſt abſolute being; And this being muſt needs be infinit, ſince he is of himſelfe, and cannot preſcribe himſelfe bounds, nor cannot admit bounds from another, when as there is nought but himſelfe; Being thus one, infinit, and from eternity, he muſt be without mixture or compoſition, *purus actus*, moſt pure and ſimple in his owne nature: for heere were not diuers ingredients, which being firſt ſimple in themſelues, might afterwards compound him; And as he is without compoſition, ſo he cannot admit diuerſity of parts, which doe indeed ariſe onely from a compoſition, which parts in reſpect of themſelues ſhould be more or leſſe perfect, when as the whole Deity is infinitly

Hence is implied Gods neceſſity, Immutability, Eternity, Bonity, Infinity, Simplicity, Without variety of parts.

finitly perfect, and cannot admit degrees of comparison.

Without diuersity of faculties.

Being thus without composition, or diuersity of parts, he cannot admit variety of faculties, which seeme to be tied and annexed to the diuersity of parts, and therefore those many seuerall perfections which appeare in the Creatures, they are but one absolute perfection in God. Thus the wisdome of God is the power of God, the power of God is the will of God, the will of God is the iustice of God, the iustice of God, is the mercy of God: all these attributes can admit no difference betweene themselues, and all these attributes are but one and the selfe-same God, though to vs, both for our apprehension, and in respect of Gods actions, they seeme to be diuers and distinct, yet are they linked, and together incorporated in that one and infinit nature of God, which cannot admit a variety. Thus farre of God in himselfe: and all this we must suppose in *a first cause or moouer:* and all this, it is no lesse in effect, then a naturall implicit faith of the Creatures, as they doe necessarily point out and demonstrate this first cause or moouer.

Gods wisdome.

Freewill.

Power.

Prouidence.

Now in respect of the Creatures, nothing can be wanting to God, which was necessarily required for the workemanship. Suppose an infinit wisdome in contriuing the worke, which otherwise would aske an infinit time of deliberation, as I may so say, a world of consultation were requisit for the framing of this world, were it not supplied in an instant by the infinit wisdome of God, which wisdome more especially and immediatly appeares in the comprehending and vnderstanding of himselfe. Secondly, hauing once laid downe the plot-forme, then succeeds a most *absolute freewill* in bounding and disposing his owne actions. Thirdly, intending to create, and being resolued of the manner, then followes an *infinit power* to put all in execution. Fourthly, hauing once finished the worke, necessary it is, that there should be a continuance of the same infinit wisdome, will, and power, in his *Prouidence*, for the continuance and preseruation of his workes.

The

The Creatures can no more preserue themselues, then at first subsist of themselues, and therefore they want a continuall concourse, and sweet influence of this first moouer: for as it is a property of God to be independent, so it is a property of Creatures to be alwaies dependent; and this serues as a bridle to curbe them, besides the ouerruling power and prerogatiue which God reserues in himselfe, whereof I will not dispute.

Whereas here are many grounds wherby we come to the knowledge of God.

See here how many excellent attributes of God are discouered by the information and instructions which wee haue from the Creatures; these are the Articles of their faith, and all these arise out of this one ground (as the Schoole speakes) *ratione, & necessitate causalitatis*, as wee consider God to be the first cause and moouer. Alas, I should be infinit, if I would proceed in this subiect to speake of God, onely so farre forth as the Creatures doe testifie of God, which in effect is their faith; but I will passe this ouer: yet giue me leaue to passe my censure vpon it. *Audita & approbata sunt omnia:* vpon due examination I finde them to be sound and Orthodoxall, I cannot taxe them with Atheisme or Heresie, but what they say or testifie of God, it is most true; onely with this defect, that they say not enough; nature cannot be raised aboue nature; the mysteries of grace fall not within the compasse of naturall bounds. Why, thus there are degrees of faith amongst vs: we see but in part, wee know but in part, all cannot conceiue mysteries alike, and the most faithfull man may truly say, *Lord, I beleeue, Lord, helpe my vnbeliefe.* And thus it is with the Creatures, what they testifie of God, is most true, but they testifie not enough, yet what they testifie not, it is not out of frowardnesse, or that they are hard of beliefe, but it is for want of capacity: here then they are sufficiently excused;

Natures testimony of God is defectiue and insufficient.

Excused I say, in respect of themselues, but whether any wrong or iniurie be done vnto vs, this is a question; for if the Creatures propose vnto vs this knowledge of God as a perfect rule of our faith, to which we should not adde,

but

Whether this defect in Gods knowledge appeares by the testimony of nature.

but that we ſhould be tied to the ſtint of their beliefe: to haue no more faith then they, this were dangerous; for to admit this, were to oppoſe and contradict all the myſteries in religion, which are not diſcouered by their light; this were in effect to ſeduce vs, to make vs of Chriſtians, meere naturalls; Indeed they haue already too farre preuailed on our paſſions and on our affections, that we are almoſt growne ſenſuall and beaſtly, like vnto them, as if we were of their common-wealth; but if they ſhall preſſe further vpon vs, to worke vpon our ſoules, our conſciences, and our vnderſtandings, to intice vs to be of their faith, of their Church, of their religion, to make vs meere naturals, like to themſelues, this were moſt intolerable. So then the queſtion remaines, whether the Creatures, or nature, I meane, in the Creatures, or that which is the ſame in effect, whether naturall reaſon proceeding vpon naturall grounds, whether theſe ſuppoſing their owne ability in the fulneſſe of Gods knowledge, ſeeme to exclude grace, or otherwiſe in the weakeneſſe of their knowledge, ſhewing their owne inſufficiency, ſeeme onely to make way, and ſerue as an introduction to grace? It is a queſtion indeed, in my iudgement, of all others moſt worthy to be reſolued: for in effect it implies the whole ground and foundation of all our myſteries, and it ſtands thus; whether by the light of our owne naturall reaſon, we are to beleeue no more of God, then appeares in the Creatures; or whether the ſame light of our owne naturall reaſon will informe vs, that there are other greater myſteries to be receiued of God, more then thoſe natural attributes, which are diſcerned by his works?

