

# H Y P A T I A:

O R, T H E

## H I S T O R Y

O F A

Most beautiful, most vertuous, most learned,  
and every way accomplish'd

L A D Y;

W H O

Was torn to Pieces by the CLERGY of *Alexandria*, to gratify the Pride, Emulation, and Cruelty of their ARCHBISHOP, commonly but undeservedly stiled

St. C Y R I L.

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*Magnum aliquid instat, efferum, immane, impium.*

SEN. MEDEA, Act. 3. Scen. 1. lin. 16.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for M. COOPER, in *Pater-noster-Row* ;  
W. REEVE, in *Fleet-street* ; and C. SYMPSON,  
in *Chancery-lane*. 1753. [Price 6d.]



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# H Y P A T I A.

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## C H A P. I.

*A general Character of the Lady; the Contrivers and Executioners of the Barbarities which she suffered; and the Authorities from whence this Story is extracted.*

I Am going to give a short Account, but as full as antient Books afford us Materials, of the Life and Death of *Hypatia*; who will ever continue the Glory of her own Sex, and the Disgrace of ours: For the Women have no less Reason to value themselves, that there existed a Lady of such rare Accomplishments, without the least Blemish, even as a Foil to her numberless Perfections; than the Men to be ashamed, that any could be found among them of so brutal and savage a Disposition, as, far from being struck with Admiration at so much Beauty, Innocence, and Knowledge, to stain their barbarous Hands with her Blood, and their impious Souls with the indelible Character of sacrilegious Murderers. A Bishop, a Patriarch, nay, a Saint, was the Contriver of so horrid a Deed, and his Clergy the Executioners of his implacable Fury. The Authors out of whom I collect my Account (and I omit none that has come to my Knowledge) were either her Contemporaries, or lived near that Age. One of them was her School-fellow, another her Scholar.

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But

But they who relate the most odious and flagitious Circumstances, are Ecclesiastical Historians; counted orthodox in their own Time, as well as eminently so by most in ours. Nor ought we to forget that several of them were Priests. To every one of them we shall do the Justice that their Sincerity or Prevarication deserves, though little remains to do in this respect; all being agreed about the principal Facts, and some differing only in Points of no great Importance. They are such Things, as, taken either Way, neither serve much to alleviate a very bad Cause, nor to aggravate what cannot be possibly made worse.

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## C H A P. II.

*Alexandria, famous for Learning and Merchandize, but particularly for a School or Academy, of which Theon, the Father of Hypatia, was Master.*

AFTER *Alexander the Great* had founded *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, as the Center of Commerce in the Empire he was projecting, this City soon became a flourishing Mart for Learning as well as for Merchandize. The Fame of the *Alexandrian School*, and of the *Alexandrian Library*, reached much further than the Name of *Alexander* himself; or at least they carried it, whither it could never have reached without their Means. This was the most proper Tribute, that could in Gratitude be paid to the Memory of a Prince so ambitious of Glory: As indeed no private Persons, no more than Potentates, will ever do any thing praise-worthy without the Prospect of a long-lived Reputation,

Reputation, the most effectual Spur to laudable and arduous Undertakings. The Succession of the great Men that presided in this School, may be learnt out of the Works of those, who have purposely written on such Subjects. My Design however obliges me here to mention one of them, namely *Theon*, who governed that Academy with much Applause in the latter part of the fourth Century. He was particularly famous for his extensive Knowledge in Astronomy, as the Catalogues, made of such who excelled in this Science, abundantly shew. But what has contributed to render him more illustrious to all Posterity, is, that he was Father to the incomparable *Hypatia*; whom, according to the Custom of those Times, or rather prompted by the Encouragement he received from her own promising Genius, he educated not only in all the Qualifications belonging to her Sex; but caused her likewise to be instructed in the most abstruse Sciences, which are reputed the proper Occupation of Men, as requiring too much Labour and Application for the delicate Constitution of Women.

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## C H A P. III.

*Philosophy not an improper Study for the Female Sex; many of them very eminent for their great Progress in the Sciences; particularly Hypatia, who excelled all the Philosophers of her Time.*

THAT this Notion is a vulgar Prejudice, the vast Number of Ladies, who have in every Age distinguish'd themselves by their Professions  
or

or Performances in Learning, furnishes an unanswerable Argument. Whole Volumes have been written, containing nothing else but the Lives of such Women, as became eminent in all Kinds of Literature, especially in Philosophy; which, as it is the highest Perfection, so it demands the utmost Effort of human Nature. But leaving those Heroines to the Search of the Curious, I shall confine myself at present to one Object worthy all Admiration; in doing Justice to whom, I may be deemed to write the Panegyric of the whole Sex. We have the unanimous Consent of *Synesius*, *Socrates*, and *Philostorgius*, her Contemporaries; as likewise of *Damascius*, *Nicephorus Gregoras*, *Nicephorus Callistus*, *Photius*, *Suidas*, *Hesychius Illustis*, and others, touching the prodigious Learning and other excellent Accomplishments of *Hypatia*. What is still a greater Proof of the Fact, no one Person, or through Ignorance or through Envy, has ever as much as insinuated the contrary. *Socrates* the Ecclesiastical Historian, an unsuspected Witness, says, *That she arrived to such a Pitch of Learning, as very far to exceed all the Philosophers of her Time; to which Nicephorus, also an Ecclesiastical Historian, adds, Those of other Times. Philostorgius affirms, That she was much superior to her Father and Master Theon, in what regards Astronomy. And Suidas, who mentions two Books of her Writing, one on the Astronomical Canon of Diophantus, and another on the Conics of Apollonius, avers, That she not only exceeded her Father in Astronomy: But further, that she understood all the other Parts of Philosophy; a Thing that will be easily credited by those, who shall peruse the Sequel of this Story, wherein nothing is advanced without competent Vouchers.*

## C H A P. IV.

*Hypatia, succeeds in the Government of the Platonic School at Alexandria, for which she was judged Qualified, in Preference to all the Men of Learning at that Time.*

