ADVERTISEMENT

By

Benjamin Robins

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NOTE ON THE TEXT

This Advertisement appeared in *The Present State of the Republick of Letters* for December 1736.

The following spellings, differing from modern British English, are employed in the original 1736 text: candor, meer, writ.

David R. Wilkins
Dublin, June 2002

Advertisement.

[*The Present State of the Republick of Letters*, December 1736, pp. 491–492.]

The controversy in which I have been engaged with a Person, who screens himself under the fictitious name of *Philalethes Cantabrigiensis*, on occasion of what I have writ on Sir *Isaac Newton*'s Doctrine of prime and ultimate ratios, is now drawn out into a very great Length. Though I was no wise obliged to take notice of an unknown Author; yet I readily waved that scruple, not doubting but, whoever he were, he would behave with that temper, which is expected from a person of candor in debating upon a matter of meer speculation. But since *Philalethes* has given loose to passion, and is so far from any design of altering his conduct, that he attempts to justify it; I think it a very ill compliment from me to the publick to undertake a serious answer to the unadvised speeches of an angry Man; whose fondness for his own Opinions persuades him, that whoever presumes to differ from him must be insincere; and whose great unskilfulness in mathematical subjects causes him to mistake for a change in Sentiment every variation in expression intended to assist his apprehension. And as I have found by Experience, that what I have already writ has been informing to many, I cannot think any thing farther necessary for the satisfaction of impartial readers. I shall now therefore take leave of *Philalethes* with this observation only, upon the two points, whereon our controversy does indeed solely depend; his definition of nascent and evanescent quantities, and his interpretation of Sir *Isaac Newton*'s first *Lemma* relating to the doctrine of prime and ultimate ratios. In regard to the first, he has relinquished those passages of Sir *Isaac Newton*, where the terms *quantitates nascentes* and *evanescentes* are expresly discoursed of and explained; and labours to shelter himself under a definition of another term, the word moment, which definition is in a different and remote part of Sir *Isaac Newton*'s works. In relation to the *Lemma* he is reduced to take refuge in the manner, wherein Sir *Isaac Newton* had expressed that *Lemma* in the first edition of his book; that is to a manner of expressing it, which Sir *Isaac Newton* himself did not approve of, as appears by his altering it. But as I here promise *Philalethes* to give him no farther trouble; I leave him at full leisure to explain himself upon this definition and *Lemma* (if he so think fit) to my friend Dr. *Pemberton.*

B. Robins.