The ground of all the myſteries in Religion.

For your ſatisfaction herein, you may be pleaſed to vnderſtand, that what knowledge wee haue of God by the light of our naturall reaſon, it is not deriued immediatly from God himſelfe, but by a reflection, onely ſo farre foorth as God is diſcerned in the glaſſe of his Creatures; now this is a rule in all arts, that no cauſes can fully, exactly and totally appeare in their effects, as hauing firſt a proper

Cauſes are not fully diſcerned by their effects.

per nature allotted to themſelues, before they were ordained to action: firſt, they are in themſelues, before they come to relation, ſo that for the knowledge of cauſes in themſelues, there muſt be ſome further ſearch and inquiſition, more then the effects demonſtrate: this ſhall appeare, by conſidering the diuerſity of cauſes, which I will ſuppoſe to be of three ſorts.

Naturall cauſes.

Firſt, naturall cauſes: and theſe are not ſufficiently diſcerned by their owne naturall effects: (*E.g.*) by the nature and properties of a weed, you cannot diſcouer the whole nature, and properties of the Sunne or the earth; for the inward nature and the outward actions, are not alwaies of like extent, nor doe they agree in all accidents.

Voluntary cauſes.

More eſpecially this will appeare in voluntary cauſes, that they cannot totally be diſcerned by their workes, when as the limitation of the worke, and the diuerſitie of the worke proceeds, not from the neceſſity of the nature, but depends vpon the free will of the Maker. Thus one and the ſame voluntary cauſe brings foorth various and different effects, and therefore cannot imprint her whole and perfect image in all. Thus if man were knowne by his workes, we ſhould neuer make ſearch for malefactors, but euery one ſhould inſtantly appeare.

Supernaturall cauſes.

Now there are yet other cauſes, and theſe are of a different nature, and condition: ſuppoſe the Angelicall ſpirits, and the materiall world; God and the Creatures, a ſpirituall Deity and a corporeall worke, *hæc differunt toto cœlo, differunt pluſquam genere:* how is it poſſible then, that the one ſhould fully and perfectly diſcouer the other? Thus in a word to make application of all, God being a cauſe, a voluntary cauſe, a cauſe of another nature, ſurely the whole vertue, and power of the Deity cannot be diſcerned or laid open by the workes of the Deity. *E.g.* By the building of this houſe though the skill of the workeman ſufficiently appeares, yet you cannot informe me of his age, his name, ſtature, ſtrength, condition, complection, the place of his birth, the place of his dwelling, his means, his

The application.

An inſtance.

his maintenance, and none of all these will euer appeare by the worke: and thus it befalls the Creatures in reference to God, they set forth indeed many excellent attributes of God, yet they doe not intend to giue vs full satisfaction in the knowledge of God; but in humility seeme to confesse, that there is something in the Deity, which appeares not in the Creatures, and therefore in their owne want and defect, they referre vs to Gods owne reuelation of himselfe.

How nature directs vnto grace.

For in our knowledge of God, the Creatures are not our bounds, but serue onely to point out a Deitie, and then to cry, *Plus vltra, plus vltra*, and so to leaue to God himselfe, sending vs from the outward shop of his workes, to the inward schoole of his words, from the theatre of the Creatures, to the sanctuary of his dwelling, there to learne a new lesson in the knowledge of God. Here is another article of their faith, another Testimony of God, in effect they confesse that God being incomprehensible, he cannot be comprehended in his workes: hence proceeds their submission, considering their owne weakenesse, and the infinit distance betweene God and themselues, they will not dare or attempt to discouer the whole Deity, nor will they iustly be taxed with curiosity, but content themselues with such a competent measure in the discouery of Gods knowledge, as their owne nature is capeable.

Nature will not trespasse beyond her owne bounds.

Thus then the Creatures not fully reuealing God, there is some place left for a further knowledge of God, and to this end there must be some further search and inquisition made after God; here then is opened a gap to let in all the mysteries of our Christian faith and religion: suppose the eternall generation of the Sonne, the admirable procession of the Spirit, the glorious and indiuisible Trinity, the miraculous incarnation of the God-head, and the like. Nature indeed cannot reueale these mysteries, and being once reuealed, nature cannot contradict them; she can neither propose nor oppose them; for as all contrarieties are in the

Reason giues way to mysteries.

She neither reuealeth, nor impugnes them.

the same kinde suppose heat to coldnesse, moysture to drought, and the like (these are qualities of the same kind) so in our vnderstanding, all opposition must be betweene things of like nature; but if secrets and mysteries be of another kinde, of a different nature, of a different world, and therefore of a different speculation; then surely one and the same ground of reason which is fitted and proportioned to this our present state and condition, cannot equally suffice both, much lesse impugne and oppose things farre aboue and beyond her reach and capacity. So then, for the right vnderstanding of mysteries which are of a different kind, we must expect a reason of a different kinde, which in effect is a sanctifying grace, *Gods holy Spirit* to guide vs.

The necessity of faith.

And to this end consider how absurd were it, that man should haue no other teachers, or instructors in the knowledge of God, but only the dumbe Creatures, which must be admitted, in case we had no other knowledge of God, but onely of such attributes, as are discerned by his works; how improbable is it, that reason should haue no other information, but onely from sence and sensible obiects, euen concerning such things, which infinitly transcend and are aboue all reason, and all sence, as if a man should stoope downe to lay hold on such things, which are indeed aboue him, and beyond his reach?

