





A PHILOSOPHICAL  
ENQUIRY  
INTO THE  
PHYSICAL SPRING  
OF  
Human Actions,  
AND THE  
IMMEDIATE CAUSE  
OF  
*T H I N K I N G.*

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L O N D O N :

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## Wrong Printed.

Page 11. Line 1. for *extream*, read *extreme*, p. 21.  
reference o, for § 35. r. § 32. p. 28. l. 23. *dele* [or]  
p. 31. l. 8. for *Connection*, r. *Connexion*. p. 35. l. 2. for,  
*that the motion of a Body in such a Direction*, r. [*a Body*  
*so in Motion.*]



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§ I. **T**HE Notion which generally prevails at present is, that Man consists of *Animal* and *Rational* Nature; the former of which is admitted to be only *Matter*, under that peculiar Organization, and therefore *mechanical*, and subject to all the Laws of *Mechanism*; but the latter it is insisted, is the Result of an *Immaterial* Substance, confin'd (*some how or other*) to the material Frame; subject

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to

to none of the Laws of Matter; but is *unsolid, penetrable, indiscerpible, and unchangeable*; and has a Power, free from all *Restraints and Impediments, of beginning, directing, and withholding*, the Motions of the Body.

§ II. This unphilosophical Notion possibly could not be more effectually expos'd than by an Enquiry into its rise and progress in the World; from whence it would easily be collected, that *Reason* had no part in its Institution; tho' some Men of Learning, since it has been found so *useful* a Notion in the Support of certain Schemes, have with great *Dexterity*, endeavour'd to prove it very rational, and consistent with the purest Philosophy.

§ III. But as that would be an Undertaking intirely inconsistent with the design of this short Enquiry; which is to consider the Subject upon its *Philosophical* and *Metaphysical* Principles; the Reader therefore is referr'd to what has been already so successfully offer'd on that Head, by the learned Mr. *Toland*. (a)

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(a) *Toland's Letters to Serena.*

§ IV. The first thing therefore, which will be necessary to be enquir'd into is, of what *Substance* the Intelligent Creature call'd Man consists: 'till this be examin'd, it will be impossible to determine with any kind of Certainty concerning the Question before us. And that this *Substance* is nothing but *Matter* under a *peculiar Modification*, it is apprehended will fully appear from the following Considerations.

1st, *That we have no Ideas of Substance, but those which have been receiv'd by our Senses from external Objects.*

2dly, *That the only Ideas which we have so receiv'd, are of Matter, or material Substance only.*

3dly, *That we have no Reason to conclude, that any part of the human Composition consists of Immaterial Substance; because we have no Ideas of any other Substance than Matter, and because there is nothing (that we know of) in the Nature of Matter, which is incompatible, with Thinking, and — (b)*

(b) Sect. 28.

4thly, *That it appears most evidently from the Nature of Cogitation, that Matter is the Subject of it; or, to speak in the Language of the modern Metaphysicians, in which Cogitation Inheres.* (c)

§ V. It is unnecessary to attempt a Proof of the *first* and *second* Propositions; which indeed are *Self-evident*; and therefore don't admit of Proof; for that no *Appearance* in Nature, nor any thing about which our *Senses* are conversant, ever convey'd to us the *Idea* of an *Immaterial* Substance, is out of dispute; but if it should remain a doubt with any, it will be perfectly clear'd up before this Subject is quitted.

§ VI. The *third* Proposition can't be better illustrated, than by taking a short View of the Controversy, between the learned Dr. *Clark* and the great Mr. *Collins*, concerning the *Capacity* of Matter to think; which seems to have ended in a *Demonstration* by the latter, that for ought appear'd to the contrary, Matter was *capable* of thinking; tho' it



must be confess'd the Doctor wrote the last Letter. (*d*)

§ VII. The Point which was in Dispute between them was at last reduc'd to this, Whether it was possible in any Instance, to predicate an *Individual Quality* or Attribute of a whole System, without predicating the same of every part in some degree: If it was, the Dr. admitted the Soul might be material.

§ VIII. That which reduc'd the Controversy to this point was, the Doctor's insisting, that if Thought *resided* or *inher'd* in a material System, it must in some degree, *reside* or *inhere*, in every constituent part; or else there would be an Effect without a Cause, and something in the whole which was more than all the Parts; and if Thought did *reside* or *inhere*, in every constituent part in some degree, then the Act of *Thinking* or *Consciousness*, (which Terms the Doctor made use of indiscriminately,) would not be one *individual simple* Act of Thinking or Consciousness, but would consist of a *vast*

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(*d*) Dr. Clark's and Mr. Collins's Letters concerning the materiality of the Soul.

*Number* of Conscioufnesses; as many as there were constituent parts in the Subject in which Conscioufness *inher'd*; the contrary of which the Doctor observ'd we all experienc'd; and therefore concluded that *Matter* could not be the Subject of Cogitation.

§ IX. But Mr. *Collins* in answer to this pretended Objection; which in reality has no Foundation in reason, prov'd, that there was no necessity in all instances, for every constituent part of a Subject to partake of the *individual Quality* or Attribute which might be affirm'd of the whole; particularly in the Instance of the *Rotundity* of a Globe; for tho' *Rotundity* could be truly predicated of the whole, yet it could not of *any* of the constituent parts in *any* degree; which in themselves, *separately* and *distinctly* consider'd were not rotund; altho' each part by its Situation had a Tendency to produce Rotundity in the whole; but actually possess'd no portion of it separately consider'd.

§ X. When this was settled, Mr. *Collins* pursu'd the Parallel of *Rotundity* and *Thinking* or *Conscioufness*; which, tho' it did not *reside* or *inhere* in every  
every

every constituent part of the Subject of Cogitation in any Degree, yet each part by its *Situation* might have a *Tendency* to produce *Thinking* or *Consciousness* in the Whole, without actually possessing *any Portion* of Thinking *separately* consider'd, in the same manner that every part of the portion of Matter, which constituted the Globe, had a *Tendency* to produce Rotundity in the whole; which yet could not be predicated of *any* of the parts, *separately* and *distinctly* consider'd in *any* Degree.

