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Earl of Shaftesbury
Complete Works



Series Sixteen

The Complete Works of
EARL OF SHAFTESBURY

(1671-1713)



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The Delphi Classics Catalogue

Anthony Ashley Cooper:
Third

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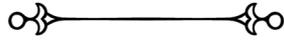
The Complete Works of
**ANTHONY ASHLEY-COOPER,
3RD EARL OF SHAFTESBURY**



By Delphi Classics, 2025

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Complete Works of Earl of Shaftesbury



First published in the United Kingdom in 2025 by Delphi Classics.

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ISBN: 9781801702911

Delphi Classics

is an imprint of

Delphi Publishing Ltd

Hastings, East Sussex

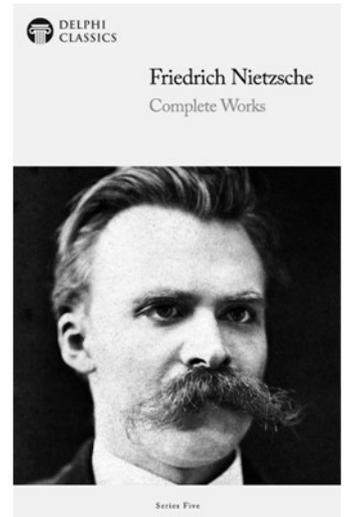
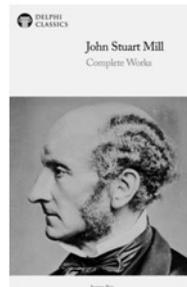
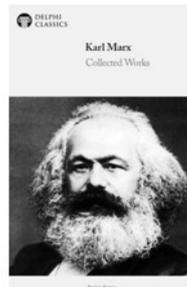
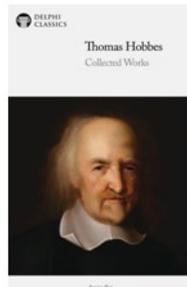
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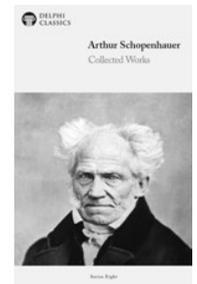
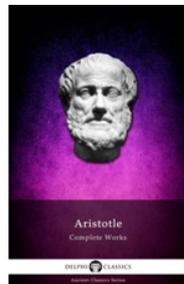
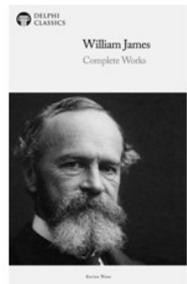
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PHILOSOPHY



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The Works



Exeter Exchange in 1826, viewed from the east, looking west down the Strand — the site of Exeter House. Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury was born at Exeter House on 26 February 1671.



He was the son and first child of the future Anthony Ashley Cooper, 2nd Earl of Shaftesbury.



The Strand Palace Hotel — the site of Exeter House today

Preface to ‘Select Sermons of Dr. Whichcote’ (1698)



A celebrated Whig politician and philosopher, Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury was born in London in 1671, the son and first child of the future Anthony Ashley Cooper, 2nd Earl of Shaftesbury and his wife Lady Dorothy Manners, daughter of John Manners, 8th Earl of Rutland. The medical attendant to the Ashley household was the philosopher John Locke, who was entrusted with the supervision of young Anthony's education. It was conducted according to the principles of Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) and the method of teaching Latin and Greek conversationally was pursued by his instructress, Elizabeth Birch. At the age of eleven, he could read both languages with ease.

In 1683, after the death of the first Earl, Anthony's father sent him to Winchester College. Under a Scottish tutor, Daniel Denoune, he began a continental tour with two older companions, Sir John Cropley, 2nd Baronet, and Thomas Sclater Bacon. After the Glorious Revolution, Lord Ashley (as he was now addressed) returned to England. He entered public life as a parliamentary candidate for the borough of Poole and was returned on 21 May 1695. He spoke for the Bill for Regulating Trials in Cases of Treason, one provision of which was that a person indicted for treason or misprision of treason should be allowed the assistance of counsel. In time, his poor health forced him to retire from Parliament at the dissolution of July 1698.

He suffered from asthma and so escaped the congested London environment, purchasing a property in Little Chelsea, adding a 50-foot extension to the existing building to house his bedchamber and Library, and planting fruit trees and vines. In 1701 he succeeded his father as Earl of Shaftesbury, taking an active part on the Whig side in the House of Lords.

Shaftesbury would never be prolific writer, publishing only a few works prior to his untimely death at the age of forty-one. He was essentially a moralist opposed to Thomas Hobbes, now considered to be one of the founders of modern political philosophy. Instead, Shaftesbury was a follower of the Cambridge Platonists, and like them rejected how Hobbes collapsed moral issues into expediency. His first published work was an anonymous *Preface* to the sermons of Benjamin Whichcote (1609-1683), a prominent Cambridge Platonist, published in 1698. Whichcote was a Puritan divine, who held that man is the 'child of reason' and so not completely depraved by nature, as other Puritans argued. Like Shaftesbury, he was also a firm believer in religious toleration. In his *Preface* Shaftesbury censures Hobbes and his ethical egoism, but also the commonplace carrot and stick arguments of Christian moralists. While Shaftesbury conformed in public to the Church of England, his private view of some of its doctrines was certainly less respectful.