AND truly were not this Matter so well attested by those Writers we have just nam'd; and by others we shall presently have Occasion to alledge; yet no Body could any longer doubt of it, after being informed by the very same Persons, that *Hypatia* succeeded in the Government of the *Platonic School at Alexandria*, the Place of her Birth and Education. This was another-guess Thing, God knows, than taking the Degree of Doctor in any of the Faculties; which one or two Women have not long since done, for which they have been loaded with fulsome Elogies, tho' producing no Effects suitable to the Titles they have so much ambitioned. But what greater Glory for a Woman, what greater Honour redounding to all Women, than to see a Lady teaching in that Chair, where *Ammonius* and *Hierocles* (to Name no more, for 'tis a Mistake in *Socrates* or his Transcriber to make *Plotinus* one of them) where so many Professors, I say, uttered the Oracles of Learning, rather as divine Intelligences than mortal Men? What infinite Merit must she have possessed, who could be preferr'd to that conspicuous Station, at a Time when Men of immense Learning abounded both at *Alexandria*, and in many other Parts of the *Roman Empire*? Wherefore, the Novelty of the Thing considered, and *Hypatia's* Worth being universally acknowledged, 'tis no Wonder that she soon had a crouded Auditory. *She explained to her*  
Hearer,

*Hearers, says Sacrates, the several Sciences, that go under the general Name of Philosophy; for which Reason, continues he, there was a Confluence to her from all Parts, of those who made Philosophy their Delight or Study. To the same Purpose speak others; and Suidas adds, that she explained all the Philosophers, that is, all the several Sects, with the particular Tenets of their Founders, which shews an inexpressible Elevation and Capacity, each of these separately being thought a sufficient Province, to exercise the Diligence of any one Man, consummate in Letters.*

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## C H A P. V.

*Hypatia's School crouded with Scholars of the best Fashion. She is admired for her incomparable Beauty, and the vast Extent of her Learning.*

NOW, I cannot but here represent to myself with Pleasure, let who will censure me for it, the Flower of all the Youth in *Europe, Asia, and Africa*, sitting at the Feet of a most beautiful Lady (for such we are assur'd *Hypatia* was) all greedily swallowing Instruction from her Mouth, and many of 'em Love from her Eyes. How she serv'd one of this last Sort, shall be told in its due Place. It was doubtless a Thing impossible, not to improve under such a Teacher; as one must be equally stupid and insensible, that could not be powerfully affected by a charming Mind in a charming Body. I am sure this Reflection is very agreeable to that Philosophy she peculiarly professed; and accordingly the *Alexandrian*



an School never flourish'd more. Her Disciples entered into a strict Tye of Intimacy with one another, stiling themselves *Companions*, or, as in our Colleges *Fellows*; which was likewise the Custom at *Athens*, and in other famous Seminaries of Learning. This commonly begot Effects of Benevolence thro' the whole Course of their Lives, and sometimes Acts of Friendship very extraordinary. *Hypatia* was by way of Excellence named *The Philosopher*, altogether as much on Account of her profound Knowledge, as for her public Profession of Teaching. Nor was any Professor ever more admired by the World, or more dear to his own Scholars. Hers were as remarkable as numerous.

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## C H A P. VI.

*An Encomium on Synesius, one of Hypatia's Scholars; who, tho' a Heathen, was consecrated a Christian Bishop.*

ONE of these, who has preserved to us the Names of several others, is the celebrated *Synesius*. He was a Native of *Cyrene* in *Africa*, on the Borders of *Egypt*, a very ancient Greek Colony, the Birth-place of *Aristippus* and *Carneades*, which *Synesius* forgets not to mention in his Writings. He travelled for Improvement to his neighbouring Country of *Egypt*, the undoubted Mother of the Sciences, where he happily succeeded in his Studies at *Alexandria* under *Hypatia*. This Personage alone may suffice for a Specimen, of the extraordinary Spirits that she formed. If we may rely on the Judgement of no less a Man than *Nicephorus Gregoras*, Patriarch of *Constantinople* (who wrote

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elaborate *Annotations* on his *Treatise of Dreams*, a Piece fraught with uncommon Learning) he says, *There was nothing he did not know, no Science wherein he did not excel, no Mystery in which he was not initiated or skilled*, with a great deal more to this Purpose. And it must be owned, that to all the Vivacity natural to his Country, there was joined the most profound Knowledge and solid Judgement. His Works are every one highly commended, but *his Epistles are admirable*, as *Suidas* very truly remarks, and in the Opinion of *Protius*, as well as of *Evagrius*, *they are elegant, agreeable, sententious, and learned*. He was a Man of noble Birth, which added no less Weight to his Learning than this reflected Lustre on his Quality; as both together procured him Credit with his Superiors, Authority over his Inferiors, and Admiration from his Equals. He went upon an Embassy, which lasted three Years, to the Emperor *Arcadius* at *Constantinople*, on the Behalf of his Country; which was miserably harrassed by the auxiliary *Goths* and other *Barbarians*, but which received considerable Relief from his Solicitations. It was then that *with greater Boldness than any of the Grecians* (as he tells us himself) he pronounced before the Emperor, that extremely fine Oration concerning *Government*; which, in a Country so justly fond of Liberty as ours, I wonder has never been translated. This defect I have supplied, and will impart it to the Public on a proper Occasion. As for *Synefius's* being consecrated Bishop of *Ptolemais*, notwithstanding his Protestation, that he disbelieved some of the most essential Articles of the *Christian Religion*, we spoke enough to that Point at the latter end of *Clidophorus*; only we shall observe in this Place, how *Petavius*, the Editor of his Works, affirms, that, in some of the Books written after his

his Profession of *Christianity*, he appears as very a *Heathen* as ever. But this being no Prejudice to his Parts, however it may affect his Salvation, is none of our present Business to examine; much less to adopt the pitiful Excuses, or rather Prevarications, invented by some learned Men to defend him from this Imputation. The principal is *Baromius*.

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## C H A P. VII.