§ XI. Twenty Pages were employ'd by the Doctor, to get rid of this Parallel; but at last he endeavour'd to prove it was no parallel, by insisting, that *Rotundity* was but an *extrinsical Denomination*, and not a real *inherent Quality* in the Subject; but only a mere Idea rais'd in us, by the Situation of an external Object; and did not really *inhere* or *reside* in the Subject, as *Thinking* or *Consciousness* does. (e)

§ XII. The justness of this distinction, depends on the difference between what the Doctor calls an *outward*

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(e) Sect. 27.

and *extrinsical Denomination*, and a *real inherent Quality*.

§ XIII. If therefore it shall appear, that all *Qualities* are equally *real*; or rather, that there is no *reality* in any *Quality*, the *Sinews* of the *Doctor's Distinction* are destroy'd.

§ XIV. But it will be proper before this is enter'd upon, to define a *Quality* or *attribute*; *By a Quality or Attribute is meant, whatever may be predicated of any Subject, resulting from its Texture and Frame.*

§ XV. And because the *Qualities* or *Attributes* of *Subjects*, have been often understood in so different a *Sense*, from that which is here intended to be convey'd, it will be necessary to be very particular concerning this *Doctrine* of *Qualities* or *Attributes*; but more particularly in *View* to a *Confutation* of *Dr. Clarke's* distinction, of *real inherent Qualities* in the *Subject*, and *outward an extrinsical Denominations*, as he calls them.

§ XVI. The judicious *Mr. Lock*, has indeed in a great measure well explain'd

plain'd the nature of Qualities; yet it must be confess'd; he has thro' an *inaccuracy* and want of clear Distinctions; afforded much occasion to puzzle and perplex the Understanding concerning Qualities; which in several places he talks of as *Real Beings*.

§ XVII. When he says (*f*) that the  
 “ *Bulk, Figure, Number, Situation, Mo-*  
 “ *tion and Rest of the solid parts of Bo-*  
 “ *dies, are really in Bodies whether we*  
 “ *perceive them or no*”; what is this but affirming, that these primary Qualities; as he calls them, are *Real Beings*? for if they were not, it would be impossible they could be, IN the SUBJECT: Since it would be very unphilosophical to say; that 'That which has no *real Being* is IN or OUT of a Subject; and nothing can have a *real Being* but a SUBSTANCE; unless a Medium can be found out between a *Substance* and the *Negation* of it; between *Something* and *Nothing*: This indeed would serve to explain what is meant by Qualities *being or inhering*, (as the Doctor has it) *in a Subject*.

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(*f*) Essay concerning Human Understanding;  
 Fo. 4 Edit. Book 2. cap: 8. sect. 17.

§ XVIII. The Truth is, that *Bulk, Figure, Number, Situation, Motion* and *Rest*, which Mr. *Lock* calls primary Qualities, are no more *really* in the Subject of which those Qualities may be predicated, than *Colours, Sounds* or *Smell* are in the Bodies that produce those Ideas in us.

§ XIX. This may be as difficult a Truth to receive as any of those which Mr. *Lock* introduc'd in the World, upon the Publication of his Book on human *Understanding*, so justly valu'd for the Use it has been of to Mankind, in rendering rational Enquiries after Truth, easy and plain to all Men of common Understanding; who before were thought unfit to be intrusted with the Means of reasoning and judging for themselves; But the most which is ask'd is a deliberate Attention, and then it is presum'd this Difficulty will vanish.

§ XX. The Body of which we affirm such a peculiar *Figure, Bulk, Situation, Motion*, or *Rest* only so exists, or under such a Modification, that we collect those Ideas from it: It is true the Subject itself, if it has a terminated Existence  
must

must have extream parts; which constitute what we call Figure; and so it must likewise be of such a Bulk, or in such a peculiar Situation, and in *motion* or at *rest*: But these Qualities are only the several *Manners*, under which the Body or the Object presents itself to us, or in which we perceive it to exist; and to say the *Manner* of a Thing's Existence, is IN, the Thing itself, would be very unphilosophical; and yet when Mr. *Lock* says, that *Bulk*, *Figure*, *Number*, *Situation*, *Motion* or *Rest* are *in* the Subject whether we perceive them or no, it is in effect, only saying this.

§ XXI. It will be allow'd, that the Subject would so exist, or in that manner, whether we perceiv'd it or no; but it no more follows from thence, that therefore these Qualities are *in the Subject*, than if it should be said a Body is *hard* or *soft*, and therefore a Conclusion should be drawn that, *Hardness* or *Softness* are *in the Subject* of which those Qualities are predicated; which yet are nothing more, than that peculiar Texture or Modification of the Subject, in virtue of which we affirm it is *hard* or *soft*; so with regard to those

other Qualities of *Bulk, Figure, Number, Situation, Motion, and Rest*; which are nothing more than that *peculiar Texture and Situation of the Subject*, in virtue of which we affirm it is of such a Bulk, such a Figure, is so particularly situated, or that it moves, or is at Rest.

§ XXII. And tho' *Hardness* or *Softness*, are what Mr. *Lock* calls *secondary* Qualities, yet when we consider his reason for distinguishing between *primary* and *secondary* Qualities, which is, that the Existence of the latter solely depends upon us, (*i. e.*) the Operation of Bodies external to us upon our Senses, but that the Former are *really in the Bodies themselves*, whether we perceive them or no, it will appear that this is a distinction without a difference; for tho' the Idea of *Hardness* or *Softness*, which is rais'd in us by the Application of something external, is not *in the Subject*, yet the Subject that produces that Idea in us, would have existed under that *particular Texture or Modification*, which enabled us to receive the Idea, in virtue of which we affirm it is *hard* or *soft*; whether we perceived it or no; and consequently



quently what Mr. *Lock* calls *secondary* Qualities, are as much really *in the Subject* as *primary* Qualities; and what is said of *hardness* and *softness*, is equally true of all other *secondary* Qualities as they are call'd.

§ XXIII. What more do we mean when we say, that those which Mr. *Lock* calls *primary* Qualities, are *in Bodies* whether we perceive them or no, than that *Bodies* exist in such a manner, that we can affirm those particular Qualities of them? or in other words, that the *Body*, not the Qualities of it, *presents itself to us under those several Appearances*; which are not, (strictly and philosophically speaking) *in the Body* itself; but are only the *Terms* we make use of, in order to be intelligible to each other; which are no more than to express merely the *manner*, in which we perceive *Bodies* as to their *Modes of Existence*.