Winchester College — where Shaftesbury was educated

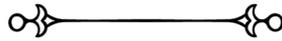


Shaftesbury with his brother Maurice, in a 1702 painting by John Closterman, designed to illustrate his Neo-Platonist beliefs



Portrait of Benjamin Whichcote by Mary Beale, c. 1655

PREFACE



AMONGST those many Things which are made Publick; it may be thought, perhaps, of *Sermons*; that they are, of any other, the least wanted; and for the future, least likely to be found wanting: since to that rich and inexhaustible Store, with which the Learned and Orthodox Divines of *England* have already furnished us, there is daily fresh addition, from worthy and able Hands. Neither, have we cause to fear a Cessation in this kind; or that so great a Blessing is likely to fail us, for the future; having such security, not only from the unwearied Zeal of present Divines (of whom we may always hope a worthy Succession) but, from the just esteem which the Publick never fails to shew, for such pious Discourses: Upon which account, we find that many of these are every day made Publick; and, as it were, forced into the World; notwithstanding the great Modesty of their Authors, whose Humble Thoughts, and devoutly resigned Affections, lead them not towards Eminence, and Advancement in the World.

It may seem strange, therefore, that in such an Age as this, any one should be so officious, as to search after, and publish the Sermons of a Man long since dead, who (himself) never meant to Publish any; or thought so highly of himself, as that he could benefit the World by such a Publication.

It is certain, that we must not ever imagine, nor can it enter into a Mind truly Christian, that because we see not an apparent Change for the better, in the Lives of Christian Professors; that, therefore all *Preaching* is ineffectual; or, that here in *England*, the Labours of the most Eminent Divines that perhaps the World ever afforded, have been of no use at all: It might be said with the same reason (tho' very prophanely, and wickedly) that because the Christians are not reported to exceed the other Nations of the World, in Probity, and Good Living; but are said to be rather inferior in this respect, to the Civilized People, whether Pagan or Mahometan, lying round them; that therefore the Christian Religion is of no effect at all, nor any ways operative upon the Lives of its Professors.

But, if we consider this, as becomes us; and not perversely, as many do; it will be found that we are, even in this sense, the most highly indebted to *Christianity*; and should look upon *It* as the greatest Blessing imaginable; not only for its spiritual Advantages, which are Unspeakable; but for its Temporal Benefits, and Securities; inasmuch as that Mankind being so inclinable to Ill, we should have a Religion so full of all good Precepts, and so enforcing with respect to all the Duties of Morality, and Justice. So that our Amazement ought rather to be; how Men, with such a Religion, should lead such Lives! and how Malice, Hatred, or Division, should have place in such Societies as these; which we might expect to see distinguished from all others, rather by a perfect Harmony, and Agreement, than by the fiercest Quarrels, Contentions, and Animosities.

And, indeed, when we consider the Nature of *Preaching*; how excellent an Order and Establishment it is; how highly raised and magnified in the Christian World: When we consider Numbers of Holy Men set apart for this great Work; having all advantages given them, the better to set forth those Glorious Truths of Revelation, and to create a Reverence of Religion in the Minds of Men; when we consider the Solemnity of a Church-Assembly, and the awful Presence and Authority of the Christian Orator; we may be apt to wonder perhaps, why we see not greater and more

happy Effects hereof, in the World. However, we must of Necessity conclude, That *this Institution* being undoubtedly so powerful a support of our Religion; if such Assemblies as these were not upheld, if such Authority as this did not subsist, the consequence would be, that as in a little time there would be no more Christianity left in the World, so neither any Morality; since, notwithstanding all the Helps of *Preaching*, and the Assistance and Support which Virtue receives from hence, the Lives of Men are still so far from being Reform'd, and the World so little Improved, in these latter Ages.

But, how reverently soever we have cause to think concerning *this Institution*, and the undoubted good Effects of it, upon Mankind; and, whatever high Opinion and Esteem we may justly have of their Performance in whose Hands this Power is placed; it seems not wholly impossible, but that there may be some Defect in this great Affair; and that the Causes of ill Success may not lye altogether in the Depravity, Perverseness, or Stupidity of Mankind, who are the Hearers and Readers of these Doctrines.

In some Countries, and amongst some sorts of Christians, we have seen, that the Whole of *this Institution* has not been appropriated to Spirituals; but, that a great part of those Divine Exhortations have had something in common with the Policies of the World, and the Affairs of Government. And, of whatsoever Benefit this may have been to Mankind, or to the Peace of the Christian World; it must be own'd that *Preaching* it self, will be so much the less apt to make any happy Revolution in Manners, as it has at any time been serviceable to Revolutions in State, or to the support of any other Interest than that of Christ's Kingdom.

Nor do we find, since the Arts of Government, and Mysteries of Religion, have been thus suited together; that *either* has been much advantag'd by the Union; it having never yet appear'd, that Divinity has been greatly better'd by Policy; or that Policy has been any where mended by Divinity.

Amongst those Writers who have been forward in making this Unprosperous Alliance, and Building a Political Christianity; there has been *one* of our Nation (in the Time wherein our Author liv'd) who whether he may have been serviceable any way to the Civil Government, or Christian Church; it may be concluded, at least, that he has done but very ill Service in the Moral World. And, however other parts of Philosophy may be obliged to him, *Ethicks* will appear to have no great share in the Obligation. He has, indeed, with great Zeal, and Learning, been oppos'd, by all the eminent and worthy Divines of the Church of *England*: And had the same Industry been applied to the Correction of his Moral Principles, as has been bestow'd in refuting some other of his Errours, it might perhaps have been of more Service to Religion, in the Main.