Dumbe Creatures cannot be the sole teachers of man concerning God.

Thus in humility the Creatures acknowledge their owne bounds; as bounds in their substance, bounds in their power; so bounds in their knowledge; they will not trespasse beyond their bounds, they will not incroach vpon mysteries, which standing a farre off, belonging to another world, and therefore farre remote from the view of nature. We want a *sanctifying grace*, like a prospectiue glasse to discerne them. Thus it falls out in nature, euen in respect of naturall things; the sunne and the starres must first send downe a light, and without their owne light, they cannot be discerned; so God himselfe must first giue a testimony of himselfe, and then inlighten our hearts, for

Faith is a kinde of reason eleuated aboue a naturall condition.

 receiuing

receiuing this testimony, and without this his owne testimony, he cannot be reuealed.

Naturall reason acknowledgeth mysteries in generall.

Thus to conclude, though the Creatures, or nature I meane in the Creatures, or that which is the same in effect, though naturall reason proceeding vpon naturall grounds, though these doe not discouer our mysteries in particular, yet in generall they seeme to imply that mysteries there are, nature seemes to confesse that there is a power aboue nature, and this power did then appeare in the first institution of nature; reason seemes to acknowledge that all faculties hauing their owne proper bounds, she her selfe cannot be without bounds, and therefore many things there may be and are beyond the comprehension of reason. Thus much in generall.

Supernaturall workes confirme supernaturall words.

Now for proofe and confirmation of our mysteries in particular, we doe not require their testimony, for we haue other greater proofes then theirs, and therefore we will ease them of that labour: they haue the workes of nature to testifie the God of nature. We haue workes aboue nature, miracles beyond all naturall causes, to testifie our mysteries aboue nature: they haue a Creation for their being; a prouidence for their preseruation, &c. we haue an eternall prescience, an immutable decree, prophecies and predictions, fore-telling future euents, together with the full accomplishing of these prophesies; in a word, they haue the voice of nature; we haue the testimony of the God of nature.

Reason discerning the open miracles, cannot gainesay the secret mysteries.

This I speake, looking to the generall nature, yet it cannot be denied, but by a particular charge, as it were a speciall Commission, some Creatures may likewise be truely and properly said to giue a testimony, and to confirme our mysteries of grace; for the same God is God both of nature and grace, he hath laid the foundation of grace in the ground-worke of nature: as grace doth sanctifie nature, so nature supports grace; as grace workes by nature, so nature may beare witnesse to the working of grace. Thus all miracles, what did they argue, but that the Creatures

tures changing their owne nature, did therein shew their obedientiall power to be at his command and direction, who first appointed their nature, who can change and alter their nature, and now workes aboue and beyond nature; these workes surmounting nature, his words may likewise surpasse nature. Thus mysteries aboue naturall apprehension, are no more incredible then workes aboue naturall power; both carry the same stampe, and are of the same mint, they giue credit and testimony to each other. Miracles we discerne by sence, we acknowledge in reason, to be such as indeed they are, miracles beyond all naturall power. Then presently our faith not carried with a vaine credulity, not seduced with sophistry, but being truly informed of the workes, presently she stoopes in humility and hearkens to the words, and therein she acknowledgeth *mysteries, mysteries* beyond mans reason and comprehension.

Reason.

Thus it should seeme, that some *Giantlike Deity*, by his workes, by his words hath made knowne vnto the world, that his power and his wisdome surpasseth all naturall bounds, while the Creatures shewing in themselues the effects of his power, doe likewise point out the depth of his wisdome, and hereby conclude an infinit power, an infinit wisdome, both which cannot admit mans weake opposition or disputation, but rather should worke in vs admiration, astonishment and silence.

Admiration, Faith.

Miracles proue mysteries.

For as in miracles, the dumbe Creatures, notwithstanding their naturall inclination, yet are they ouer-ruled by Gods power: so in mysteries, man, notwithstanding his naturall wrangling, and contentious wit, and the scrupulous curiosity of his owne minde, yet must he submit himselfe to Gods words. Thus the power manifested, serues as a seale to the will reuealed: miracles prooue the truth of mysteries; the one our naturall reason may easily see, and discerne; and these being discerned, doe prooue the infallible truth of the other.

This by way of digression: for this is extraordinary vnusuall,

usuall, and therefore onely incident to some few of them, according to times, place, and occasions. Come we then to their generall faith, which I call the naturall faith of the Creatures, which faith implies the whole knowledge of God, whereof the Creatures informe vs, how farre by their direction wee may proceed in *Gods knowledge*, and where we must desist. This knowledge of God being fitly gathered from the Creatures, can be no lesse then a naturall implicit faith of the Creatures; all of them testifying the same truth, doe in a sort make one common confession of their faith, they say their Creed together, as we doe; this is enough, to saue and excuse them from the imputation of infidelity: for children doe no more in their baptisme, whom notwithstanding we know to be in the number of Gods faithfull people.

The naturall implicite faith of the Creatures.

Faith doth not alwaies imply the actuall surrendring vp of our wills and consents, but sometimes an habit or forme; neither is euery faith, a iustifying faith: but there is a testifying faith, an historicall faith, yea, sometimes an imputatiue faith; and there being so many kindes and degrees of faith, I pray be not so vncharitable, as to make the poore dumbe Creatures infidels.

The seuerall kindes of faith.