§ XXIV. Tho' Mr. *Lock* has gone so far as to mention (g) the different *modifications* of Qualities; and perhaps the Absurdity of this whole Doctrine

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(g) *Essay cap. 8. Section 23.*

concerning the *reality* of Qualities, can't be better explain'd, than by a short Observation upon this Notion of Mr. *Lock's* about the *Modification* of them; for if there is a Possibility to *modify* a Quality, then it must be acknowledg'd the whole of what has been said on this head is idle and fruitless; because in that Case, a Quality must necessarily be a *Substance*.

§ XXV. This Experiment can't be better try'd, than upon those Qualities which Mr. *Lock* calls original and primary; and to which he attributes great Reality, *viz.* *Bulk, Figure, Number, Situation, Motion, and Rest*.

§ XXVI. That a Body 'of such a *Bulk, Figure,* or so particularly situated, or that is in *motion* or at *rest* may be differently *modify'd*, that is, that the Subject of which we predicate those Qualities, may be differently modify'd, and exist in a different manner, is disputed by none; But to affirm that the *Motion* or the *Rest* of a Body, or its *Figure, Bulk, or Situation* (which are only the several manners in which we perceive the Body, as to its Mode of Existence,) can be differently *modify'd*, is talking unintelligibly: The  
thing

thing itself, existing in that *manner*, may be differently modify'd, but the *Manner* cannot be differently *modify'd*; for that would be considering it as a *Substance*; an Absurdity before taken notice of.

§ XXVII. This being settled, it may be applied to the Doctor's Distinction, between an *outward* and *extrinsical* Denomination, and a *real inherent* Quality in the Subject; which the Doctor affirms is the Difference, between Rotundity and Thinking or Consciousness; (*b*) since if the foregoing Observations are true, it appears that the Distinction between a *real* and inherent Quality, and an outward and *extrinsical* Denomination, is without any foundation; and that (strictly and philosophically speaking) no Quality inheres *in the Subject*; and consequently the Parallel, (which if true would take away the Distinction) is a just parallel.

§ XXVIII. So much then of the force of the Doctor's Argument, which depends upon this being an unjust Parallel is abated; and when the whole of this

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(*b*) Sect. 11.

Controversy, is consider'd by an attentive Reader, he will find the Doctor has left us at full Liberty to conclude, in the Words of the third Proposition, "*that for ought appears to the contrary* (from his Arguments or any other Consideration,) "*Matter may be capable of thinking; since Nothing appears in the Nature of Matter to be incompatible with Thinking*"; (i) which will be fully prov'd under the fourth head, and carry'd beyond Controversy in the Course of this Enquiry.

§ XXIX. But before the Proof of the fourth Proposition is enter'd upon, it will be necessary to repeat what is meant by an *Immaterial Substance*; and by a *Material Substance*.

§ XXX. An *Immaterial Substance*; is said to be an *indiscerpible, un-solid, unchangeable, penetrable, and unextended Substance*; (k) but because Dr. *Clark* has suppos'd, that *Extension* may be an Attribute of what is call'd an immaterial Substance, (tho' with what Propriety, is not necessary here to be

(i) Sect. 4.

(k) Sect. 5.

consider'd) the Ideas of an Immaterial Substance, may be confin'd to *unsolid, penetrable, indiscerpible* and *unchangeable* only.

*Material* Substance, is allow'd by all to be the Reverse of this; to be *discerpible, solid, impenetrable, extended,* and liable to constant Variation and Change.

§ XXXI. This difference between our Ideas of what is call'd an *Immaterial* Substance, and a *Material* Substance, being thus establish'd, the fourth Proposition which is, *that it appears from the Nature of Cogitation, that Matter is the Subject of it,* may with more ease be demonstratd.

§ XXXII. It will certainly be allow'd, that we think very *unlike*, (and have different Ideas) at different times; and that the Mind is almost constantly gaining new Ideas, and ceasing to retain several others which before might have been predicatd of it. (1)

§ XXXIII. If therefore it shall appear, that this *Change, or Succession* of Ideas, is absolutely *incompatible* with the *In-*

(1) Sect. 35.

*discerpibility, Insolidity, Penetrability, and Unchangeableness* of the Subject of Cogitation, it will follow that That only, which is *discerpible, solid, penetrable, and changeable*, can be the Subject of Cogitation; and consequently *material* (and not *immaterial*) Substance is the Subject of Cogitation; which may be demonstrated by the following Propositions.

1st, *Every Quality or Attribute, that can be affirm'd of any Subject, must necessarily be the Result of the Texture and Frame of the Subject, of which it may be predicated.* (m)

2dly,

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(m) The first Proposition serves as well to establish the present Hypothesis, as it does to answer what Mr. *Lock* has said in his *Essay, Book 4. Cap. 3. Sect. 6.* concerning God's *superadding* a Quality to Matter, which might render it capable of thinking; for if every Quality or Attribute must necessarily be the Result of the Texture and Frame of its Subject, then it will be impossible to superadd any Quality, unless something that is material be added to the Subject; in which case no new Quality would be superadded, but that Portion of Matter would really be converted into something else, that would be specifically different from all other Matter: It being as inconceivable that any Quality should be actually separated from its Subject, (*which the Superaddition of*

2dly, *While the Subject continues exactly in the same Texture and Frame, it can neither acquire any new Qualities or Attributes, nor cease to retain any that might be before predicated of it; nor will there be a Possibility, of affirming more or less Qualities or Attributes of the Subject, while the Texture and Frame of it, upon which its Qualities ultimately depend, remain invariable.*

3dly, *That every new Idea which may be predicated of the Mind, or subject of Cogitation, being a new Quality or Attribute acquir'd, and every Idea which it forgets or ceases to retain, being the Loss of a Quality or Attribute, or in other Words, of what could before have been affirm'd of the Mind, it follows, if the second Proposition be true, that this can only arise from, and be occasion'd by some real Change or Alteration, in the*

*of a Quality supposes) as to conceive the Figure of a Body, actually separated from the Body itself.*

That God might so modify and dispose the Parts of any System of Matter, as to make it capable of Thinking, might very reasonably have been said by one, who doubted of the natural Capacity of Matter to think, but that a Quality must be superadded for that Purpose, is both impossible and unintelligible.