This is *He* who reckoning up the Passions, or Affections, by which Men are held together in Society, live in Peace, or have any Correspondence one with another, forgot to

mention Kindness, Friendship, Sociableness, Love of Company and Converse, Natural Affection, or any thing of this kind; I say *Forgot*, because I can scarcely think so ill of any Man, as that he has not by experience found any of these Affections in himself, and consequently, that he believes none of them to be in others. But in the place of other Affections, or good Inclinations, of whatever kind, this Author has substituted only one Master-Passion, *Fear*, which has, in effect devour'd all the rest, and left room only for that infinite Passion towards *Power after Power*, *Natural* (as he affirms.) *to All Men, and never ceasing but in Death*. So much less *Good-nature* has he left with Mankind, than what he allows the worst of Beasts: Having allotted to us,

in the way of our Nature, such mischievous Passions as are unknown to them; and not so much as allow'd us any Degree of their Good ones, such as they All are known to have, and are never wanting to exert towards their own Kind: By which Excellency of Nature (so little reckon'd upon, in the Case of Mankind) their common Interest is duly serv'd, and their Species propagated and maintain'd.

Had not the Poyson of these Immoral, and (in reality) *Atheistical* Principles been diffused more than 'tis easie to imagine, (at that time especially when Dr. *Whichcot* appear'd) we should, perhaps, where Morality was concern'd, have heard less of *Terror* and *Punishment*; and more, of *Moral Rectitude* and *Good-nature*. At least, it should not have grown customary to explode Good-nature, and detract from that Good which is ascrib'd to *Natural Temper*, and is accounted *Natural Affection*, as having Ground and Foundation in *Meer NATURE*: On the contrary; it would have been the Business of those who had manag'd the Cause of Religion, to have contended for these better Dispositions; and to have shewn, how deep a Root and Foundation they had in Human Nature; and not, just contrary-wise, to have built on the Ruine of *these*. For, with some people, this was then become a Method to prove Christianity. Revelation was to owe its Establishment to the Depression and Lowering of such Principles as these, in the Nature of Man: And the Weakness of these was made the Strength of Religion. As if Good-nature, and Religion, were Enemies: A Thing, indeed, so unthought of, amongst the *Heathens*; that *PIETY* (which was their best Word to signifie *Religion*) had more than half its Sence, in Natural and Good Affection; and stood not only for the Adoration, and Worship of *God*; but for the Natural Affections of Parents to their Children, and of Children to their Parents; of Men to their Native Country; and, indeed, of all Men in their several Relations one to another.

It must be confess'd, that it has been the Reproach of some Sects of Christians amongst us; that their Religion appear'd to be, in a manner, opposite to Good-nature; and founded in Moroseness, Selfishness, and Ill-will to Mankind; Things, not easily reconcileable with a Christian Spirit. But, certainly, it may be said of *the Church of England*, if of any Church in the World, that this is not *Her* Spirit: But, it is by Characters and Features just contrary to these, that *this Church* shews Herself, above all others, most worthily and nobly Christian.

It is certain, that there is nothing more contended for, by those who would not willingly admit a Deity; nor is there any thing of greater Use to them, in their Way of Reasoning; than to have it pass as current, that there are in Man, no Natural Principles inclining him to Society; nothing that moves him to what is Moral, Just and Honest; except a Prospect of some different Good, some Advantage of a different Sort from what attends the Actions themselves. Nor is it strange, that they who have brought themselves off from so much as believing the Reality of any Ingenuous Action, perform'd by any of Mankind, meerly through Good Affection, and a Rectitude of Temper; should be backward to apprehend any Goodness of that sort, in a *Higher Nature* than that of *Man*. But it is strange to conceive, how Men who pretend a Notion and Belief of a *Supream Power* acting with the greatest Goodness, and without any Inducement but that of Love and Good-will; should think it unsuitable to a Rational Creature, derived from *Him*, to act after *His* Example; and to find Pleasure and Contentment in Works of Goodness and Bounty, without other Prospect. But, what is yet more unaccountable, is, that Men who profess a Religion where *Love* is chiefly enjoyn'd; where the Heart is expresly call'd for, and the outward Action without that, is disregarded; where Charity (or Kindness) is made all in all; that Men of this Perswasion, should combine, to degrade the Principle of Good-nature, and refer all to

Reward; which being made the only Motive in Mens Actions, must exclude all worthy and generous Disposition, all that Love, Charity, and Affection, which the Scripture enjoys; and without which, no Action is *Lovely*, in the Sight of God, or Man; or in it self, deserving of Notice, or kind Reward.

But, perhaps, one Reason of this Misfortune has been; that some Men, who have meant sincerely well to Religion and Vertue, have been afraid least by advancing the Principle of Good-nature, and laying too great a Stress upon it, the apparent Need of *Sacred Revelation* (a Thing so highly Important to Mankind) should be, in some Measure, taken away. So that they were forced, in a Manner, to *wound VERTUE*, and give way to the Imputation of being *Mercenary*, and of *Acting in a slavish Spirit, in Ways of Religion*, rather than admit a sort of Rival (in their Sense) to the Faith of Divine Revelation: Seeing that Christianity (they thought) would, by this Means, be made less necessary to Mankind; if it should be allow'd, that Men could find any Happiness in Vertue, but what is in Reversion.