*Synefius's Testimony to the Learning and Virtue of Hypatia. Some Account of his Writings and other Works.*

THE Thing which our Design obliges us not to pass over slightly is, the greatful Testimony he every where bears to the Learning and Virtue of *Hypatia*, whom he never mentions without the profoundest Respect, and sometimes in Terms of Affection coming little short of Adoration. In a Letter to his Brother *Euoptius*, *Salute* (says he) *the most honoured and the most beloved of God, the Philosopher; and that happy Sodality or Fellowship, which enjoys the Blessing of her divine Voice.* In another to his said Brother he mentions one *Egyptus*, *who sucked in the Seeds of Wisdom from Hypatia.* And thus he expresses himself writing to *Olympius*: *I suppose these Letters will be delivered by Peter which he will receive from that sacred Hand. I send them from Pentapolis to our common Instructress, and she will intrust them with whom she thinks fit, which I am sure will be to one that is well known to her.* In a Letter addressed to herself, he desires her to direct a *Hydroscope* to be made and

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bought

bought for him, which he there describes. *Peta-vius* thinks it was a sort of Level, and others an Hour-Measure. That famous Silver *Astrolabe* which he presented to *Peonius*, a Man equally excelling in Philosophy and Arms, he owns to have been perfected by the Directions of *Hypatia*. In a long Epistle he acquaints her with the Reasons of his writing two Books, which he thereby sends her. The one was his mystical Treatise of *Dreams*, and the other his *Dion*. This last is a most ingenious Apology for Learning against two Sorts of Men, who by very opposite Lines tended to the same Center of Ignorance. The one, that under Pretence of being reserved towards unworthy Hearers, concealed their Want of real Knowledge, did accuse him of being too Communicative, and of prostituting Philosophy. The others would have him to be eternally prating like themselves, not that they studied more than others, nor yet so much, to be furnished with Matter of Discourse; but that talking by Rote out of certain *Systems*, the Truth of which they took for granted, and which no Body must contradict, they could tire the Patience of their Hearers, without making these or themselves a whit the wiser. Both Sorts charged him with studying Elegance and Oratory in his Compositions; for the Divines of that Time were substituting apace to Philosophy and other Learning, Legends and Enthusiasm, Fables and Fancies, which they sanctified by the Name of *Divine Contemplation*. Metaphysical Distinctions about the *Trinity*, and extravagant Notions about the Essence of GOD (whose Majesty they blasphemed by their profane Definitions) was all the Study then in Vogue, to the irreparable Damage of polite and useful Letters.

## C H A P. VIII.

Synefius *submits his Book of Dion to the Judgment of Hypatia ; his Description of his Censurers.*

OF his *Dion* therefore he begs *Hypatia's* Judgment, resolving not to publish it without her Approbation. He informs her moreover, that she's the first among the *Greeks*, or rather the *Heathens*, to whom he communicates his *Treatise of Dreams* ; and that he might complete, he says, the sacred Number *Three*, he adds to these two his *Account of the Astrolabe* presented to *Peonius*. It will not be a Digression altogether foreign to the Subject (as we shall see hereafter) if we insert here part of the fine Description, which he has given of the second Sort of those that censured him ;

“ who being full of Ignorance (says he) yet armed  
 “ with Confidence, are readier than all other Men  
 “ to discourse concerning GOD ; and if you  
 “ happen to light upon them, you will strait hear  
 “ some of their unreasonable Reasonings, which  
 “ they will needs obtrude on such as are desirous  
 “ of no such Matter ; because, I suppose, it is  
 “ for their Interest so to do. For on the Score of  
 “ such Things they are made Preachers in Towns,  
 “ which is the same Thing as to enjoy *Amalthea's*  
 “ Horn or *Plenty of all Things*, which these think  
 “ themselves obliged to use. I fancy by this Time  
 “ you perceive, what this forward Generation of  
 “ Men may be, that blame my generous Purpose.  
 “ They invite me to come into their Discipline,  
 “ promising, that in a short Time I shall appear  
 “ most confident in Things relating to GOD,  
 “ and ever after be capable to dispute incessantly  
 “ both

“ both Night and Day.” I believe this Race of Men is not yet extinct; but another Time they may hear of a certain *Speech* addressed to them by the same Truth-telling *Synefius*.

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## C H A P. IX.

*Synefius's Misfortunes; his Letter of Complaint to Hypatia.*

ON his Promotion, or, as he accounted it himself, his Banishment to the Bishoprick of *Ptolemais*, he was forced to quit the Fellowship of his Condisciples; and the Presence of his dear *Hypatia*. As an Augmentation of his Affliction he soon lost his Wife, with his Children in a little Time after, whom he very tenderly loved, and whose Death he did not bear with the same Fortitude, that is reported of some other Philosophers. On this Occasion, and a fancied Neglect of his Friends, he wrote the following Letter, “ *To Hypatia the*  
 “ *Philosopher* (that I may use the very Words of  
 “ the Inscription.) I salute you, happy Lady,  
 “ and by your Means the most happy Compani-  
 “ ons. I have of a long Time had an Intention  
 “ to chide, by reason I have received no Letters  
 “ from any of you. But now I perceive that I  
 “ am neglected by all, not that I have in any Thing  
 “ failed of my Duty; but that I am in many Re-  
 “ spects unfortunate, and indeed as unfortunate as  
 “ any one can be. Nevertheless, could I be thought  
 “ worthy of receiving your Letters, and of being  
 “ informed how you lead your Lives (being con-  
 “ fident however it is after the best Manner that  
 “ may be, and that you fail not to exercise a  
 “ sprightly Genius) I should only think myself  
 “ un-

“ unhappy by Halves, while I enjoyed any Hap-  
 “ piness on your Account. But now I must reckon  
 “ this also, as one of the Misfortunes wherein I  
 “ am involved. For I am not only deprived of  
 “ my Children, but likewise of my Friends, and  
 “ of every body’s Kindness; nay, what is more  
 “ than all, of your most divine Soul, which only  
 “ Thing I flattered myself would continue stedfast  
 “ to me, in Spite of the Injuries of Fortune, and  
 “ the Storms of Fate.” One would think that he  
 could not better express, in so few Lines, the good  
 Opinion he had of his Teacher; yet he’s still more  
 pathetical in other Letters, which, because serv-  
 ing to give us the fuller View of *Hypatia’s* Cha-  
 racter, I shall produce as essential to my Subject.

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## C H A P. X.

*Synefius’s Grief for the Death of his Children,  
 brings upon him a Fit of Sickness; his  
 Letter of Complaint to Hypatia in his Illness.*

C Ontinuing therefore to grieve for the Death of  
 his Children, he fell into an ill State of  
 Health, which he signifies to his Mistress (whom  
 in all his Letters he styles *The Philosopher*) and to  
 the beloved Companions of his Studies, in these  
 Words. “ Being confined to my Bed I have dic-  
 “ tated this Letter, which may you receive in  
 “ good Health, my Mother; my Sister, and my  
 “ Instructress! in all which Respects you have been  
 “ my Benefactress, or if there be any other, either  
 “ Name or Thing, that is more honourable. The  
 “ Weakness of my Body proceeds from the An-  
 “ guish of my Soul. The Remembrance of my  
 “ deceased Children consumes me by little and lit-  
 “ tle.