*Frame and Texture of the Subject of Cogitation.*

§ XXXIV. These three Propositions, on the Truth of which depends the fourth Proposition, by which it was to be shewn, *from the Nature of Cogitation that Matter is the Subject of it*, may be prov'd in the following concise manner.

1st, *If the Qualities or Attributes of Subjects, did not result from the Frame and Texture of those Subjects, of which they may be predicated, then a Quality or an Attribute might exist separately and independently of its Subject; which is the Absurdity before taken notice of, and consequently the first Proposition must be true.*

2dly, *If the second Proposition was not true, the Subject would continue in the same Texture and Frame, and not in the same Texture and Frame at the same time, which is a Contradiction; for every Quality or Attribute that can be predicated of any Subject, being the Result of the Texture and Frame of it, it necessarily Follows, that while the Subject continues under that Identical Texture and Frame, its Qualities or Attributes must remain invariable; nor (in  
the*



the words of the second Proposition) will there be a possibility, of affirming more or less Qualities or Attributes of the Subject, while the Texture and Frame of it, upon which its Qualities ultimately depend, remain the same; since if that were possible, then the Qualities or Attributes of Substances do not result from the Texture and Frame of those Subjects of which they may be predicated; which is already prov'd to be an Absurdity.

3dly, The third Proposition must be true if the second is, by a necessary Consequence; for if every new Idea is a new Quality or Attribute acquir'd, and every Idea, which the Mind forgets or ceases to retain, is the Loss of a Quality or Attribute; or in other Words of what could before have been affirm'd of the Mind, which is a Self-evident Truth and disputed by none; Then it will follow from the second Proposition, that this can only arise from, and be occasion'd by some real Change or Alteration, in the Frame and Texture of the Subject of (12) Cogitation.

§ XXXV. These three Propositions being consider'd as true, as also that our

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(12) Sect. 46.

Ideas continually succeed each other, (o) it follows unavoidably, that the Subject of Cogitation, is in constant *Change* and *Alteration* in its *Texture* and *Frame*, and consequently is *discerpible* and *changeable*: And as the Attributes of *insolidity* and *penetrability* are inseparable from the *Indiscerpibility* of any Subject, it necessarily follows that the Subject of Cogitation, being *discerpible* and *changeable*, it must also be *solid* and *impenetrable*; and consequently *Matter*, is the Subject of Cogitation.

§ XXXVI. Tho' this Consequence might as easily be deduced singly, from the *Discerpibility* of the Subject of Cogitation; because *Indiscerpibility*, by Doctor *Clark* (p) in his Dispute with Mr. *Collins*, and by almost all the defenders of the *Immateriality* of the Soul, is made the *distinguish'd* and *principal Characteristic* of an *Immaterial Substance*.

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(o) Sect. 35.

(p) Dr. *Clark*'s and Mr. *Collins*'s Letters refer'd to. Sect. 6.

§ XXXVII. These Consequences, are not only to be deduc'd from a strictly argumentative Enquiry, but from the constant *Variation* of *Thought* and Succession of Ideas, agreeing so exactly with the Nature of Matter; which seems to be always in Motion, and shifting and varying its Modification; nor in reality, can the *Variety*, and *Fluctuation* of Thought be accounted for rationally, upon any other Principles, than that of the continual *Change* in the *Texture* and *Frame* of the Subject of Cogitation; since it is inconceivable and impossible, that there could be any *Change* in the *Qualities* or *Attributes* of a Subject; or that more or less could be affirm'd of it at different points of time, and yet the *Texture* and *Frame* of the Subject remain invariably and specifically the same. When once a Proposition so absurd as this, can be thought true by any Man who pretends to make use of his Understanding; or to reason concerning Matters of Speculation, the Professors of Transubstantiation, need not despair of being thought the Messengers of Truth and Reason.

§ XXXVIII.

§ XXXVIII. The Way being thus pav'd, the *Enquiry into the Spring of Human Actions, and the immediate Cause of the various Modes of Thinking*, may be enter'd into with much more Perspicuity, than it would have been possible to preserve in a point of so nice Speculation, as that which is at present in view.

§ XXXIX. The *Spring of Human Actions*, has generally been understood, particularly by Mr. *Lock*, and several other Writers of equal Esteem, to be in the *Understanding*; and ultimately to depend upon *Thought*, and *Volition*; but the late learned Dr. *Clarke*, (who differs with most modern Writers in the manner of defending Human Liberty,) lays it down expressly, that the (q) *Spring of Action is not in the Understanding*; of which most extraordinary Position, particular notice will be taken hereafter. But here it will be proper to consider, the force of what Mr. *Lock* says in support of his Opinion; which will render the Enquiry in view

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(q) Dr. *Clarke's* Letters to the Gent. at *Cambridge*, concerning Liberty and Necessity.

more intelligible; and serve to explain several Points that will be insisted on in this Pursuit.

§ XL. Mr. *Lock* in his endeavour to confute the Opposers of Creation, attempts to prove that *Thought* and *Volition* can move Body; His Words are these (r) “ We can’t conceive how  
 “ any thing but *Impulse* of *Body* can  
 “ move *Body*, and yet that is not a sufficient Reason to make us deny it  
 “ possible, against the constant Experience we have of it in our selves, in  
 “ all our voluntary Motions; which  
 “ are produc’d in us only by the *Free Action* or *Thought* of our own *Minds*;  
 “ and are not, nor can be the effects of the *Impulse* or *Determination* of the  
 “ motion of blind Matter in or upon  
 “ our Bodies; for then it could not be  
 “ in our power or choice to alter it:  
 “ For Example, my right hand writes  
 “ whilst my left hand is still, what  
 “ causes *Motion* in one and *Rest* in  
 “ the other? Nothing but my *Will*, a  
 “ *Thought* of my *Mind*; My *Thought*

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(r) Essay, Book. 4. Cap. 10. Sect. 19.

“ only changing, the right hand *rests*  
 “ and the left hand *moves*: This is  
 “ matter of Fact which can't be de-  
 “ ny'd; explain this and make it intel-  
 “ ligible, and the next Step will be to  
 “ understand Creation”.