Thus, *one Party* of Men, fearing the Consequences which may be drawn from the Acknowledgment of Moral and Social Principles in Human-kind, to the Proof a Deity's Existence; and, *another Party* fearing as much from thence, to the Prejudice of Revelation; *Each* have in their turns, *made War* (if I may say so) even on *Vertue* it self: Having exploded the Principle of Good-nature; all Enjoyment or Satisfaction in Acts of Kindness and Love; all Notion of Happiness in temperate Courses and moderate Desires; and, in short, all Vertue or Foundation of Vertue; unless *that*, perhaps, be call'd *Merit*, or *Vertue*, which is left remaining, when all Generosity, free Inclination, Publick-spiritedness, and every thing else besides *private Regard*, is taken away.

If this may be said to be our Case, under this Dispute; and, that true Religion it self (which is *Love*) be thus endanger'd; and Morality so ill treated, between two such different and distant Parties; if each of these, notwithstanding their vast Disagreement, do yet, in this Matter, so fatally agree; to decry Human Nature, and destroy the Belief of any immediate Good or Happiness in *Vertue*, as a Thing any way suitable to our Make and Constitution; there is, then, so much the more Need of some great and known Man to oppose this Current.

And, *here* it is that our *Author* has appear'd so signally. *Whatsoever* (says he) *some have said*; Man's Nature *is not so untoward a Thing (unless it be abused) but that there is a secret Sympathy in Human Nature, with Vertue and Honesty; which gives a Man an Interest even in bad Men. — God, in infinite Wisdom, has so contrived; that, if an Intellectual Being sink it self into Sensuality, or any way defile, and pollute it self; then, Miseries and Torments should befall it, in this State — VERTUE, and VICE* (says he) *are the Foundations of Peace and Happiness, or Sorrow and Misery. — There is inherent Punishment belonging to all Vice; and no Power can divide or separate them. For, tho' God should not, in a positive Way, inflict Punishment; or any Instrument of God punish a Sinner; yet, he would punish Himself; his Misery and Unhappiness would arise from Himself. — Thus speaks our excellent Divine, and truly Christian Philosopher; whom, for his appearing thus in Defence of Natural Goodness, we may call the Preacher of Good-nature.* This is what he insists on, every-where; and, to make this evident, is, in a Manner, the Scope of all his Discourses. And, in conclusion of all this; 'tis hop'd that what has been here suggested, may be sufficient to justify the Printing of these Sermons.

As for *our Author* himself; what his *Life* was; how great an Example of that happy Temper, and God-like Disposition, which he labour'd to inspire; how much he was, for the Excellency of his Life, and admirable Temper, esteem'd and belov'd of all;

and even in the worst of Times, when Feuds, and Animosities, on the Account of Religion, were highest (during the Time of the late great Troubles,) how his Character and Behaviour drew to him the Respect of all Parties, so as to make him be remarkably distinguished; how much in Esteem he was with the greatest Men; and how many constant Hearers he had of the best Rank, and greatest Note, even of the most eminent Divines themselves; this is sufficiently known. And the Testimony which the late *Arch-bishop Tillotson* has given of him, tho' it be in a Funeral Sermon, is known to be in nothing superiour to his Desert.

The Sermons which are here Printed, have been selected out of Numbers of others less perfect; there being not any of our Author's extant, but such as were written after him at Church: He having used no other than very short Notes, not very legible: Tho' these have been of great Use to the Publisher, in whose Hands they have been.

The unpolish'd Style, and Phrase of *our Author*, who drew more from a College, than a Court; and who was more used to School-Learning, and the Language of an University, than to the Conversation of the fashionable World, may possibly but ill recommend his Sense to the Generality of Readers. And, since none of these Discourses were ever design'd for the World, in any other Manner than as he (once for all) pronounc'd them from the Pulpit; they must of Necessity appear to have a Roughness in them, which is not found in other Sermons more accurately penn'd by their Authors. For, tho' the Publisher has sometimes supplied him out of himself, by transferring to a defective Place, that which he found in some other Discourse, where the same Subject was treated; yet, so great a Regard was had to the very *Text*, and *Letter of his Author*; that he would not offer to alter the least Word: And, wheresoever he has added any Thing, to correct the most apparent Omission, or Fault of the Penman; he has taken Care to have it mark'd in different Characters: That nothing might appear as *our Author's* own,

which was not perfectly *His*. Tho', some others in the World have been very far from this Caution: Since, of late, some things have been set out in *our Author's* Name, which his best Friends disown to be his; and which any one who studies him in his Genuine Works, will easily know to be unworthy of him.