For there is a wisdome of nature, there is a knowledge in dumbe beasts, they know their times and their seasons, their manner of working, and what is fit and agreeable to the state of their bodies; and why may there not be a naturall faith in them, as well as a naturall wisdome and knowledge? for these seeme to be as proper to man as his faith; yet these we ascribe to dumbe beasts, though they want a reasonable discourse: and why may we not as well yeeld vnto them a faith, not a sanctifying, but a naturall faith? for I will not exceed the bounds of nature in them: their faith is an historicall faith, or a testifying faith; for this their naturall faith serues onely to giue testimony to the God of nature.

Dumbe Creatures may as well be said to haue faith as knowledge.

Surely they haue a faith, and what is more, they preach this faith vnto vs, together with many morall instructions, and

and many good admonitions, they are, I confesse, very learned preachers, and doe exceedingly edifie, for they were able to strike the very heathen (who were without the knowledge of the true God) with wonder and amazement: the most dumbe and senceless Creatures beare witnesse and testifie of God, *The heauens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handyworke: one day telleth another, and one night certifieth another.* Thus they instruct vs, while they catechize each other; and as we exhort them to praise God, so they exhort vs, that what is wanting in them, they may supply it in vs: (here is their cunning:) they are dumbe, therefore they make vs their Aduocates, their instruments and spokesmen, they vse our tongues to set forth Gods praise, giuing vs occasion, and stirring vs vp to praise him, our praise becomes theirs, and their praise is made ours; wee are their God-fathers to make the confession of their faith; they are our remembrancers, & serue as the seales of our truth. And thus there is not onely a communion of Saints, but *a communion of Creatures*, which ioyne together in one naturall seruice of God; as we partake with them in substance, so we may ioyne with them, or rather learne of them, the commendations of God.

The dumbe Creatures preach their faith vnto vs:

And exhorting vs, they praise God by vs.

Thus much of their faith: wherein if I haue beene somewhat obscure, I pray remember the nature of faith, which is of things inuisible, and so from their faith and testimonies of God, come we then to their praiers, and praises of God. It is not onely proper to Angels to be continually busied in praising and magnifying of God, singing their *Halleluiah, &c.* but euen the most dumbe Creatures partake in this seruice, and beare their part in this song, though not in such an excellent manner. This is natures daily taske and imployment: for what is naturall to things in generall, therein nature cannot be wanting to her selfe, but must first know and acknowledge her owne properties, within her selfe; *artificem collaudat opus*, that the worke should praise and commend the workeman, I take it

As Angels, so dumbe Creatures continually praise God.

it to be a seruice imposed, or an homage done to the Lord. Thus wheresoeuer ye discerne the worke, you cannot exclude the workeman, both are of like extent, since to be, and to be the effects of his power, both are alike inseparable from the Creatures; who vpon the first view and appearance doe plainly shew, that what they are in themselues, this they haue from their Maker; their perfection speakes his excellency; their continuance, his eternity; if they haue ought praise worthy in themselues, this makes for his praise, who is most worthy of all praise, though we most vnworthy to set forth this praise.

The perfection of the Creatures.

Consider then in the Creatures in generall: First, their proper and bounded nature, together with so great variety and perfection in their owne kinde. Secondly, in this nature, such excellent properties, affections, and accidents which doe so well agree with the nature. Thirdly, from this nature, such strange and wonderfull apparitions and effects. Fourthly, by this nature such an excellent order, and proportion both in themselues, and to the whole Vniuerse. Fifthly, through this nature, such a constancy and perseuerance in keeping their due course, in performing their duty, seruice and ministry to man.

How Creatures praise their Maker.

O excellent Artist, that could so sweetly tune nature to make such a melody, where there is such a concent and agreement on euery side; the parts to the whole, the whole to the parts, each to it selfe, all to the Maker! O excellent melody! here is neither sound, nor voice to the eare, yet a most sweet and delectable harmony, a musicke of nature. Doe not then harken with your eares, but listen with your mindes, and in stead of notes, conceiue this ditty: *We sing the praise of our Maker.*

The temple of the Creatures and their Leiturgie.

This praise and seruice of God seemes to resemble our mentall prayer: for it is inward, secret, and consists only in Meditation. Come we then to their vocall prayers, which in effect is our Leiturgy or Church-seruice: and first, behold the magnificence of their Temple, which is the materiall world, the naturall Temple of God, a Temple made by

by God for himselfe, and by himselfe consecrated to his owne vse, where the heauens are the roofe, the earth is the footstoole, and wherein nothing is wanting, which may serue for beauty and ornament: here all the Creatures dayly attend, and are euer conuersant in this Temple: *For the Sparrow hath found her a house, and the Swallow a nest, where she may lay her young ones, euen thine Altars, O Lord God of Hostes, my King and my God: Blessed are all they that dwell in thy Courts, for they will euer be praysing thee, Psal.* 84.3,4.

They vse no ceremony, but substance.

Decent and comely ceremonies, which serue to stirre vp our dulnesse, and to set forth Gods magnificence, and therefore are most commendable in vs, yet they haue none; for they want none: in stead of them, they haue a truth and sincerity in their seruice, without hypocrisie or dissimulation: they are not troubled or disquieted in their owne thoughts (as we are) that they should be admonished by outward ceremonies: but they are like the Angels in heauen, wholly intent to their seruice. I would I could say as much for our selues.

The prayers of the Creatures.

Now listen a while to their prayers: here euery creature hath his sound & his voice, *Vox naturæ inclamantis Dominum naturæ, The voice of nature calling vpon the God of nature.* Nature is no foole, that she should babble and talke to her selfe, nor is there any other nature, with whom she might haue conference; she is no more idle and superfluous in her words, then in her workes: *Natura nihil fecit frustrà, natura nihil dicet frustrà.* Then vndoubtedly in these cries, she offers vp her prayers to her Maker.

