

its being extravagant and insignificant ; but use, and a fixed application, made the actions in question both sober and pertinent. We may add, that several of these actions were performed in *vision* ; and that considering the genius of the people who were addressed, they were calculated strongly to excite their attention, which was the end for which they were adopted.

Y. It is objected to the Bible, that it represents God as giving command to the Israelites to exterminate the nations of Canaan.

T. This objection cannot be argued upon the mere ground that it is contrary to the divine justice or mercy to cut off a people indiscriminately, from the eldest to the youngest, since this is done in earthquakes, pestilences, &c. The character of the God of nature is not therefore contradicted by that ascribed to the God of the Bible. The whole objection resolves itself into this question : Was it consistent with the character of God to employ *human agents* in this work of destruction ? Who can prove that it was not ? No one ; and yet here lies the whole stress of the objection. The Jews were not rendered more cruel by their being so commissioned, for we find them much more merciful in their practice than other ancient nations ;—nor can this instance be pleaded in favour of exterminating wars, since there was in the case a special commission for a special purpose, by which it was limited. Other considerations are also to be included. The sins of the Canaanites were of so gross a nature, that it was necessary to mark them with signal punishments for the admonition of surrounding nations ; the employing of the Israelites as instruments, under a special and publicly-proclaimed commission, connected the punishment more visibly with the offence, than if it had been inflicted by the array of warring elements ; whilst the Israelites themselves would be more deeply