And, now, when these Disadvantages which have been mentioned, are considered; since they are no more than what sensible People will easily make Allowance for; 'tis presum'd there may be in the World some Persons who will, notwithstanding, think these Sermons to be of Worth, and may perhaps discover in them some peculiar Beauties, such as are not to be despised for want of that Ornament which might have accompany'd them, I know that there are now growing up, in the World, too many who are prejudic'd against all Pulpit-Discourses; and who, in this prophane Age, are led to think not only *the Institution of Preaching*, but even the *Gospel* it self, and *our Holy Religion* to be a Fraud. But, notwithstanding all the Prejudice of this kind; 'tis to be hop'd that even some of these Persons (if they have any Candour left) may be induced to applaud some Things that they may meet with, here: So as from hence, perhaps,

to like Christianity the better. *This* we may with Assurance, say; that were there besides ours, any Religion, Ancient; or Modern, that had so Divine a Man as this, to shew; these very Men would admire and reverence him; and, tho' a Priest of that Religion, and bound to comply with establish'd Superstition, would praise his Vertue; and, perhaps, be the forwardest to extol his Sentences and Works, in Opposition to our Sacred Religion. But this is hard, that even *Heathen Religion*, and *Paganism* can be more mildly treated, and cause less Aversion than *Christianity*. To such Men as these, I can say nothing further. But, if they who are thus set against Christianity,

cannot be won over, by any Thing that they may find here; yet we may assure our selves, at least, of *this* good Effect from hence; that the excellent Spirit which is shewn here, and that Vein of Goodness, and Humanity, which appears throughout these Discourses, will make such as are already Christians, to prize and value Christianity the more: And, the Fairness, Ingenuity, and Impartiality, which they may learn from hence, will be a Security to them, against the contrary Temper of those other irreconcilable Enemies to our Holy Faith.

The Adept Ladys (1702)



OR, THE ANGELICK SECT

Being the Matters of fact of certain Adventures Spiritual, Philosophical, Political, and Gallant. In a Letter to a Brother. 1702.

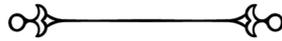
The Adept Ladys was written in 1702, but never published during the author's lifetime. It is a satirical epistle, offering an account of the narrator's encounters with old acquaintances and their new mentor, a Quaker lady, who claims to converse with angels and to be able to make gold from excrement. Satirising pantheistic materialism, the work attacks the doctrines of the Rosicrucians. It stresses Shaftesbury's satiric skill as well as his predilection for wit and humour.

The Letter opens with an account of the visit of old Chrysogenes, his wife and the Quaker lady. Despite tone lapses and prolixity, Shaftesbury reveals his talent for farce. He presents his narrator, the host, as a rational, sensitive soul, whose dilemma results from his unwillingness to offend his guests and his revulsion at their religious enthusiasm. Upon the arrival of his guests, he receives Chrysogenes and the two ladies "with all Possible Civility". Then, having lapsed into a morose silence in response to their ravings, he notes their uneasiness and immediately forces himself to return to a cheery manner. However, his efforts to be polite and gracious only encourage the increasingly frustrating spiritual confidences of his guests. His numerous attempts to steer the conversation away from their occult obsessions are ultimately thwarted, much to hilarious effect. The humour produced by the host's mental suffering in the text is enhanced by his comic physical suffering. His intellectual fastidiousness — grossly offended at every turn by his guests' naive fanaticism — has its counterpart in his revulsion at the bodily dross that the Quaker woman repeatedly celebrates. Tormented, yet unable to escape from his guests without giving offense, the host vents his frustration in derisive remarks for our enjoyment.



Anthony Ashley-Cooper, 3rd Earl of Shaftesbury by Francis Kyte

THE ADEPT LADYS.



BEING THE MATTERS OF FACT OF CERTAIN ADVENTURES SPIRITUAL,
PHILOSOPHICAL, POLITICAL, AND GALLANT.

IN A LETTER TO A BROTHER. 1702.

‘Chelsea, January 19th, 1702.

‘Dear Brother,

‘When you were last with me here at my evening retreat, out of the smoke and noise of the town, it being then a time that afforded us a short respite from public affairs and gave us an opportunity of conversing intimately and freely as became brothers and friends, you may remember that amongst other subjects you fell upon that of Superstition and Enthusiasm, the evils of which I had ever been sufficiently convinced of, but never experienced so much as I had freshly done in the persons of some of our acquaintance. I could not then tell you my adventure, which was a very long and sore one; and it was too soon yet awhile to renew the nauseous ideas of what had quite sickened me. I promised you it should be for some other time when I was stronger; and having since recollected myself I here send you an exact relation of what passed, making use only of some feigned names which you will easily know.

‘It was but the very next day after my coming hither from the country, when early in the morning, word was brought me of a coach come to my door, with some grave visitants who proved to be my old acquaintance Chrysogenes, and Chrysogenia his accomplished spouse. With them there was a woman in a Quaker’s dress, whom I scarce knew by sight, but guessed to be that friend of theirs of whom I had heard so much of late. I received them with all possible civility, and after mutual enquiries of health, friends, relations and the like, I expected when this odd figure of a woman would say something on her own account, or they concerning her and the reason of their bringing her with them. But there was not so much as an offer of this kind, and the deep silence and solemn manner of the woman herself showed me that something more than ordinary was meant.

‘Being sat down, Chrysogenes accosted me with congratulations on the account of my late successes in the public. I thanked him; but withal assuring him that if I had been happy in anything of this kind I attributed the good success to Providence only, and the zeal of friends: expressing my gratitude to both, and speaking on this occasion as well as I was able and with that piety I thought due and becoming. This, I found, was exceedingly well received by my visitants; and I took notice it raised something extraordinary in their looks. They turned often to one another, and as I was speaking I observed they expressed their satisfaction and seemed to confirm one another in the good construction they made of my discourse. This made them hasten, I suppose, to the opening of a scene which they thought with themselves now needed not much ceremony or preparation.