The generall intent of prayers.

Now would you know the meaning and sence of these prayers? Surely I conceiue them to be to this or the like purpose. *Venite, iubilemus Deo nostro, qui fecit nos, exultemus & lætemur in ipso:* (the very beginning of our Morning Seruice) *O all yee workes of the Lord, praise ye the Lord, blesse him, and magnifie him for euer.* Doe you yet require some more particular notice, what they request in their prayers? Truely they pray in a strange tongue, I neuer learnt their language;

language; yet this I can say for a truth, in mine owne experience:

The diuersity of their prayers.

That according to the diuersity of occasions, you shall finde a difference in their prayers: in their ioy and mirth, you may discerne their pleasant notes of thankfulnesse: in their griefe and heauinesse, you shall heare their sorrowfull sighes, and groanes of complaints. Then it should seeme, nature becomes a petitioner: and to whom should she petition, but to that higher power which sits aboue nature? Though the dumbe Creatures haue neither speech nor language among them, yet *their sound is gone out into all quarters*: though their cries be inarticulate, and vnsignificant to vs, yet are they vnderstood of their Maker; he that sees the secrets of our hearts, can much more easily discerne the intent of their prayers.

But in this their seruice, or prayers, doe they vse no meanes of deuotion? haue they no respect to Gods magnificence? but confusedly doe mumble vp, or bellow out their prayers, as if with their crying, and roaring, God could be praised? which were indeed more to dishonour God in the manner, then to honour him in the seruice.

They praise God in the best manner.

Herein, to giue you full satisfaction, I say, that euery thing, according to the vttermost extent of his own ability, doth offer vp his seruice to God in the most excellent manner.

The Church-musicke of the Creatures.

To instance only in their Quier, or in their Church-musick, here you haue a full, perfect, and compleate Quier; sufficient variety of voices; the little chirping birds, the Wren and the Robin, they sing a treble; the Gold-finch, the Nightingale, they ioyne in the meane; the Black-bird, the Thrush, they beare the tenour, while the foure-footed beasts, with their bleating and bellowing, they sing a base: how other birds sing in their order, I referre you to the skilfull Musicians: here is diuersity of musicke, some haue their seuerall notes, as if they sung verses alone, and did pawse and keepe time like Queristers, while others vse their continued songs, that all might please with variety.

These songs are fitted for euery season, as if they had some

Their variety of Anthems and Collects.

some proper seruice, some collects appointed for the time; Thus they alter and varie according to the quarters of the yere, the houres of the day, the coasts of the world; and as if they were in some solemne procession, and did purpose to compasse and circuit the whole earth, with their Anthemes and Letanies: some sing while they are flying, others make choice of the woods for their standing, some in the groues, some in the meddowes, some in the plaines, some on the house toppe: here are their voyces. Now for their instruments; me thinkes the rockes, the caues, and the woods, with a hollownesse of their sound, like a musicall instrument, send forth an Eccho, and seeme to vnite their songs, together with the pleasant noyse in the fall, and gliding of waters; the pretty, sharpe whistling of the winde, which serues as a ground to their musicke.

Their canonicall houres.

And what is more, beleeue it, they obserue their canonicall houres, as if they were some religious order, they haue their lauds, their Mattens, their Vespers, in effect, they haue their Morning prayer, and their Euening song, for these are the speciall and the appointed times for their deuotion; neither will I conceale that which I haue so often obserued; sometimes one bird prouokes another to sing, then me thinkes I heare the Churches Antiphona's, one side of the Quier answering another, a custome which hath anciently beene brought into the Church, according to the patterne and president of the Seraphims, *Isa.6. Et clamabant alter ad alterum, & dicebant; Sanctus, sanctus, Dominus Deus exercituum.*

How powerful their prayers are.

To conclude, how effectuall, and acceptable their prayers are, I will not demand of them, they may chance to be foolish and partiall in their owne behalfe; herein take rather the testimony of God himselfe, and that to the poorest bird, which of all others we might suppose to be most neglected, for it is a night-bird, melancholy, ill presaging it hath a harsh note, and it feeds vpon carrion, and yet notwithstanding the *Psalmist* can testifie, *Psal. 147.9. Escam dat pullis corvorum inuocantibus eum*, as if

God kept a watch ouer the neſt, and did teach the young Rauens to call vpon him, and in effect to ſay grace, and to giue him thankes before the receiuing of their food.

After their prayers followes in the next place, their decalogue or law: and truly, for the practice of their religion in their liues and conuerſations, which appeares in the keeping and fulfilling of this decalogue or naturall law, I cannot but greatly admire them. They are ſtill carried with the ſame courſe, which God firſt appointed; the Sunne keepes his iuſt houre of riſing, the Moone obſerues her certaine reuolutions, ſo all the dumbe Creatures, and all the beaſts of the field doe the like: you may aſſoone aboliſh their nature, as accuſe them for the breach of the law of nature; they are led by their owne inſtinct, they haue no liberty of will to oppoſe, they cannot be refractory, but are like the Angels in heauen, ſealed and confirmed in their ſtate and condition. Here is their conformity to Gods naturall law; as farre forth as God hath giuen them a law, they are ſurely led by the law, and the moſt ſanctified man can doe no more, but according to the meaſure of grace that is giuen him. Alas! I ſhould ſhame our ſelues, if I ſhould ſpeake of our diſobedience, in reſpect of theirs.

The decalogue of the Creatures.