§ XLI. Upon this occasion, it will be necessary to take the Liberty of comparing, what Mr. *Lock* says in his Chapter of Power concerning *Volition*, with what he advances in the Quotation above; that the Reader may be able to judge, how consistently Mr. *Lock* has wrote upon this Subject.

§ XLII. In the same Essay He says,  
 “ (s) That the *Will*, is Nothing but  
 “ one *Power* or *Ability*, and *Freedom*  
 “ another *Power* or *Ability*, so that  
 “ to ask, whether the *Will* has *Free-*  
 “ *dom*, is to ask whether one *Power*  
 “ has another *Power*, one *Ability* an-  
 “ other *Ability*; a Question at first sight  
 “ too grossly absurd to need an Answer;  
 “ For who is he that sees not that  
 “ *Powers* belong only to *Agents*, and

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(s) *Ib. Cap. of Power. Sect. 16.*

“ are Attributes of *Substances* not of  
 “ *Powers* themselves; so that this way  
 “ of putting the Question, whether the  
 “ *Will* be *free*, is in effect to ask whe-  
 “ ther the *Will* be a *Substance*, or an  
 “ *Agent*”.

§ XLIII. When this is compar'd, with what is quoted out of Mr. *Lock's* tenth Chapter, it will appear, that he has consider'd the *Will* in one place, as the Agent or Subject itself, and in the other, as a mere *power* or *predicable* of the Agent or Subject; and has attributed so much *power* to *Volition* in the first instance, as to make it the very *Cause* of Motion and Rest in Body; but in the latter, has reduc'd it to a mere *Power* or *Predicable* only, incapabale of any *Action* or *Causality*.

§ XLIV. It may a little surprize the Reader possibly, to find so flagrant a Contradiction in so admir'd an Author as Mr. *Lock*; but this will be left to be explain'd by the intelligent Reader; who need not be inform'd of the Prejudices and Difficulties this *Great Man* had to encounter, when he wrote this useful and elaborate Treatise; tho' it is

not very unlikely that his Mistake, in making *Volition* or *Thought* the *Cause* of the alternate *Motion* and *Rest* of the left and right Hand, may have crept in from the consideration of the *Action's* being the *Consequence*, or immediately following the *Resolution* to move either of the Hands; which is so very unhappy, that it is mistaking the *Effect* for the *Cause*: For *Thought* or *Volition*, being only mere *Powers* or *Abilities*, can have no *power* to cause either *Motion* or *Rest* in Bodies; since that would be to affirm (in the Words of Mr. *Lock*) that, “ one *Power* or *Ability* has another *Power* or *Ability*; an Affirmation too grossly absurd to need an Answer; for who is it that sees not that *Powers*, belong only to *Agents*, and are Attributes of *Substances*, and not *Powers* themselves”.

§ XLV. *Thinking, Willing, or Resolving*, can no more *act* upon a Body, or give it a new Determination, than *Length, Breadth, or Thickness, or Rotundity* can, for that solely depends on PHYSICS. In the Motion of the hand in the instance Mr. *Lock* gives, there is a *physical Effect* produced; which must necessarily have



have had a *physical* Cause, (as will be prov'd immediately): And *Thought* or *Volition*, is so far from being the *physical* Cause of this Motion, that it was only the mere *Effect* of that new *Modification* or *Change* in the Texture of the Subject, by which that Resolution was necessarily form'd to move the right or left hand; the *actual* and *real* Cause, both of the *Resolution* and the *Action* that follow'd, was *physical* and *mechanical*, and consequently necessary.

XLVI. *Thought*, is so incapable of being the *efficient* Cause of *physical* *Action* or Motion of a Body, that it can't even produce Thought; When we say one Idea *produces* another, or one *Thought* *introduces* another, it is not meant that *Thinking* really *produces* other Thoughts; which can no other way be effected, but in virtue of some *Variation* or *Change*, in the *Frame* and *Texture* of the Subject of Cogitation; (t) because, without such an alteration, it is absolutely impossible there could be any *Succession* of Ideas; but the Mind

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(t) *Vide* the Proof of the third Proposition. Sect. 34.

must in that case, *always and invariably think alike*; and have one and the same set of Ideas. And that *Thinking*, can't be the *Efficient Cause* of this *Change* in the Subject, is already prov'd to Demonstration; It being a mere *predicable or attribute* of the Subject, and can therefore no more *influence* or be the *Cause* of *Action* or *Motion* in a Body, than the particular *colour* of a Bowl, can be the *Cause* of its *Motion*.

§ XLVII. Tho' it may be observ'd of this Position of Mr. *Lock's*, (by which he endeavours to prove, that *Thought* or *Volition*, can be the *Cause* of the *Motion* and *Rest* of Bodies,) that it is not so singular as it seems absurd: There are many others, whose Characters in the World for Reasoning and Literature are too well known, to make it necessary to mention them, who have very strenuously contended for what in effect is the same thing; tho' for a different purpose than Mr. *Lock* seems to have introduc'd it in that part of his Essay; Which is, that every Action necessarily follows the *last Judgment* of the Understanding; and therefore the *last Judgment* by these Gentlemen, must  
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be suppos'd the *Spring* of Action; which that is to run into the Absurdity of predicating one Property of another. But the Difficulty which attends this State of the Question will appear most manifestly, when it is consider'd, that there is no certain Medium, by which the absolute physical Connection, between seeing the Reason of an Action and doing it can be prov'd; on the contrary Experience, would rather furnish us with Arguments against this; which seems to prove, that the exertion of the Self-motive Power, as it is pleasantly call'd by Dr. *Clark*, does not necessarily follow a Man's last Judgment, or what upon the whole he thinks best.

§ XLVIII. But supposing it were really true, that the Action always follow'd the last Judgment; it is putting a philosophical Enquiry into the *Spring of human Actions* upon so uncertain a foot, that nothing but vain wrangling can be consequence; for the Issue of the Dispute depending upon what each man experiences, concerning a Point they are divided about, it is hardly to be expected they should ever agree: And if Experience, or what Men say they experience

perience, is to determine the Question, almost every Man in the World would bear Testimony for Liberty; which seems to be the Reason why *Euphranor*, one of the Dialogists, in a late System of *little* Philosophy, (*u*) rests the whole Dispute which was between him and *Alciphron* his Competitor, (who push'd him hard on the Subject of Necessity,) upon the single Issue of every Man's Experience; without making use of one single Argument, in answer to three or four which were put very strong in that way of reasoning; so that Philosophy, can't be admitted to bear any part in a Controversy of so whimsical a Nature.