‘Chrysogenes began with telling me “that GOD had a great work in hand; that He was resolved to do all by Himself and in His own way, without leaving it to man or doing it by such means as that man might derive anything of glory or honour to himself; that this would soon appear, and that GOD would show Himself in an extraordinary manner; and that He had already revealed Himself to some.”

‘Much more was said in general after this way; to which I answered still very respectfully, understanding it in the best sense I could, and accommodating it, all that I was able to piety and sound religion, they in the meanwhile continuing to express their surprise and joy more and more; which I could not but take notice of, and turning to Chrysogenes, asked if he thought this discourse anyway strange in me, or if he judged of me now at this time by my character of early days and in the heat of youth when he first knew me, though even then he knew very well the awful impressions I had of a DEITY. And here I appealed to him concerning my much altered character of late years, my greater deference to all things sacred or that carried but the shadow of religion. This he and Chrysogenia with much forwardness acknowledged, adding besides that they had been long assured of this truth, in such a manner as I dreamt not of, they being no way strangers even to what passed within me, ‘In short, they assured me that this was not the greater of those wonders and mysteries of which I should hear; for that both my late actions for the public and what was done and resolved by the highest persons in the world, even by the King himself, his late change, his favour towards the honest Party, and amongst the rest towards myself, the breaking of the late Ministry and Parliament — all this was known long before and expressly foretold. I told them that I had often in my life heard them make mention of secret prophecies, and supposed this was from something they had met with of that kind, which they would not find me so averse to now as formerly; but that as to what I said of my own heart none surely could let them know concerning that so well as I myself. At this the Quaker woman who now for the first time began to speak, interrupted me in a seeming humble manner, told me that what was said to be so certainly known concerning my heart was from ONE that knew it as perfectly as I myself; which when I objected to with some heat, asking how that was possible, or who that person could be, she said GOD.

‘At this the two companions (the old gentleman and lady) pressing upon me both at a time, drew nearer with their chairs, and speaking with an emphasis suitable to some high and important discovery, bid me not be surprised, for they had many satisfactory assurances to give me of the extraordinary character of that person (pointing to the Quaker Woman who sat between them). Nor would they conceal from me the wonders and miracles that GOD had wrought in and by her — such as were of greater certainty than either of the Old or New Testament; which Chrysogenes twice pronounced very emphatically, adding that they were MATTERS OF FACT, and that he did not merely believe but *saw* and *knew*. That upon this account they came with the resolution of acquainting me with these things which I should be witness of, myself; and that it was *the Will of GOD* I should be so.

‘After this there was a silence of some time whilst they waited, I suppose to hear my answer and knew how this was received. But I was gone a little too far in my thoughts to recover myself and be with my company immediately. The scene I had in view had made me somewhat more than ordinary thoughtful. I was then reflecting on certain miseries of mankind of which I thought I had the ideas but too plain before me. I had fixed my eyes this while upon the ground, and when I raised them up to regain my company I found them in a manner retired back from me and at a greater distance. Their looks were bent on me with greater attention than ever. Their countenance showed disorder and pain and discovered plainly a doubt of me and some mistrust of themselves as if they had gone too far; not knowing what to judge of this seriousness they had raised in me; till clearing up my brow and assuming my cheerful way I assured them again more than ever by telling them “it was indeed no wonder to see any one thoughtful as they saw me on the first hearing of things so

strange and of so high a nature: that as to my own heart it was my wish that all mankind could know it, and I had often grieved that my intimate friends who seemed to know it so well now should have had so little knowledge of it of late when it was not my good fortune to please the Court. My only satisfaction was that HE whom they named and was above all did perfectly know my heart and was a witness of its sincerity: that all I lived for in this world was to obey HIM and to serve my country and friends; and, as such an one, it was impossible for me (if I rightly knew myself) to regret what came from HIM or was (as they assured me) of the greatest importance to mankind.”

‘This being spoken by me with a real feeling and with a zeal very apparent, it finished their assurance of me; and they seemed now as people overcome with their joy. The old lady who could hardly sit still in her chair was ready to clap her hands, and in joy laughed out. The Quaker woman smiled, but with a face so unhappily suited to good humour that she expressed a sort of ghastly sweetness.

Poor good Chrysogenes expressed his joy another way: tears came in his eyes and he was in earnest about to weep; which really moved me so that between my pity for him and my horrors of another kind, the women who observed me most could not but discover in me a more than ordinary commotion, which they interpreted (no doubt) as a stronger mark of my being filled with that spirit they wished. For now I saw them turning towards one another, and, after a short whisper of all three, could hear them say “Who then shall begin?” each answering, “Do you? Chrysogenes was just then raising his voice with his hand already in action, and a countenance composed to some solemn and long narration, when he was interrupted by the old lady, who made signs to him to observe the Quaker woman, which he no sooner did, but throwing himself back in his chair as one at ease and well pleased, he cried out, “Will she do it then herself? Let it be so then, and in her own way as is best.” The Quaker woman in the meanwhile appeared in great agitation, and seemed now as in a double labour both of body and of mind, which when I was considering what it might end in, I saw her draw with some difficulty a pretty big bundle out of her pocket. The others no sooner saw this but they cried out “Will she begin by THE SUBJECTS?” and repeating the question to her, asked if she would so do; to which she nodded only, going on earnestly employed with what lay before her in her lap.

