*form* after death, as that, after having arrived at man­hood, he ſhould return to the ſtate in which he was be­fore his birth ? Such changes as theſe are evidently made permanent by the invariable laws of nature. But ſuppoſe it were poſſible, for what purpoſe ſhould they return ? To deſcribe to us what is paſſing in the other world, to animate us to virtue, by informing us of the rewards which there await the good ; or to alarm us, by deſcribing the puniſhment of the wicked. Theſe ſeem important reaſons. But Divine Providence has wiſely thrown a veil over futurity. We know every thing of the other world from the ſcripture which it is proper for us at preſent to know. And as to incen­tives to virtue, we are already bleſſed with a num­ber sufficiently great and powerful for moral beings, who are to act from rational motives, and not from compulſion. “ He that will not hear Moſes and the pro­phets, will not be perſuaded though one rose from the dead.”

There is one ſtrong objection againſt the probability of ſpectres, which is sufficient to prove that they are not intelligent creatures ; or at leaſt that they poſſeſs ſo ſmall a degree of intelligence, that they are unquali­fied to act with prudence, to propoſe any end to themſelves, or use the proper means to accompliſh that end. Ghoſts often appear in order to diſcover ſome crime that has been committed : but they never appear to a magiſtrate, or perſon in authority, but to ſome illiterate clown, who happens to live near the place where the crime was perpetrated ; to ſome perſon who has no connection with the affair at all, and who in general is the moſt improper in the world for making the diſcovery. For inſtance, in Glanville’s *Saduciſmus triumphatus* (a book written in the laſt century by a chap­lain of Charles II. in ſupport of the common opinions reſpecting witchcraft and apparitions), we have the fol­lowing ſtory : James Haddock, a farmer, was married to Elenor Welſh, by whom he had a ſon. After the death of Haddock, his wife married one Davis; and both agreed to defraud the ſon by the former marriage of a leaſe bequeathed to him by his father. Upon this the ghoſt of Haddock appeared to one Francis Ta­verner the ſervant of lord Chicheſter, and desired him to *go to* Elenor Welſh, and to inform her that it was the will of her former husband that their ſon ſhould enjoy the leaſe. Taverner did not at firſt execute this commiſſion ; but he was continually haunted by the appari­tion in the moſt hideous ſhapes, which even threatened to tear him in pieces, till at laſt he delivered the meſſage. Now, had this ſpectre had the leaſt common ſenſe, it would have appeared firſt to Elenor Welſh and her husband Davis, and frightened them into compli­ance at once, and not have kept poor Taverner in ſuch confiant diſquietude, who had no concern in the matter.

Another very odd circumſtance reflecting apparitions in general muſt not be omitted, which is, that they have no power to ſpeak till they are addreſſed. In the 27th of Glanville’s Relations we read of an old woman that appeared often to David Hunter, a neat-herd, at the house of the Bishop of Down and Conners. When­ever ſhe appeared, he found himſelf obliged to follow her ; and for three quarters of a year poor David spent the whole of almoſt every night in ſcampering up and down through the woods after this old woman. How long this extraordinary employment might have conti­nued, it is impoſſible to guess, had not David’s violent fatigue made him one night exclaim, “ Lord bleſs me ! would I were dead!—ſhall I never be delivered from this miſery !” On which the phantom replied, “ Lord bleſs me too ! It was happy you ſpoke firſt, for till then I had no power to ſpeak, though I have followed you ſo long.” Then ſhe gave him a meſſage to her two ſons, though David told her he remembered nothing about her. David, it ſeems, neglected to deliver the message ; at which the old beldam was ſo much provoked, that ſhe returned and hit him a hearty blow on the ſhoulder, which made him cry out, and then ſpeak to her. Now if ſhe could not ſpeak till David addreſſed her, why might ſhe not have applied this oratorial medicine the firſt time ſhe appeared to him ? It would have ſaved both herſelf and him many a weary journey ; and certainly David would much rather have had even half a dozen of blows from her choppy fills than have wanted ſo many nights ſleep. To complete the ſtory, we muſt add, that when David s wife found it impoſſible to keep him from following the troubleſome visitor, ſhe trudged after him, but never was gratified with a fight of the enchantreſs. David’s little dog too was a dutiful attendant on his maſter during his pilgrim mage.

It is remarked by Glanville, that ghoſts are generally very eager to be gone; Indeed they are often ſo much ſo, that they do not ſtay to tell their errand. One would be induced from this, as well as the circumſtances already mentioned, to think that they are the stupidest and dullest of the dead that affirme the appearance of ghoſts ; unleſs we adopt the ingenious ſolution of Glanville, “ that it is a very hard and painſul thing for them to force their thin and tenuious bodies into a visible conſiſtence ; that their bodies muſt needs be exceed­ingly compreſſed ; and that therefore they muſt be in haste to be delivered from the unnatural preſſure.”

With reſpect to the *evidence* in favour of ſpectres, if examined ever ſo ſlightly, it will be found very de­fective. They only appear to one perſon at a time ; they are ſeen only in the night ; they are viſible only to ignorant, illiterate, and credulous perſons, and never preſent themſelves before men of education and learn­ing.

That ſpectres only appear to one perſon at a time, even though there are more in company, is an objection againſt the credibility of their appearance quite insurmountable. How is it poſſible that two men of eye­sight equally good, directing their eyes to the same ſpot, ſhould not ſee ſo large an object as that of a man. or woman at a ſmall diſtance equally well ? Some will tell us that a mist is caſt over the eyes of the one, while the vicw of the other is free from obſtruction. But how is this to be proved ? and besides what purpoſe would it ſerve ? Ghoſts have ſeldom any ſecrets to diſcloſe ; they might be proclaimed to a multitude with as much propriety as confined to one perſon. Shall we be told, that the ſpectre has the power of becoming visible to ſome, and of remaining inviſible to others ? This cannot be allowed without adopting opinions deſtructive to revealed religion ; for it would be a miracle : and we cannot be persuaded, without evidence, that God would empower any inferior being to controul at pleaſure the wise laws which he has ordained for governing the world. To him who is of a different opinion, we