§ XLIX. And that we may have a clearer view of the *Spring of human Actions*; and remove all kind of misapprehension or Doubt, concerning the certainty of the several Conclusions that will be drawn from this Enquiry, it will be necessary cursorily, to consider the general Laws of Matter.

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(*u*) *Alciphron* or the Minute Philosopher.  
Vol. 2. Fol.

§ L. All the *Actions* or *Motions* of Bodies, must necessarily depend on the two following Principles.

1st, Upon the *Physical* and *Mechanical* Laws and Powers of the Bodies themselves that are in Motion; or,

2dly, Upon the *Impulse* or *Contact*, of some other Bodies.

These are the two only conceivable Principles upon which Motion can be accounted for: Two other Principles of Motion have indeed been talk'd of; which are,

3dly, That Body, is capable of being put into Motion, or receiving a new Direction, by Thought, Intelligence, or Volition. (w)

4thly, That there is in the human Composition, a Self-motive, or Self-determining Power, which is said to be the Spring of human Actions; and to constitute what is call'd Freedom. (x)

(w) Essay, Book 4. Cap. 10. Sect. 19.

(x) Doctor Clark's Letters refer'd to, Sect. 39.

§ LI. Upon a due Consideration of the two first Propositions, will greatly depend the Truth of the Conclusions which will be drawn from this Enquiry; and therefore it will be necessary to consider each head distinctly; which will clearly evince the *Impossibility*, of any Action's being the *Effect*, of either of the *Causes* assign'd under the two last heads.

§ LII. First, *By Bodies which are in a particular Direction, resulting from the physical Laws and Powers of the Bodies themselves, is meant that Species of Motion, which may be suppos'd essential to Matter; and was not communicated from any Impulse or Cause without, or that was foreign to it; but was as much the necessary Result of the Constitution and Frame of the Bodies so in Motion, as any other Quality or Attribute that could be predicated of them; and in this Sense, supposing Motion to be essential, to all or any given Quantity of Matter, (which is not necessary to be consider'd under any distinct head, because the Reader will easily collect from this Enquiry, sufficient to conclude rightly concerning*

*cerning that Question,) it will hardly be contended, that the Motion of a Body in such a Direction, does not depend on the Physical and Mechanical powers of the Body it self; which is all that is meant by the first Proposition.*

§ LIII. Secondly, *To prove the second Proposition, it will be necessary to repeat one short Postulatum; which is allow'd on all Hands.*

§ LIV. *That no Body which is at perfect Rest, (supposing that to be possible) can put itself into Motion, or give itself a new Direction when in Motion, without undergoing some Physical Change, or being acted upon physically by something external to it.*

§ LV. This is handed down to us under the Sanction of so great a Name, that it is almost exempt from the test of Examination: But no refuge will be taken even in Sir *Isaac Newton* in this Enquiry; which pretends to pay no deference to Authority; and therefore it will be necessary to offer the following Reason in Support of it.

§ LVI. If a Body which is at *absolute Rest*, could put itself into Motion; or give itself a new Direction when in Motion, without undergoing any physical Change, or being acted upon physically by any thing external to it, “*then*”  
 “*more or less Attributes, could be af-*”  
 “*firm'd of the same Body at different*”  
 “*Points of time, and yet the Frame*”  
 “*and Texture of the Body itself con-*”  
 “*tinue exactly the same*”; which is already prov'd an Impossibility (y): And may be further prov'd so; because in such a supposition this manifest Absurdity is involv'd, that a Body may be continu'd at *Rest*, be put into *Motion*, or receive a new *Direction* when in *Motion*, from one and the same Cause; that is, under the *Sameness* and *Identity* of the Subject, in its *Texture* and *Frame*; to affirm which, is the same in effect as to affirm, that it may be at *Rest*, in *Motion*, and in a *new Direction*, all at one and the same time; which is just as conceivable, as that it should be in all three at different points

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(y) *Vide* the Proof of the Second Proposition. Sect. 34.



of Time, from one and the same Cause.

§ LVII. It remains therefore to be prov'd, that no Body which is at *rest*, (supposing that to be possible) can be mov'd or acted upon, so as to be put into Motion, by any thing but the *Physical Impulse or Contact* of some other Body; which is prov'd thus.

*That only which has the power of Impulse and Contact, can act upon or affect Body, so as to put it into Motion.*

*But whatever has the power of Impulse and Contact, must be solid, and therefore Material.*

*And consequently, Matter only can act upon or affect Body, so as to put it into Motion.*

§ LVIII. This Argument appears so evident, that it should seem unnecessary to attempt a Proof of either of its Parts; especially after what has been already observ'd upon this head in Answer to Mr. *Lock*, who assign'd another Cause for the Motion of Body, than the

the *Impulse and Contact* of Body, (z) (tho' with what Propriety the Reader it is presum'd has already determin'd:) But because nothing short of Demonstration, will be admitted as an Evidence of the truth of any Position, which is endeavour'd to be supported in this Enquiry, all the parts of this Argument may be prov'd in the following Manner.

§ LIX. The first of which, (*viz.*) *that only which has the power of Impulse and Contact, can act upon or affect Body, so as to put it into Motion,* may be prov'd thus.

*That which has undergone no change or alteration in its Texture and Frame, no new Quality or Attribute can be affirm'd of it.*

*This has been already demonstrated. (a)*

*And that Body which has not been acted upon by Impulse and Contact, must still continue in the same Texture and Frame.*

(z) (40.) (a) *Vide* the Proof of the Second Proposition. Sect. 34.

*And consequently, if it was at rest before, it must be in the same Situation still; because Motion, would be a new Quality or Attribute acquir'd; which is already prov'd to be impossible, in a Subject that has undergone no Physical Change.*

§ LX. In order to prove the second Part of this Argument, which is, “*that whatever has the power of Impulse and Contact, must be Solid and therefore Material*”; it will be necessary to make the following short Quotations, out of Mr. *Lock*, who says (b) “*The Idea of Solidity, we receive by our Touch, [or Contact] and it arises, from the Resistance which we find in Body, to the entrance of any other Body into the place it possesses, till it has left it*”: And in the same Chapter (c) He says, “*upon the Solidity of Bodies also depends, their Mutual Impulse, Resistance, and Protrusion*”.