" tle. *Synefius* ought only to have lived so long,  
 " as the Evils of Life were unknown to him.  
 " Afterwards it has happened to him as to a Stream  
 " that is stopt; it rushes over its Dam on a sud-  
 " den, and forces all the Pleasure of Life before  
 " it. Let me cease to live, or to remember the  
 " Burial of my Children. May you enjoy Health  
 " yourself, and salute in my Name the happy  
 " Companions, beginning with Father *Theotecnus*,  
 " and Brother *Athanasius*, and so proceeding to  
 " the rest. Or if any other be since associated  
 " to them, who is agreeable to you (and to whom,  
 " for this very Reason of pleasing you, I ought  
 " to stand obliged) salute him also from me, as  
 " one of my dearest Friends. If what relates to  
 " me be of any Concern to you, 'tis well done;  
 " though, even then, I shall be insensible to this  
 " Favour." What can be more affectionate, what  
 " can be more tender, what can be more benevolent  
 " or candid? The Soul speaks here in every Line.  
 " A while after, the Calamities of War being added  
 " to all his other Sorrows, he writes her this Letter,  
 " beginning with a couple of Lines out of *Homer*,  
 " changing only a Word or two.

*Tho' 'mong the Dead profound Oblivion reigns,  
 E'en there my dear Hypatia I'll remember!*

" I, who am surrounded with the Miseries of  
 " my Country, and who am thoroughly weary of  
 " it, since I daily see hostile Arms, and Men  
 " slaughter'd like Beasts; that I breathe Air in-  
 " fected with the Corruption of dead Bodies, and  
 " that I hourly expect the like Fate myself; for  
 " who can hope well, where the very Face of the  
 " Sky is most lamentable, being darkened by the  
 " Shadow of carnivorous Birds? Yet, notwith-  
 " standing all this, I retain an Affection for the  
 " Country;



“ Country ; nay, how can I do otherwise, being  
 “ a *Lybian* by Nation, and born in this Place,  
 “ where I behold no ignoble Sepulchres of my  
 “ Ancestors. For your Sake alone I fancy I can  
 “ set light by my Country, and, as soon as Lei-  
 “ sure offers, will banish myself out of it.” In  
*Clidophorus* I shew’d the like Resolutions out of  
 some of his Letters to others : but whether he  
 ever executed them, or how long he lived, or where  
 or in what Manner he died, is not recorded by  
 any Author that I remember.

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## C H A P. XI.

*Hypatia is esteemed and caressed by the Publick ;  
 is consulted by the Magistrates in all impor-  
 tant Cases, and sometimes sat among them.*

ALL this, some will say, we readily grant,  
 that *Hypatia* was a Lady of most eminent  
 Learning, and that *Synefusus*, with probably not a  
 few of her other Disciples, esteemed her to be a  
 Miracle of Virtue and Prudence ; but what did  
 the rest of the World think of her Conduct, what  
 Marks of Approbation or Favour did she receive  
 from the Publick ? To this Inquiry, which is very  
 natural in this Place, we answer ; that never Wo-  
 man was more caressed by the Publick, and yet  
 that never Woman had a more unspotted Character.  
 She was held an Oracle for her Wisdom, which  
 made her be consulted by the Magistrates in all im-  
 portant Cases ; and this frequently drew her among  
 the greatest Concourse of Men, without the least  
 Censure of her Manners. The Proof of so rare a  
 Felicity we chuse to give in the Words of the  
 C Historian

Historian *Socrates*. “ By reason of the Confidence  
 “ and Authority (says he) which she had acquired  
 “ by her Learning, she sometimes came to the  
 “ Judges with singular Modesty; nor was she  
 “ any thing abashed, to appear thus among a  
 “ Croud of Men; for all Persons, on the Score  
 “ of her extraordinary Discretion, did at the same  
 “ Time both reverence and admire her.” The same  
 Things are confirmed by *Niceforus Callistus*, *Suidas*,  
*Hesychius Illustis*, and indeed by whom not? So  
 far was she from that blameable Timidity, which  
 is contracted from a wrong Education; or from  
 that conscious Backwardness, which is inspired by  
 Guilt. That the Governors and Magistrates of  
*Alexandria* regularly visited her, that all the City  
 (as *Damascius* and *Suidas* relate) paid Court to her,  
 is a Distinction with which no Women was ever  
 honoured before. And to say all in a Word, when  
*Nicephorus Gregoras*, above quoted, intended to  
 pass the highest Compliment on the Princess  
*Eudocia*, he thought he could not better hit, than  
 by calling her *another Hypatia*.

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## C H A P. XII.

*Synefius's recommendatory Letter to Hypatia,  
 in Behalf of two young Gentlemen, on a Suit  
 depending at Alexandria.*

IT was during this prosperous Gale of publick  
 Favour, that *Hypatia's* devoted Friend *Synefius*  
 sent her this recommendatory Letter on the Behalf  
 of two young Gentlemen, that had a Claim de-  
 pending at *Alexandria*. “ Although Fortune can-  
 “ not take every thing from me, yet she has a  
 “ mind to strip me of all she can; she that

“ Of

“ Of many Sons, and good, has me bereft.

“ But to be ambitious of doing the best Things,  
 “ and to assist the unjustly Oppressed, is what she  
 “ shall never take from me; for far be it from me,  
 “ that she should ever be able to conquer my  
 “ Mind. Therefore I hate Injustice, since this I  
 “ may do still; and am also desirous to repress it,  
 “ but that is one of the Things taken out of my  
 “ Power, and which I lost before my Children.

“ Once the *Milefians* valiant were.