Heare then how all thoſe naturall vertues appeare in them, how they are rooted and grounded in them, ſuppoſe temperance, iuſtice, ſobriety, induſtry, naturall affection and the like; I will forbeare to ſpeake, being verily perſwaded that nature hath propoſed them vnto vs, as preſidents of each vertue, that hauing giuen vs a rule, ſome inclination in our ſelues to morall vertues, ſhe might annexe ſome example to that rule, the example of dumbe Creatures; that if we our ſelues, through the malignity of our wills, ſhould practiſe to aboliſh the law in our hearts (for ſo the cuſtome of ſinne takes away the ſence of ſinne) yet ſtill the law might be reſerued whole and entire, together with the exact patterne and practice of the law, as I may ſo ſay, bookes of reports in the Creatures; and to this

The morall vertues of dumbe beaſts.

this purpoſe I had made a long diſcourſe, but to enter vpon it, I ſhould proue tedious: therefore I will forbeare to make any further mention of this, which indeed is ſo euident and palpable, as that it cannot admit a contradiction.

From their law, come we then to their ſacrifice, which truely is as naturall as is their law: for ſacrifice is a pledge of our thankfulneſſe, which thankfulneſſe is a branch of common iuſtice, this iuſtice is naturally ingrafted in all Creatures, that receiuing our ſelues from God, we ſhould offer vp our ſelues vnto God, or at leaſt, ſomething in lieu of our ſelues, ſome quit-rent or fine in the acknowledgement of our Tenure, that we hold our ſelues from God, and therefore we are not at our owne diſpoſing, but muſt ſurrender vp our ſelues vnto God; ſo that you might as well exclude from nature, a naturall law, as to deny a ſacrifice. Thus in generall, all things being ordained to Gods glory, they are likewiſe ordained for his ſeruice, here is their ſacrifice. More particularly: Nothing in it ſelfe, containes in it ſelfe the vſe and end of it ſelfe; but hath ſome reference beyond it ſelfe (*E.g.*) Doth not euery thing euaporate, and impart ſome part of it ſelfe, ſuppoſe the flowers of the field in their ſweet ſmels; many Creatures with their incenſe and odoriferous perfumes: and what are theſe indeed but natures ſacrifices?

The ſacrifice of dumbe Creatures.

Shall we yet come neerer, and ſhew how they partake in a true ſacrifice? What are the ſtones in the Temple, but indeed offered vp in ſacrifice? For it is not neceſſary, that all ſhould conſecrate, who attend at the Altar: all cannot be principals; if the materiall temple will not ſuffice, come we then to mans body, which is the Temple of Gods Spirit: and ſurely things ordained for the vſe of this Temple, and the vſe conſiſting in their owne ſlaughter, they are indeed conſecrated and become a ſacrifice.

Their various and different ſacrifices.

If hitherto you diſlike the metaphoricall or large ſignification, come we then to the ſtrickeſt ſence. What were the ſacrifices of the Iewes, but indeed the offering vp of dumbe Creatures? Then ſurely, theſe dumbe Creatures were

The truth of their ſacrifices.

were no ſmall part in the ſacrifice, they cannot be excluded; but theſe were only types and ſhadowes of a true Sacrifice; Come we then to that one and only true Sacrifice, the ſacrifice of Chriſt: As we partake in his ſacrifice, in regard of our nature, the manhood of Chriſt, ſo all the Creatures cannot be excluded in regard of one common matter, or ſubſtance, in the body of Chriſt; ſo that in him, in him alone, the whole world, the great world in the little world, becomes a true and reall ſacrifice.

How the Creatures concurre in the Sacraments.

And for Sacraments: Are not all the Creatures ſanctified for mans vſe? And what is this in effect, but to be the viſible ſignes of inuiſible grace? Suppoſe the foure Elements. The fire, when as God appeared like fire in a bramble-buſh, and the Holy deſcended in fiery tongues; The aire, when as Chriſt together with his owne breath, breathed out his Spirit: The water, in our baptiſme: The earth, in her fruits; Bread and wine in the Euchariſt. Thus they ſhare in our Sacraments, according to the capacity of their nature: we actiuely, they paſſiuely, all concurre in the Sacraments.

The hope of the Creatures.

And to proceed yet further: Leſt they might ſeeme to faile in the end, and ſcope of religion, I ſay, they are not altogether without hope; for what may they not hope and expect from God, who is ſo bountifull and magnificent in his rewards? though their ſeruice be a naturall ſeruice, a ſeruice neceſſarily impoſed, and that they can doe no leſſe then ſerue him in their owne kinde, yet it ſtands with Gods bounty to reward their ſeruice. I ſay then, that they are not altogether without hope; for there is a naturall hope, as *Iob* ſpeaks, *Iob* 14.7. *Lignum ſi preciſum fuerit, habet ſpem quod reuireſcet:* ſo if I ſhould extend this naturall hope, as an earneſt, or as an implicite hope, to a renouation of nature; this were no inconuenience. For certaine it is of all the dumbe Creatures, that at the generall day of our Reſurrection, they likewiſe, though not in themſelues, yet in their owne elements and principles, ſhalbe renewed. For there ſhall be a new heauen and a new

new earth, that then they may be fitted for our vſe, as now in the time and ſtate of corruption, they ſerue our preſent turnes and occaſions.

What becomes of the Creatures after our reſurrection.