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(b) *Essay, Cap. 4. Sect. 1.*

(c) *Ib. Sect. 5.*

The whole of which is Self-evident; and from whence may be deduc'd the following Argument.

*That of which the power of Resistance can be predicated, must be solid and impenetrable.*

*But that which has the power of Impulse and Contact, the power of Resistance can be predicated of,*

*And consequently, that which has the power of Impulse and Contact must be solid and impenetrable.*

*And by the Definition of an Immaterial Substance, Solidity is excluded; consequently, that which has the power of Impulse and Contact must be Material: And thus the Truth of the second Proposition is demonstrated.*

¶ LXI. Tho' this Argument might be lengthned and divided, and carry'd into Demonstration in many Shapes; but the *Self-evident* Principles upon which it is founded, make it unnecessary to tire the Reader, with Divisions and Subdivisions in the Support of what every unprejudic'd Enquirer, will see

at first View; and confess to be founded upon Reason, and the *Testimony of his Senses*; which latter is generally too much neglected in controversies of this Kind; and chimerical abstracted Ideas, which stand refer'd to no *Archetypes* in Nature substituted in its Stead.

§ LXII. The first and second Propositions therefore being considered as true, it follows by necessary Consequence, that it is impossible any Body should be *put into Motion*, by either of the suppos'd Causes assign'd under the *Third* and *Fourth* Propositions; which may be further illustrated by a short Observation, on a Quotation from the late learned Dr. *Cudworth's* Intellectual System; where he is endeavouring to answer a particular Query.

§ LXIII. The Question being concerning God's Power of putting the material World into Motion, the last Query, which the Doctor puts into the Mouth of his Objector, (d) was, " what Tools or In-

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(d) *Cudworth's* Intellectual System, page 886.

“ struments? what Machines or En-  
 “ gines had the *Deity*? or how could  
 “ He move the Matter of the Whole,  
 “ especially if incorporeal? because he  
 “ would run thro’ all things, and could  
 “ not lay hold or fasten upon any.  
 To which the Doctor answers, (e)  
 “ That all other things being deriv’d  
 “ from God as their only Fountain  
 “ and Original, and essentially depen-  
 “ ding on him, who by his absolute  
 “ Power could also annihilate what  
 “ He created, he must needs have a  
 “ despotic Power over all, and every  
 “ thing whatsoever be naturally sub-  
 “ ject and obsequious to him; *And*  
 “ *since no Body can possibly move it-*  
 “ *self,* that which first mov’d Matter  
 “ must of Necessity be *incorporeal*;  
 “ nor could it move it by *local* Motion  
 “ as one Body moves another, or as  
 “ Engines or Machines move by *Tru-*  
 “ *sion* or *Pulsion*, they being before  
 “ mov’d; but must do it by another  
 “ kind of Action such as is not *local*  
 “ Motion; nor *Heterosinesie* but *Au-*  
 “ *tosinesie*, that is by *Cogitation*; where-

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(e) *Ib.* page 887.

“ fore that conceit of the Atheists;  
 “ that Incorporeal Deity could not  
 “ possibly move the Matter of the  
 “ World, because He would run thro’  
 “ it, and could not fasten or lay hold  
 “ thereupon, is absurd; because this  
 “ moves Matter *not mechanically* but  
 “ *vitally*, and by *Cogitation* only; and  
 “ that a *Cogitative Being* as such, has  
 “ a natural IMPERIUM, over  
 “ Matter and Power of moving it,  
 “ without any Engines or Machines is  
 “ unquestionably certain, even from  
 “ our own Souls; which *move* our  
 “ Bodies and command them every  
 “ Way *merely by Will or Thought*.

§ LXIV. The Design of introducing  
 this Quotation, was not to dispute the  
 Justness of Dr. *Cudworth’s* Answer with  
 respect to the power of the Deity;  
 who without Dispute is omnipotent;  
 but only to shew from the mysterious  
 manner in which the Doctor has an-  
 swer’d a plain Objection, the difficulty  
 which attends a metaphysical Explica-  
 tion of the Attributes and Powers of  
 the Deity; which are better understood  
 from the Self-evident Principles of  
 common Reason and common Sense,

than by any abstruse metaphysical Speculations, concerning the Nature of a Being so infinitely beyond our Reach.

§ LXV. But that the cogitative Being call'd the *Soul can move the Body, and command it every Way merely by Will, or Thought*, is already prov'd to be absolutely impossible; (*f*) since *Thought* or *Intelligence*, are only mere Attributes or Qualities of a Subject; and are therefore no more capable of being the Causes of the physical Motions of a Body, than Nothing is capable of producing Something; that which has no *real* Being can no more act, than it can be acted upon; so that to affirm a cogitative being (as such) hath a natural IMPERIUM, (which Word if defined has no Meaning,) over Matter and Power moving it, without any Engines or Machines, either means, Nothing in reality, or if understood in the Sense which he would be thought to convey, is already prov'd to be a Contradiction.

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(*f*) Sect. 46.



§ LXVI. It has been thought indeed, that Dr. *Cudworth* has put some of his Objections too strong, to suppose him not interested in the Defence of them, instead of answering them clearly; and that he did not intend to serve the Cause of Religion by it; but this surely can only be Clamour, since by this most learned Book, almost *every Argument which could be imagin'd to have any Weight against the Being of a God*, is there laid open and expos'd to publick View; and if the Doctor has not detected the Whole, yet he has given an Opportunity to any Man of Parts and Learning, to shew the Fallacy and Weakness of the Rest; which is the greatest Service that can be done to the Cause of true Religion; which requires nothing to support it, but *fair Argument and free Enquiry*.