“ Time also was, when I could be useful to my  
 “ Friends, and when you were wont to call me  
 “ *Others Good*; as turning to the Profit of other  
 “ Men my Interest with Persons in great Autho-  
 “ rity, whom I made to serve me as so many  
 “ Hands. Now I am left destitute of all, unless  
 “ you have any Power; for you, together with  
 “ Virtue, I reckon a Good, of which none will  
 “ be able to rob me. But you have, and will al-  
 “ ways have Power, by reason of the excellent  
 “ Use you make of your Credit. Wherefore let  
 “ *Niceus* and *Philolaus*, virtuous Youths and Re-  
 “ lations, return Masters of their own, thro’ the  
 “ Care of all who honour you, whether private  
 “ Men or Magistrates.” Thus, as a necessary  
 Part of her History, I have inserted at Length, all  
 the Letters written to *Hypatia* by *Sinesius*, except  
 the 15th, whereof I have given the Substance;  
 and the 33d in the Collection of his *Letters*, which  
 is too short to contain any Instruction; as likewise  
 the 154th, which, being too long, I have abridged  
 above.

## C H A P. XIII.

*Hypatia married, yet said to die a Maid.  
Isidorus, her Husband, the most eminent  
Philosopher of his Time.*

**I**T would be as great a Prodigy in Nature as *Hypatia* was herself, if a Lady of such Beauty, Modesty, Wisdom, and Virtue, were not by many eagerly sought in Marriage : And, in Effect, we find that she was actually married to the Philosopher *Isidorus*, tho' *Suidas* says she died a Maid ; which is not so irreconcilable a Thing, as People may be apt to imagine on first Thoughts, but, as we shall shew, very likely to be true. This *Isidorus* succeeded *Marinus* in the School, and his *Life* has been written by *Damascius*, one of *Theon's* Scholars, who therefore had all imaginable Opportunities to know whatever regarded *Hypatia* and *Isidorus*. His *Life* was abridged by *Photius*, but we have it not so perfect as he left it ; for besides the extreme Confusion and Incorrectness which appears thro' the whole, the learned *Valesius* gave the World Expectations, that he would, one Time or other, publish it twice larger than that we read now in *Photius*. However, in such as it still is, *Damascius* bestows such Elogies on *Isidorus*, as put him almost above Humanity ; yet, no way concerning *Hypatia*, I pass them over in Silence. I frankly confess, that I more than suspect many of the Things he reports ; as knowing that *Damascius* was a great Visionary, and, like *Philostratus* with respect to *Apollonius Tyaneus*, designed to oppose *Isidorus* to those Christian *Saints*, who were celebrated for their miraculous and supernatural Attainments. But this ought not to affect his Credit in Matters of an ordinary Nature, and therefore

fore I do not in the least hesitate to believe him, when he positively affirms that *Hypatia* was Wife to *Isidorus*.

## C H A P. XIV.

*In what Sense it might be said, that tho' Hypatia was married, yet she died a Maid.*

SUIDAS likewise makes her the Wife of the same *Isidorus*, tho' he be the very Man who tells us she died a Virgin. That Matter, considering the great Uncertainty in which we are left by the meditated Destruction or casual Decay of authentick Writers, I conceive to stand thus. *Damascius* says, that *Isidorus* had another Wife, whose Name was *Domna*, by which he had a Son call'd *Proclus*. She died the fifth Day after her Delivery, and, according to his Panegyrist, *she rid the Philosopher of an evil Beast and a bitter Wedlock*. Now supposing this to happen some Time before the tragical End of *Hypatia*, and that the latter was betrothed to *Isidorus*, it might very well be said that she was his Wife, and yet that she died a Maid. The Author of an *Epigram*, that was made upon her, seems to have been of the same Opinion.

*The Virgin's starry Sign when e'er I see,  
Adoring, on thy Words I think and thee :  
For all thy vertuous Works celestial are,  
As are thy learned Words beyond compare,  
Divine Hypatia, who dost far and near  
Virtue's and Learning's spotless Star appear.*

The Allusion, I say, to the Constellation *Virgo*, and the Epithet of *Spotless*, would induce me to believe that the Writer reckoned her a Virgin as well as *Suidas* ; but I shall conclude nothing from  
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so slender a Conjecture, besides that her Character is no way concerned in this Particular, tho' as a Historian I would omit nothing that might illustrate my Subject. For this Reason it is, that I cannot pass over uncensured a Reflection of *Damascius*, who gravely says, that *Isidorus was far superior to Hypatia, not only as a Man to a Woman, but as a Philosopher to a Geometrician.* Good and egregious Reasoning! as if her Skill in Geometry or Astronomy, had been any Hindrance to her Improvement in every Part of Philosophy, wherein she is by so many confessed to surpass those of her own, if not of former Time; or as if we in *England*, for Example, did reckon King *James* superior to Queen *Elizabeth*; because the first, forsooth, was a Man, and the last a Woman. But I observed before that *Damascius* was a sad Visionary.

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## C H A P. XV.

*Hypatia's Lovers, one of whom she cured of his Passion, in a very particular Manner.*

A Lady of such uncommon Merit and Accomplishments as *Hypatia*, daily surround with a Circle of young Gentlemen, many of them distinguished by their Fortune or Quality; besides her frequently appearing in publick Assemblies; and receiving Visits from Persons of the first Rank, could not possibly fail being sometimes importuned with Addresses of Gallantry. Such Attempts the severest Virtue cannot avoid, tho' it can deny Incouragement, and make Success to be despaired. How many Trials of this kind *Hypatia* may have overcome, we are left to imagine rather than to know, thro' the Silence of Historians, who either thought it below their Gravity to record such Things, or  
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that the Works of those who descended to Particulars are lost. One Instance however has escaped the common Wreck of good Books; nor can I doubt but several others might be contained in the *Life of Isidorus*, out of which there is Reason to believe, that *Suidas* picked what I am going to relate. He acquaints us therefore, that one of her own Scholars made warm Love to her, whom she endeavoured to cure of his Passion by the precepts of Philosophy; and that some reported she actually reclaimed him by Musick, which he judiciously explodes; Musick having ever been deemed rather an Incentive to Love, than an Antidote against it. But he says, with much greater Probability, that the Spark vehemently soliciting her (not to be sure without pleading the irresistible Power of her Beauty) at a Time when she happened to be under an Indisposition ordinary to her Sex; she took a Handkerchief, of which she had been making some Use on that Occasion, and throwing it in his Face, said; *This is what you love, young Fool, and not any Thing that is beautiful.* For the Platonic Philosophers held Goodness, Wisdom, Virtue, and such other Things, as by Reason of their intrinsic Worth are desirable for their own Sakes, to be the only real *Beauties*, of whose divine Symmetry, Charms, and Perfection, the most superlative that appear in *Bodies* are but faint Resemblances. This is the right Notion of *Platonic Love*. Wherefore *Hypatia's* Procedure might very well put a Student of Philosophy at *Alexandria* to the Blush, and quite cure him too (which *Suidas* assures us was the Effect) but would never rebute a Beau in St. James's Park, nor perhaps some Batchelors of Divinity at our modern Universities.