If this ſeeme a ſtrange doctrine then, let this reaſon confirme it: Creatures were firſt created in Paradiſe. Then ſurely they were not ſo much ordained for ſlaughter, and mans vſe, as for the ſetting forth of Gods glory. Now ſince our fall, *they groane and trauell in paine together with vs vnder the burthen of our ſinnes, and our miſeries, the puniſhments of ſinne, Rom.*8. 22. yet ſtill they continue innocent in themſelues, they are often imployed in Gods ſeruice, alwaies prayſing God in their owne kinde, and neuer incurre the breach of his law, but are patient, notwithſtanding our immoderate and inordinat abuſe. Then ſurely by a courſe of iuſtice, according to their manner, and the capacity of their owne nature, though not in themſelues, (that is) in the fierceneſſe, malignity and corruption of their nature, yet in their owne firſt elements and principles, or as they haue now entred into mans body, and are become parts of mans fleſh, all the Creatures in generall ſhall partake with vs, in our future intended renouation.

Their religion is according to their power.

Thus then we will ſay with *Ioſhuah*, 24. 15. *I and my houſe will ſerue the Lord:* we and whatſoeuer is ours, either inwardly in our ſelues, or outwardly in our ſubſtance, we are all at his ſeruice, euery one according to his power and ability doth praiſe God, and hath his religion, if a defectiue religion. Then looke to the power, and you ſhall finde it likewiſe defectiue, for both are fitted and proportioned to each other: in nature, there is a faith of nature, there is a law of nature; and where the naturall creature is capeable of grace, there are the myſteries of grace, the precepts and counſels of grace.

Euery thing muſt haue a religion.

And thus without any figure or metaphore, the Creatures may truly be ſaid to praiſe God, in a kinde of religious worſhip and ſeruice; for whatſoeuer proceeds from God, tends to his glory: heere is the end. Now the way muſt be agreeable to this end: and therefore what tends

to

to his glory, must needs runne in the course of his seruice, whether nature or grace. If ye say, that religion be properly tied to a state of grace; *Non est litigandum de verbis, vbi in re conuenimus*, yet I am not of that opinion, for I thinke it no absurdity to say, a natural religion. Thus all nations are said to haue their religion, and yet we know, that most of them haue no more then sence, reason, and nature; and yet notwithstanding, they haue a religion: then surely they haue onely a naturall religion, which in effect is no more, then the religion of dumbe beasts, for nature appeares alike in them as in vs: that which giues mans religion a speciall dignity and prerogatiue aboue the religion of dumbe beasts, is onely this, that mans religion is not meerely naturall, and onely naturall, but there is an earnest of grace to sanctifie the corruption of nature, mysteries of grace beyond the apprehension of nature, and a certainty of hope beyond the expectation of nature.

There is a naturall religion.

Proper to beasts, not to man.

And thus in generall, as there is a seruice of nature, so in generall, we may well say that there is a kinde of naturall religion; which notwithstanding proceeding onely from nature, it cannot be raysed aboue nature, but must againe returne and end in nature, and being by the necessity of their nature, it is therefore a seruice which requires no further reward, but onely serues as a motiue and example to vs.

A naturall religion hath naturall bounds.

And thus far of the naturall seruice of God in dumbe Creatures, which I call the Religion of dumbe Creatures; now briefely to conclude, three things there are wherein I doe much desire to giue you contentment. First, whether this meditation may be thought vaine and needlesse. Secondly, how farre it may seeme strange or a Paradoxe. Thirdly, what good vse may be made of it: for the first, whether this be a vaine meditation, I pray trace it by degrees: the faith of the Creatures, I did suppose to be that knowledge of God, which is gathered from the Creatures, as much in effect, as the naturall or reasonable man can know of God. Now whereas of all sciences, the Metaphy-

The Metaphysicks.

Metaphysicks haue euer beene held the most excellent, this very subiect is the principall part of the Metaphysicks; by consideration hereof, the heathen Philosophers haue beene strangely transported, and rauished, and haue burst foorth into these or the like exclamations and inuocations of God: *Ens entium, primus motor, prima intelligentia, naturans natura, immensa infinitas, principium sine principio, &c.*

Naturall Philosophy.

Secondly, after their faith; how the dumbe Creatures doe praise God in their owne nature, in their passions, in their affections; or if these be secret and hidden from man, then according to the imitation of man, how they praise God in their voyces, in their sounds, which are the outward signes, and symptoms of their owne inward nature. This belongs to the Physickes, and is in effect, the whole scope and intent of all naturall Philosophy.

Morall Philosophy.

Thirdly, for their law which serues as a guide to direct them; which law is written in their hearts, practised in their actions, in so much that in them, we may easily read the characters of this law, the very pure text of the law of nature without any corrupt glosse: this is in effect the whole ground and foundation of all morall Philosophy.

Theology.

Fourthly, for the sacrifice and Sacraments of Creatures, when we consider how the dumbe Creatures are sanctified, and prooue to be *Sacramentalia*, fit to enter into the Holiest of Holies, to be vnto vs as meanes and conduit-pipes of grace, which seeme to imply, that nature and grace being now incorporated, there was surely some Deity incarnate, by vertue wherof, the whole materiall nature is combined to the Spirituall nature; not by consanguinity, but by alliance, by the nuptials of those two natures in his one person, who was both perfect God and perfect Man; this is a most deepe and profound mysterie in Theology, and thus you cannot condemne this Meditation as vaine and needlesse.

How all sciences may be reduced to this naturall religion.

Neither can it seeme so strange, or a paradox: for take the bookes of Philosophers, and such as haue written of the Crea-

Creatures in generall, and suffer me to prefixe these words in the frontispice, *A Ioue principium*, or *In Dei nomine*; which are the same in effect. Then giue me leaue to turne ouer the leaues, and to the last lines, in stead of *Finis*, or *Explicit*, to adioyne these words, as a labell or codicill to the worke, *Ad Dei gloriã*: & both these nature implies: for first there must be a workeman, then the worke must be directed to some end. Now besides the worke it selfe, no other end appeares but the workeman: things must then runne in a circle, from God, to God; God in the forefront, God in the vpshot. And thus if you consider the Creatures, betweene God and God, in stead of a naturall discourse, here you haue a religion of nature.

