

your Maker, your neighbour and yourself.
and do it without regarding the consequences
of praise or dispraise, of profit and loss. By
following this simple plan you must expect
to meet with several suits, but your mind
will always be at ease, and your reward in
the end glorious both here and hereafter.

I do not mean however that you should
set the good opinion of the world at defiance,
or treat it with contempt; on the contrary
it is perhaps next to the mens conscia recti
the most agreeable reward of good conduct;
but whoever regulates his actions by the Vox
populi contrary to his own sentiments, will
never please himself nor yet other people long.

Every thing I have seen or heard of you

hitherto has given me the greatest pleasure, and I have little fear of your perseverance in the course you have so happily begun; but as you are probably very soon to launch into the world at large, you will forgive a Parent's anxiety, and excuse his putting you in mind of what perhaps you are already well apprised of. As you must mix with the busy, and often the wicked world, you will unavoidably meet with many things that must give you pain, particularly the ridicule that is thrown upon every thing serious and sacred, especially revealed religion, by would be wits and shallow philosophers; the best method to get rid of this Vermin is to treat them with as much contempt as civility will allow, to turn the discourse

to another subject, or shift the argument to some
in the company older and more likely to be
better qualified than yourself, but if all this
will not do, be prepared to give an account of
the Hope that is within you, avoiding carefully
formal or warm argument, of which a fatal
instance now occurs to my memory. Keep
therefore an absolute command over your
own temper however provoked, and avoid
irritating your adversary, but should he
grow warm, drop the argument immediately,
observing coolly that as you argue for truth,
and not victory, you are always ready to
give up a dispute. There is another method
of managing that is to take the defensive and
put the proof upon your adversary by asking

questions, which is called the Socratic method of arguing; this artfully managed in a good cause will always insure conquest, and is at the same time the least apt to give offence. As your business is commerce, not divinity, you will in prudence shun disputes concerning religion particularly about the merits of its different sects; none of them are void of error, yet for the most part you will find those most tenacious of their opinions who are the furthest distant from reason. The general and saving principles of the Christian religion are a ought to be the same through all its sects, and in adhering to those principles you can give no offence.

For the sake of improvement and occasionally to keep up conversation, I would recommend

it to you to become acquainted with the tenets
of every religion that exists or has existed, there
is something good in them all; but do you frame
your own religious opinions on the plain and
obvious meaning of the words of the sacred wri-
tings, which I often have recommended, and
do now most seriously recommend to your fre-
quent perusal: in them are the treasures of
eternal life, yet from the perverted and strained
meaning of several words to be found in them
have arisen various contradictory & absurd
opinions, which as they were conceived in
error, have been supported with obstinacy,
and given birth to persecution, war and
bloodshed to the great disgrace of true Religion
Humanity and Reason. Would you know