## C H A P. XVI.

*The close Intimacy between Hypatia and Orestes the Governor of Alexandria, very displeasing to Cyril the Bishop.*

AT the Time that *Hypatia* thus reigned the brightest Ornament of *Alexandria*, *Orestes* was Governor of the same Place for the Emperor *Theodosius*, and *Cyril* Bishop or Patriarch. As *Orestes* was a Person educated suitable to his Rank, he could not but take Notice of those Perfections in *Hypatia*, which all the World admired; and, as he was a wise Governor, he would not be so far wanting to his Charge, as not to ask her Advice in Matters difficult or dangerous, when every Body else consulted her as an Oracle. This created of Course an Intimacy between them that was highly displeasing to *Cyril*, who mortally hated *Orestes*. But because this Emulation proved fatal to *Hypatia*, I shall take the Subject a little higher. 'Tis observed by *Socrates*, *Nicephorus*, and others, that *Cyril* (who was elevated to the See by Sedition and Force against one *Timothy* an Archdeacon of no extraordinary Reputation) intermeddled more in temporal or civil Matters, than his Predecessors took upon them to do, and that the Example was greedily followed by his Successors; *who not keeping within the Bounds of their Priestly Ordination, took upon them an arbitrary kind of Principality, and the absolute Disposal of Affairs.* The first Act of Authority that *Cyril* exercised was, to shut up the Churches of the *Novatians*, from which Step he proceeded to seize upon their sacred Vessels and Church-Ornaments, till at length he robbed their Bishop *Theopemptus* of all he had. Yet these *Novatians*



*vations* profess'd the same Doctrine to a Tittle that he did, and differed only in some Points of Discipline. But they must be mere Novices in *Ecclesiastical History*, who know not that *Discipline* has been ever reckoned of greater Consequence than *Doctrine*; if one may judge by the Commotions that have happened in Churches, or the Durations of their Schisms. The Reason is obvious. For if a Man believes otherwise than his Teacher, and yet prudentially conforms to the publick Ritual and Discipline, or perhaps eagerly itickles for it, as thinking it the most conducing to Order, be his Speculations what you will, still he preserves the Unity of the Church; or, in other Words, he obeys his Spiritual Governors, and teaches others by his Example to do the like; whereas if his belief be ever so right, or at least ever so agreeable to that prescribed in the Society whereof he is a Member; yet if he boggles at any Part of the publick Ritual and Discipline, he then promotes a Spiritual Rebellion, and rends the Unity of the Church; that is, he weakens the Government of the Clergy. These were the Maxims of those Times, and hence it sprung, that Schism is counted so damnable a Sin in their Writings, a Sin more dreadful than any other, that it may the better serve for a Scare-crow.

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CHAP.

## C H A P. XVII.

*Cyril expels the Jews out of Alexandria; Orestes complains to the Emperor; Cyril and Orestes become irreconcilable Enemies.*

ONE main Reason why Cyril could not bear the Governor, as we are told by *Socrates*, was, that *Orestes* hated the Principality of the Bishops; as well because they transferred to themselves much of the Power belonging to those appointed Governors, by the Emperor; as, in particular, because Cyril would needs be prying into his Actions. Their Enmity became sufficiently known to the Publick, by a Sedition raised against *Orestes*, occasioned by one *Hierax* a pitiful School-Master, but a profest Admirer of the Bishop, and a most diligent Attendant at his Sermons, where he was sure to clap and rechap, according to the rare Custom of those Times. The Jews spying him in the Theatre, while the Governor was there on some publick Business, cried out, that he came purposely thither to cause Mischief; and the Uproar, whereof the Particulars may be read in the just quoted *Socrates*, terminated in this, that Cyril expelled all the Jews out of the City, where they had liv'd in great Opulence from the Time of *Alexander* the Great, to the no small Benefit of the Place. Were I not accustomed to read monstrous Lies of this unfortunate Nation, especially that thread-bare Fiction of crucifying a Child (objected to them here as a thousand Times afterwards) I should think them very rightly served. But even in that Case, who can justify *Cyril's* licensing the Multitude to seize on their Goods? And yet why do I ask such a Question; when this has ever been the true Motive

tive of the Barbarities to which they have been exposed, tho' Zeal for Religion has been as shamelessly as wickedly pretended. *Orestes*, as became a good Governor, *being grievously concerned at what had happened* (to speak in the Words of the Historian) *and sadly afflicted, that so great a City should be so suddenly emptied of such a Multitude of Inhabitants, gave the Emperor an Account of the whole Matter.* We might be certain, were we not expressly told it, that *Cyril* was not behind Hand on his Part. Yet conscious of his Guilt, as every Reader may collect, he would fain make up with *Orestes*, and conjured him by the holy *Gospels* to be Friends; being constrained to this, as *Nicephorus* observes, by the People of *Alexandria*, who loved their Governor. But this last knew him too well to trust him, upon which their Difference became irreconcilable. You may therefore expect to hear of Vengeance from the Priest, whom the same *Nicephorus* represents proud, seditious, a Boute-feu, a Persecutor: while the Emperor might thank himself for the Disorders that desolated one of his principal Cities; for where was it ever otherwise, when the Clergy were permitted to share in the Government of civil Affairs.