How this naturall religion and Iudaisme is reduced to Christianity.

Thus in Christian Religion, if our ceremonies were first inuented by Pagans, if our prayers were first composed by Heathen, yet still we may lawfully vse them: for when we prefixe, *In nomine Patris, & Filij, & Spiritus sancti*, or when we shut vp our prayers with *Per Christum Dominum nostrum*, then wee giue them the tincture of Christianity. Thus with *Dauids* Psalmes, which are indeed the Psalmes of the Iewes, when we cloze them vp with this period, *Gloria patri & Filio & Spiritui sancto*, then we make them ours, and properly ours; in effect, we Christen them. And thus to consider the Creatures barely in themselues, without reference to God, were a most imperfect knowledge; but shew them their discent and originall, from whence they proceed, shew them their right vse, and the end of their progresse, and here in effect you haue composed a naturall religion.

Thirdly, for the vse which we may make vnto our selues of this *Religion of dumbe Creatures*, in a word it is this:

The Creatures make man ashamed.

First, it serues to make vs ashamed of our selues, that while all other Creatures doe strictly serue God in their owne kinde, yet wee, though more bound vnto God for the many blessings receiued, then they; though more especially intended for Gods seruice, seeing all other Creatures serue man, and man alone is immediatly ordained for Gods

Gods seruice; yet the poore dumbe Creatures should strictly serue God in their owr e-kinde, while we, and we alone, and we onely are the transgressors.

The large extent of Gods Church.

Secondly, it sets forth the large extent of Gods Church, and the vntouchable height of his glory, though our sinnes haue made a separation betweene God and vs, though our blasphemies be such and so great, as that faine they would obscure and eclipse *Gods glory*: yet maugre our attempts, and in despight of our malice, God shall be glorified, as of the Angels aboue, so of the dumbe Creatures beneath: if men shall cease to sing their *Hosannah*, the stones will cry, *Luke* 19.40.

The example of Creatures, is an exhortation to vs.

Then in the last place let their seruice be some encouragement and motiue to ours, if we cannot attaine to the perfections of Angels to offer vp our selues as a whole burnt sacrifice to God; if we cannot approue our selues, as members of one Catholike Church, to serue God in the vnity of one faith, but that as the East hath formerly beene separated from the West, so is now the South from the North, as if with sects and schismes, we were to quarter out religion according to the coasts of the world, and to diuide Christs seamelesse garment among vs, hauing first crucified the Lord of life: If in the course of Christianity, we cannot agree in the very fundamentall points of religion, but are wholly separated, so that neither one mother Church beneath, nor yet one heauen aboue can containe vs. Suppose that Christianity should cease, then let vs come to the tearmes of humanity, and desire to exceed all other Creatures, as well in vertue and dignity, as in nature and condition. But if all faile, if all faile (as I feare they doe in some) then in the last place I pray let me recommend vnto them the religion of dumbe Creatures: surely we can doe no lesse then ioyne with them in their religion: for they are sensuall and beastly, like to our selues: then let not those most excellent attributes of God, which are discouered by them, be contradicted by vs: here we shall auoide Atheisme in our prayers, deuotions, and seruice

By our nature we are tied to a naturall religion.

of God, let vs not be inferiour to them.

But aboue all, let me recommend this one thing to our practice, that the Creatures may not out-ſtrip vs, in the ſtrict obſeruing of the naturall Law, which to vs, in effect, is, in moral honeſty. This I doe the rather wiſh, becauſe the morall law was neuer abrogated, notwithſtanding the change of Prieſt-hood, the change of Ceremonies, the change of Religion, which was tranſlated from the Synagogue of the Iewes, to the Church or congregation of the Gentiles; yet ſtill one and the ſame morall law was continued. So at this day, notwithſtanding our diuerſity of Sects, Schiſmes and Religions; yet it were to be wiſhed, that our actions might be ſquared out by one morall law, which law appeares in the Creatures, and is common to man and the Creatures; and is as naturall to man, as is his owne nature, and ſhould no more be ſeparated from man, then his owne nature: for want then of religious piety and godlineſſe, let this morall law be our guide. Thus man ſhall know his dutie to man.

There is but one and the ſame morall law to all religions.

But how miſerable were our condition? what a world of miſchiefe would follow? if we ſhould neglect morall duties, vnder cloake and pretence of religion, as if religion did aboliſh nature, as if the morall law were abrogated together with the ceremoniall; Yet this is the practice and iniquity of theſe our moſt vnhappy times, that all factions, ſeditions and trecheries muſt be forſooth rooted and grounded in religion, as if religion were the ſole mother, and nurſe of all treaſons; as if heauen could not ſubſiſt with the earth; as if the Tower of Babel could not be built, but with Church ſtones. This is the bane and the ſhame of Religion. God knowes, I cannot ſpeake of it with patience, or without my great hearts griefe: and therefore I will here end abruptly; beſeeching the Almighty God to reforme it; beſeeching the Almighty God reforme it.

No differences in religion ſhould take away morall duties.

Sancto & indiuiduæ Trinitati ſit honor & gloria.

SOme faults haue eſcaped the Preſſe, *either* in omitting letters, as page 4. line 21. for awake read awaken; *or* omitting words, as p. 25. l. 17. this word *Sanctus* ſhould be thrice repeated, as implying a myſtery: *or* miſtaking ſome words, as pag. 22. lin. 17. for apparitions, read operations, yet the faults are ſuch and ſo few, as that thou thyſelfe maiſt eaſily correct them.

(*e.g.*) ſignifies *exempli gratia*, as forexample.