§ LXVII. From the several foregoing Propositions concerning the *Powers* of Bodies, and the reasoning in support of them, may be easily collected, that the accounting for the *Spring* of Human Actions, either

First,

First, *By a Self-motive or Self-determining Power, or*  
 Secondly, *By any IMPERIUM*  
*(which is only a magical Word,) that Mind as such has over*  
*Body, or*  
 Thirdly, *By Intelligence or Volition,*

is inconceivable and impossible; and as little to be reconcil'd with the Principles of Reasoning, as that an *Effect* should be produc'd without a *Cause*; which in Fact is the Amount, of all these Accounts of the *Spring of human Actions.*

§ LXVIII. The last thing which is necessary to be consider'd is, whether the Causes or the Spring of Human Actions, are from *Within* or *Without*; and what will be the Consequence, with regard to the Principles already laid down, and the several Inferences from them, concerning the Spring of Human Actions, supposing the former or the latter of these to be true; which will be the more necessary

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fary to be enquir'd into, as it will furnish an Opportunity of making a short Observation, on that most extraordinary Position of Dr. *Clark's*; (who was always a Contender for Liberty,) *That the Spring of Action is not in the Understanding.*

§ LXIX. That it does not evidently appear, we are acted upon by any thing external to us in all Instances of our Actions must be admitted; tho' it will be impossible to determine that Question with any great Certainty; for although in several of our Actions, there is no apparent Connection between them, and Bodies external to us, as to any Causality; yet in many Instances there is a most evident Communication; and where the *sole Spring* of our Actions is from without.

§ LXX. That Substance so peculiarly modify'd as Gunpowder, by the Opposition it meets with, when it is dissipated in the Air through the Medium of a Gun, occasions so great an *Agitation* in the *circumambient Air*, as very often to cause a violent *mechanical Motion* in the human Body.

§ LXXI.

§ LXXI. In what particular manner this *Effect* is produc'd; or how the Air or other Substance *acts* upon the Body so as to cause these Motions, perhaps will be impossible to determine; but this leaves no room to doubt of the Reality of it; which would not be more certain, even if the particular Manner in which it is done could be discover'd; for we are sure these *Effects* must be produc'd *Physically*, and *Mechanically*; since Nothing can be more evident, than that Bodies cannot *act* upon each other *unless they TOUCH*.

§ LXXII. And this is all that can be suppos'd to be meant by those who assert, we are acted upon by the *Impulse* of Things *Without*; or by Objects that are *external* to us; which is, that there may be so close and immediate a Connection and Communication, between the circumambient Air that always encompasses the Body, and the Body itself, that the *Spring* of every Action, may be founded in the *mechanical* and *necessary* Operation of the former upon the latter; and that the human Body may be so particularly fram'd  
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and constituted, that the *Spring* of every Action arises from Bodies external to us.

LXXIII. It would be in vain to say by way of answer to this, that we don't in all instances, see any immediate Communication or Connexion, between external Objects and the human Body, and therefore conclude there is none; for we see Matter in a great Variety of Motions and Situations, particularly in the Instance of the Loadstone and Steel, the Spring of which can't with exactness be accounted for, nor discover'd; and yet no Man in his Senses ever thought of any other Cause, than the *necessary* and *mechanical* Action of Bodies on each other, by *Impulse* and *Contact*; and though we cannot discern the *physical Spring* of these Actions or Motions, We are not so senseless to say they have no *physical* or *mechanical* Cause, or that they are the Effect of *Freedom* or *Liberty*.

§ LXXIV. And, if the *Spring of Human Actions* is not in the *Understanding*, (which Dr. *Clark* asserts,) it must  
H necessarily

necessarily arise, either from the Action of Bodies external, or from physical Causes, resulting from the very Being and Constitution of Man; by which some constituent Parts of the Frame, *necessarily* and *physically* and according to the Laws of Mechanism, act upon and move the other Parts so as to produce the Effect; but whether the former or latter are most predominant Causes of Action, is not necessary to be consider'd with much exactness; since in either of which Cases, as the *Quality* or *Attribute* of *Thinking* or *Volition* cannot possibly have any part in *producing* the Effect, (g) and as a *Body at Rest, cannot put itself into Motion, or give itself a new-Direction without undergoing some physical Change,* (h) it follows the Action is equally unavoidable and necessary, whether the Cause be *ab intra* or *ab extra*: And therefore the *Root and Spring of Human Actions, must be physical; and founded in the necessary and mechanical Nature of Matter.*

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(g) Sect. 46.

(h) Sect. 58.

LXXV. And as the Motions of the Body must necessarily depend on physical, mechanical, and therefore necessary Causes; so must *Thinking* itself; for every new Idea which may be predicated of the Mind, must be the Effect of some *physical Change in the Subject*, of which, as has already been prov'd to *Demonstration*, no new Attribute can be affirm'd, while the Subject remains in the same Texture and Frame (i); which Change, cannot be the Effect of *Cogitation*; since *Cogitation* is only a mere *Predicable* or *Quality*, and therefore incapable of producing any Alteration, in the Texture and Frame of a *real Being*; and consequently each new Idea, that can be affirm'd of the Mind, must be the Effect of some *physical Cause*; which must vary the Texture and Frame of the Subject, before any new Idea could be affirm'd of it.

LXXVI. What may seem most surprising in this case, are the various

(i) *Vide* the Proof of the second Proposition, Sect. 34.

*Motions and Directions of Thinking Substances*; which seem to be under different Laws and Powers, from *Inco-gitative* Substances; whence it is generally concluded, that the latter are govern'd by *physical* and *mechanical* Laws, but not the Former; altho' the whole difference is no more, than the different Textures and Modifications of the Subjects.

§ LXXVII. The Substance which thinks has not received a *new Nature*, but is still the same Substance it was before that Attribute could be affirm'd of it; The real Difference therefore between an *Intelligent* and *Unintelligent* Substance is only this: That as the *Texture* and *Modification* on which *Thinking* depends, differ from all other *Modifications*, (*or else indeed all Matter would think,*) so the *Motions* and *Directions* of a *Thinking Substance* are different from all others; but in no other Sense, than the *Motions* and *Directions* of all Bodies in general differ, as they are *differently fram'd* and *constituted*.

§ LXXVIII.



§ LXXVIII. With this *Key*, that Variety of Motions and Directions in which the Body is at different points of time, so different from the Motions and Directions of all inanimate Bodies, may as easily be reconcil'd with the *Principles and Laws of Mechanism*, as the Motion of the Needle may with the *physical Influence of the Loadstone*; or any other *physical Effect* which is produc'd in Nature.

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