## C H A P. XVIII.

*Orestes the Governor, assaulted by the Monks, their Captain racked to Death, but esteemed as a Martyr by Cyril.*

NOW the Revenge which *Cyril* took of *Orestes*, being the Prelude to poor *Hypatia's* Tragedy, I chuse to relate it, as I have done other Passages,

in the Words of honest Socrates. Certain of the Monks (says he) living in the Nitrian Mountains, leaving their Monasteries to the Number of about Five Hundred, flocked to the City, and spied the Governor going Abroad in his Chariot; whereupon approaching, they called him by the Names of Sacrificer and Heathen, using many other scandalous Words. The Governor therefore suspecting, that this was a Trick plaid him by Cyril, cryd out, that he was a Christian, and that he was baptized at Constantinople by Bishop Atticus. But the Monks, giving no Heed to what he said, one of them, called Ammonius, threw a Stone at Orestes, which struck him on the Head; and being all covered with Blood from his Wound, his Guards, a few excepted, fled some one Way some another, bidding themselves in the Croud, lest they should be stoned to Death. In the mean while the People of Alexandria ran to defend their Governor against the Monks, and, putting all the rest to Flight, they apprehend Ammonius, and brought him before Orestes; who, as the Laws prescribed, publicly put him to the Torture, and racked him till he expired. Not long after he gave an Account of all that was done to the Princes. Nor did Cyril fail to give them a contrary Information. He received the Body of Ammonius, and, laying it in one of the Churches, he changed his Name, calling him Thaumastus, and ordered him to be considered as a Martyr; nay, he made his Panegyrick in the Church, extolling his Courage, as one that had contended for the Truth. But the wiser Sort of the Christians themselves did not approve the Zeal, which Cyril showed on this Man's behalf; being convinced that Ammonius had justly suffered for his desperate Attempt, but was not forced to deny Christ, in his Torments. This Account requires no Commentary. I shall only observe with a Heathen Philosopher, that at that Time the Monks (the fittest Executi-

Executioners of Cyril's Cruelty) were Men indeed as to their Form, but Swine in there Lives; who openly committed Thousands of execrable Crimes, not fit to be named. Whoever, says he, got on a black Habit, and would make a Grotesque Figure in Publick, obtained a tyrannical Authority; to such a Reputation of Virtue did that Race of Men arrive. This Picture, tho' drawn by an Enemy's Hand, is allowed by all good Judges to be done to the Life; and we shall presently have Reason, more than sufficient, to be of the same Opinion.

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## C H A P. XIX.

*Hypatius's tragical Death, perpetrated by Cyril's Clergy, who hated her for Intimacy with Orestes.*

**B**UT Cyril's Rage was not yet satiated. Tho' Orestes had the good Luck to escape being murdered, *Hypatia* must fall a Sacrifice to the Prelate's Pride and to the Ghost of *Ammonius*. This Lady, as we mentioned above, was profoundly respected by Orestes, who much frequented and consulted her; for which Reason, says Socrates, she was not a little traduced among the Mob of the Christian Church; as if she obstructed a Reconciliation between Bishop Cyril and Orestes. Wherefore certain hot-brained Men, headed by one Peter a Lecturer, entered into a Conspiracy against her, and watching their Opportunity when she was returning Home from some Place, they dragged her out of her Chair; hurried her to the Church called Cesar's, and stripping her stark naked, they killed her with Tiles. Then they tore her to Pieces, and carrying her Limbs to a Place

*Place called Cinaron, there they burnt them to Ashes.* Nothing short of this Treatment, not to be paralleled among the most savage Nations against a Woman (and against a Woman of such Distinction scarce credible, did not two or more of her Contemporaries attest it) nothing, I say, but the Blood of *Hypatia*, shed in the most inhuman Manner, could glut the Fury of *Cyril's* Clergy; for these were the Monsters, that putting off all Humanity, committed this barbarous Murder. *Socrates*, 'tis true, distinctly Names but one Clergyman, *Peter* the Lecturer; but *Nicephorus* expressly tells us, that the Zealots, led on by this *Peter*, were *Cyril's* Clergy, who hated her for the Credit she had with *Orestes*; that they were these, who imputed to her the Misunderstanding between the Governor and their Bishop; and finally, that they butchered her the Time of solemn Fasting; which, added to their sanctifying of their Villany by perpetrating it in a Church, shews the glorious State of Religion in those pure and primitive Times; as some, no less hypocritical-ly than falsely, are pleased to stile them. The Citizens of *Alexandria*, on whom certain Persons would fain lay this Act of popular Heat, as they speak by way of Extenuation, were too great Admirers of *Hypatia's* Virtue, and too much in the Interest of *Orestes*, to have any Hand in so foul a Business, however prone to Tumults. All the Circumstances accompanying the Fact, clearly prove this; not to repeat the Assault so lately made by the *Nitrian* Monks on the Governor, whom the People rescued; tho' I will not answer for all the Mob, especially when the Clergy loo'd them on.

## CHAPTER XX.

*Cyril the main Instigator of Hypatia's Murder, being envious of the Fame she had acquired by her Learning and Philosophy.*

**B**E it so that the Clergy of *Alexandria* were the Murderers (some may say) and that their Affection for *Cyril* transported them beyond what can be justified; how does it appear that he himself had any Hand in this black Deed, which perhaps he neither knew nor could prevent? For the Sake of our common Humanity (since true Christianity is not at all concerned) I wish it were so; but there is such Evidence as will not let any Man, if not wilfully shutting his Eyes against Truth, to believe it. *Damascius*, who is the other contemporary Witness of her Murder, I mean besides *Socrates*, positively affirms, that “*Cyril* “vow’d *Hypatia*’s Destruction, whom he bitterly “envied;” and *Suidas*, who writes the same Thing, says, that this Envy was caused by her extraordinary Wisdom and Skill in Astronomy; as *Hesychius*, when he mentions her Limbs being carried all over the City in Triumph, writes, that *this befel her on the Score of her extraordinary Wisdom, and especially her Skill in Astronomy*. For *Cyril* was a mighty Pretender to Letters, and one of those Clergymen who will neither acknowledge nor bear the Superiority of any Laymen in this Respect, be it ever so incontestable to others. But some Circumstances of *Hypatia*’s Death, not mention’d in *Socrates*, are preserved in the Abridgment of *Isidorus*’s *Life* in *Photius*, such as *Valesius* had it; and which I here give you, Reader, though it should cost you the Tribute of one Tear more to her Memory. “Upon  
“a Time