‘Hitherto I could understand but little of this by any knowledge or intellectual faculty I had; but now I was to make use of other faculties, the trial being put to my senses. For the Quaker woman having opened the bundle in which there were papers that seemed to contain certain drugs which they called as I perceived the SUBJECTS, presented one to me ready opened, and bid me “observe it well,” which I did with great gravity, holding the paper in my hand, and after I had remained a little in this pause, looking still on what was in the paper, one of them asked me smilingly, and in a very familiar way, “what I thought of it?” I told them with great submission (as to persons deeper-sighted than myself) that I thought I saw a powder. And now, as if some charm were perfected that just began to operate, they all accosted me with new life, supposing me after this, as I imagine, already initiated in their reverend mysteries. The Quaker woman who hitherto had acted the part of a deep reserve, began now to open herself, and spoke to me in a continued discourse, but in such high raptures and in such involved and intricate reasonings that it was altogether impossible for my low genius to comprehend anything. The matters on which she founded her discourse were those contained in the papers; for by this time more papers were produced, in which were displayed the like extracts or quintessences of bodies. From these she asserted that she could produce gold, not, however, without

the Divine assistance which was now attained. Chrysogenes here cried out “‘tis done; ‘tis done; the thing is over; our eyes have seen it” There remained now the use only and employment of it in such hands, and by such instruments as GOD had chosen, and should entrust with it for the good of the world, none being empowered to make use of this any longer than they remained His instruments; for that the secret was of such a kind that if the person entrusted left GOD (as much as to say, if He left them) it would either leave him or he it; which (considering the poisoning practices they told me of amongst some of their adepts) was, methought, a very remarkable threat. In the end it was, told me that I was pitched on as an instrument above mentioned, and as one of the greatest. And hereupon the divining woman began to open more of her revelations, mysteries and prophecies.

‘I took the opportunity to break the conversation, and called for some glasses of a good strong wine, which I fancied might not relish ill with the spiritual woman, but which I am sure was necessary as a cordial for my own stomach after such a discourse and such a mass of villanous imposture and enthusiastic cant. But as if I was born to suffer this day the last extremity and to expire under all the torments of this kind, my wine, which had a little revived me, unhappily revived them too, and by what I perceived had raised the enthusiastic spirit to a greater degree than before.

‘The woman began now to speak her mysteries in a higher tone of authority: “That these gifts to her being from the LORD, she ought not to deny Him; that since she was thus privileged, she ought to speak it, and confess and own what came from the LORD to her.” Chrysogenes here joining with her, bid her to speak it out freely, since it was no more than what they *knew* and could bear witness to: that “*it was by Revelation that she spoke,*” which she accordingly declared was so; and they, then jointly assured me that she had from time to time Revelations immediately from GOD, and that this great work (meaning the golden operation) was from the same hand: there being no room so much as for a doubt of these things, which were evident and MATTERS OF FACT.

‘Here she began to explain to me the manner of this operation in a natural way by the subjects which were in the papers, and this in such empirical, astrological, bombastic strains, with such fantastic action and change of tones, as made me suffer at once whatever I had suffered at several times from all the quack doctors, almanack-makers, fortune-tellers, or fanatical visionaries I had ever been plagued or provoked by in my whole life. Sometimes there came in ingredients and names of several drugs and poisons, with ambiguous words and broken verses, which seemed like charms or spells, so that all I had ever heard of magic, sorcery, or witchcraft, I imagined to be then before me, and I could think of nothing but the cauldron of Macbeth.

‘Having now no other refuge, I began to turn the discourse with might and main towards public affairs, especially foreign ones, where I thought they could have no great handle. But this stood me but in little stead. I was told to my surprise not only of negociations with some of our great men at home, but also of correspondencies abroad, and those too carried on after a very surprising way by messengers that never failed, ran no risk, and were more expeditious than those of kings; from hence and back again as far as Prince Eugene’s camp being but the journey of a fortnight; which, when I said might as well have been in so many minutes, I was instructed concerning other agents than man, which might be far quicker than he, though limited also in their motion according to their bodily organs (for bodies it seems they had, and of a vulgar, human form). Many of these sibylline oracles and letters extraordinary, scattered abroad from the cell of our prophetess and conveyed thus to Sovereign Provinces, I afterwards heard read. But so dull and heavy they proved, that,

methought, they ill-answered the sprightliness of their sublime aerial messengers. The King of France was doomed as an old tyrant; but in a style that would not much move him (I thought) nor anyone else. The young hero of Sweden, whose love to religion we were told of, was spoken to of terrors and judgments, and commanded to the dread of GOD, which, with more of this kind, might have better suited with the character of that old King than of this young one. Prince Eugene, after kind greeting (as they expressed it), was bid not to fear the French, and it was told me withal that before the letter was written they had intelligence of great agonies and fears that he lay under, from which this had delivered him.

‘I was bid be assured that whatever I saw looked melancholy in the public was nothing. All was for the better. GOD was working Himself. He was come nearer to the world than before. The Princes of the world should know and own Him. The Pope and King of France should fall, and King William should perfect this our deliverance in a most glorious manner. And hereupon they pulled out certain long scrolls which proved to be prophecies and revelations addressed to our good King; and most unmercifully gave them to me to read, which I was forced to do aloud, and afterwards to hear them magnified by my con-disciples, who signified that they came from our grand Sibyl and sovereign Instructress. Viler cant I never read; nor could there well be anything more fulsome, except the extemporary expositions that followed after, and the ridiculous promises and descriptions of the fine world and glorious day which we were shortly to see.