“ a Time (says *Damascius*) *Cyril*, passing by the  
 “ House of *Hypatia*, saw a great Multitude before  
 “ the Door both of Men on Foot and on Horseback;  
 “ whereof some were coming, some going, and  
 “ others staid. When he inquir’d what that  
 “ Croud was, and what occasioned so great a Con-  
 “ course? he was answered by such as accompa-  
 “ nied him, that this was *Hypatia* the Philosopher’s  
 “ House, and that these came to pay their Respects  
 “ to her. Which when *Cyril* understood, he was  
 “ moved with so great Envy, that he immediate-  
 “ ly vow’d her Destruction, which he accomplish’d  
 “ in the most detestable Manner. For when *Hy-  
 “ patia*, as was her Custom, went abroad, several  
 “ Men, neither fearing divine Vengeance nor hu-  
 “ man Punishment, suddenly rush’d upon her and  
 “ kill’d her: Thus laying their Country both  
 “ under the highest Infamy, and under the Guilt  
 “ of innocent Blood. And indeed the Emperor  
 “ was grievously offended at this Matter, and the  
 “ Murderers had been certainly punished, but that  
 “ *Edesius* did corrupt the Emperor’s Friends; so  
 “ that his Majesty it’s true remitted the Punish-  
 “ ment, but drew Vengeance on himself and his  
 “ Posterity, his Nephew paying dear for this  
 “ Action.” This Nephew *Valetius* believes to  
 have been *Valentinian*, whose Mother *Placidia* was  
 Aunt to *Theodosius*.

CHAP.



## C H A P. XXI.

*The Death of Hypatia brought an Infamy on Cyril and the Christian Church: She was no Catholick, but a Heathen.*

THUS ended the Life of *Hypatia*, whose Memory will ever last, and whose Murder happen'd in the fourth Year of *Cyril's* Episcopate, *Honorius* being the tenth Time and *Theodosius* the sixth Time Consuls, in the Month of *March*, in the Time of *Lent*, and in the Year 415. "That Action (says *Socrates*) brought no small Infamy not only upon *Cyril*, but also upon the whole Church of *Alexandria*; for Slaughters, and Fightings, and such like Things, are quite foreign to the Christian Institution." There's nothing surer, there's nothing truer; but of genuine Christianity there remain'd very little at that Time, unless Christianity be made to consist in the bare Name and Profession; for, were I disposed to take this Trouble upon me, I should think it no difficult Task to shew, that neither the Doctrines nor Distinctions then in Vogue were ever taught by *Christ* or his Apostles; and that the Ceremonies enjoined or practised were all utterly unknown to them. No, no, they were no Christians that kill'd *Hypatia*; nor are any Christian Clergymen now to be attack'd through the Sides of her Murderers, but those that resemble them; by substituting precarious Traditions, scholastick Fictions, and an usurped Dominion, to the salutiferous Institution of the holy *Jesus*. *Photius* is very angry with *Philostorgius*, whom he stigmatizes as an impious Man, for saying that the *Homocousians*, or the *Athanasian Trinitarians*, tore her to Pieces; but

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is he not an *impudent Man*, or something worse, that dares to deny this? when none were more remarkable Sticklers for the *Homoousian*, than *Cyri* and his Adherents. This only the Truth of History requires to be specially noted; for with me the *Homoiousion* and the *Homoousion* are of no Account, in Comparison of the *Bible*, where neither of them are to be found. In the mean Time 'twill not be amiss to hear *Gothofred* on this Occasion. “ Ob-  
 “ serve here (says he) the *Arian* Poison of *Phi-*  
 “ *loftorgius* against the *Homoousians*, or Catholicks;  
 “ as if the Murder of *Hypatia* were the Crime of  
 “ the Catholicks, and not of the indiscrete Po-  
 “ pulace. Thus much however may be gathered  
 “ from this Passage, that this same *Hypatia* was  
 “ no Catholick.” Admirable *Gothofred*! Not to say any thing to your *Arian* Poison, for which I am not a whit concern'd; neither of the People's Guilt, whom I have sufficiently clear'd before; nor yet of the nice Distinction between the Populace and the Catholicks, as if the Bulk of the Catholicks were not the Populace: Your Conclusion that *Hypatia* was not a Catholick is unspeakably acute, when in Reality she was not as much as a Christian; her Father having been a Heathen Philosopher, and herself the Wife of one, without the least Appearance that she was ever any other with regard to her own Persuasion. As for a ridiculous Letter, pretended to be written by her to *Cyri*, about the Paschal Cycle, 'tis a manifest Forgery; for she was murdered the sixth Year of *Theodosius*, and therefore one and twenty Years before the Exile of *Nestorius*, who yet is mention'd in that Letter under the Epithet of *impious*.

## C H A P. XXII.

*The making Cyril a Saint a Dishonour to Religion. Three Sorts of Persons canonized for Saints.*

AND now that *Cyril's* Name puts me once more in mind of him, how insufferable a burlesquing of God and Man is it to revere so ambitious, so turbulent, so perfidious, and so cruel a Man, as a *Saint*? since History shows that this was his just Character. But in good Earnest this same Title of *Saint* has not seldom been most wretchedly conferred; for the greatest Part of the Saints after *Constantine's* Reign, and especially since Canonization came in Fashion, are made up of three Sorts of Persons, the least of all others meriting Veneration. First, Men have been dubbed Saints, for promoting the Grandeur of the Church by all their Endeavours, especially by their Writings; which, instead of employing for the Happiness or Instruction of their Fellow Citizens, they prostituted to magnify spiritual Authority, to the debasing and enslaving of their Spirits. The second Sort that have been honoured with Saintship, were Princes and other powerful or rich Men, however vicious or tyrannical, who gave large Possessions and Legacies to the Church; or that with Incapacity, Faggot, Gibbet, Sword, and Proscription, chastised the Temerity of such as dared to question her Decrees. The third Sort, were poor groveling Visionaries, boasting of their delirious Enthusiasms and Extasies; or imposing on the ignorant by formal Mortifications, falsely reputed Devotion, and were recompensed with this imaginary Reward, by those that despised their Austerity,

Austerity, at the same Time that they mainly thrived by the Credit of it. It is no Wonder then, that when the Epithet *Saint*, which peculiarly belonged to Piety and Innocence, was thus pompously bestowed on Vice and Impiety, there should prevail that Deluge of Ignorance, Superstition, and Tyranny, which overwhelmed almost the whole Christian World. All the Persecutions that ensued, were so many forcible Means, employed to suppress any Efforts that might be used for the restoring of Virtue and Learning. By that Antichristian Spirit fell *Hypatia*, to whom the Clergy of her Time could never forgive, that she was beautiful yet chaste; far more learned than themselves, not to be endured in the Laity; and in greater Credit with the civil Magistrate, whom the Clergy of that Time would needs drive or lead as their Pack-afs.

F I N I S.

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