‘I began to say something by way of excuse for myself upon my ill constitution, which hindered me from acting any such considerable part in the world as they seemed to expect of me in this great Revolution to come. Here again “*the Secret*” met with me, for I was assured I should be restored entirely by the Sovereign Remedy. And when I asked, I remember, about my lungs, what she thought to be the cause that affected them, she began first by telling me something about sulphur and what the philosophers (*the Adepts!*) taught concerning it; and then told me that I had much of that sulphur in me which could not bear the sulphur that was in the air of London. But that this sulphur within me (and this she said courteously smiling) “*was a token of my being to become a great philosopher!*” — which truly, I thought with myself, I was become already in a proper sense, having philosophy enough courageously to endure this assault of the most raging enthusiasm that ever yet surely broke out into the world, and this too in the persons of some who were my near friends, but whom it would be madness and equal enthusiasm in me to think of ever reclaiming.

‘Afterwards the Quaker woman went onto declare to me miracles concerning herself; of voices she had heard in the air when she saw nothing; one voice in particular, which I thought an odd one, that bid her give over her trading and work, which accordingly she did, and discharging all her work-people, who she told me were about a score or upwards, she neglected the matter of her livelihood, and betook herself to this other work above recited, she and her husband (a very obedient one), and this without ceasing, the one working by day, and the other getting up at night to business, whilst the former slept. Whether it was the night or the day that fell to the good wife’s share I did not learn: I suppose it was at her choice.

‘Many other of her ghostly achievements I was told of; as of her powerful speeches, writings and letters as before; her trials and mortifications, and in particular her fasting, if not forty days and nights as our Saviour, yet at least so long that (as Chrysogenes told me) it could be by nothing but a miracle that she had subsisted as they knew her of a long time. Besides these imitations of our Saviour in this sect of theirs, there was also the healing of the sick, the commanding of the winds and the

like; it being as I was told in the last great storm about midnight that one of the society in assistance of our much-terrified female-saint, then working with him, turned to the wind, and in a high tone pronouncing these words, “Wind, be still, and retire to thy center.” The wind instantly obeyed. The particulars were confirmed and the miracle afterwards asserted by the whole family.

‘It was now that I was told again of the cure I might expect if I could put myself into their hands, and to encourage me I was told of the cures that had been wrought on themselves, Chrysogenes in great zeal standing up and showing himself, as he declared, a living instance of the power of their great medicines; though soon afterwards I saw him in a dying condition, and only saved by the skill of a physician, a friend of mine, a great anti-adept and hater of their ways.

* * * * *

‘When I came to take my rest it had been better for me I had not rested at all than as I did. Never did I pass such a night as this. I slept indeed, but was so haunted in my dreams with all those spectres and monstrous things I had been conversant with this last day that, as I remember I then told you, it called to mind my childhood, when the nurses and beldames had, as is usual, filled my head with fairies and hob-goblins.

‘Being risen both of us pretty late in the morning which was Sunday, we went, you know, to church for the first time of this new year. Thither I never went with truer zeal, in a better disposition or with wholesomer reflections; and what satisfied me still the more, it was by appointment that we were that day to receive the Sacrament together, having had no opportunity of a long time and it being now in a manner our duty, at least for example’s sake, on the account of our stations in Parliament. Here we both of us joined in blessing that good Providence which had by reason and education separated us from the impure and horrid superstitions, monstrous enthusiasms, and wild fanaticisms of those blasphemous visionaries we saw abounding in the world, and which had given us on the contrary such established rites of worship as were so decent, chaste, innocent, pure; and had placed us in a Religion and Church, where, in respect of the moderate party and far greater part, the principle of charity was really more extensive than in any Christian or Protestant Church besides in the world; where zeal was not frenzy and enthusiasm; prayer and devotion not rage and fits of loose extravagance; religious discourse not cant and unintelligible nonsense; nor the character of a Saint resembling that of their inspired and godly men and women leaders; — but where a good and virtuous life with a hearty endeavour of service to one’s country and to mankind, joined with a religious performance of all sacred duties and a conformity with the established rites, was enough to answer the highest character of Religion, and where all other pretences to gifts or supernatural endowments beyond those moral and Christian perfections were justly suspected and treated as villany, cheat, imposture and madness.

‘Thus, brother, I have performed my promise to you, and have, methinks, in this account, raised a sad monument before my eyes of the burning fury and rage, the dreadful ravage and destruction of that greatest incendiary of the earth — *Enthusiasm*, which is not only able as we see to destroy private persons and whole families, but which, getting head and rising at first from small beginnings, has so reduced even to ashes and desert even the most flourishing cities and countries, overthrown established Churches, violated the most lawful Rites, reversed all that is sacred, profaned religion with blood and cruelties, and in a word, confounded all things divine and human. May the poison of this kind never go further, so as once again to

endanger our state, or so as ever to reach the Head of it, our wise King, or those of his Ministry, our good friends whom these enthusiasts vainly count on. And for our own parts who are also alike counted on, may the intoxicating fumes of these pretendedly inspired operators never ascend into our brain, nor their poisonous drugs, their conjurations and real witchcrafts, affect our mind or body as I really thought that they had done mine when I last parted with the assembly. So, brother, farewell! and wishing you the reversed state of our lamentable friends — viz.

‘Ut sit mens sana in corpore sano —

‘I remain,

‘Your affectionate brother,’

‘* * * *’

DELPHI  CLASSICS

End of Sample