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The theological and
miscellaneous works of



J. P. Brock

THE
Theological and Miscellaneous
WORKS,
§c.
OF
JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, LL. D. F. R. S. &c.

WITH
NOTES,
BY THE EDITOR.



VOLUME III.

Containing

REMARKS ON DR. REID'S INQUIRY, DR. BEATTIE'S
ESSAY, AND DR. OSWALD'S APPEAL;

Introductory Essays to Hartley's Theory of the Human Mind;

DISQUISITIONS RELATING TO MATTER AND SPIRIT,

AND

THE DOCTRINE OF PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY ILLUSTRATED.

PREFACE

BY THE EDITOR.

HAVING reserved Dr. Priestley's smaller pieces, to be brought together in the further progress of this Edition, I designed that this Third Volume should include the *History of the Corruptions of Christianity*. Finding, however, that, in the preface to that work, the Author had referred to the *Disquisitions relating to Matter and Spirit* as having entered in them on the subjects afterwards prosecuted in the *History*, I resolved to bring into this and the following volume, the whole of his Metaphysical Pieces.

The *Examination* of the Theories of Drs. Reid, Beattie and Oswald, first appeared in 1774. There was a second edition in 1776, without any alterations; a circumstance which I am not singular in regretting. Those, in whose judgment the arguments of the *Examination* were conclusive, against the theory of *Common Sense*, are, I am persuaded, among the first to wish that the Author had revised the expressions of ridicule, not to say contempt, in which, sometimes, those arguments are conveyed. It was my duty to record, at the beginning of the *Examination*, his own disapprobation of the *manner* in which that piece was written. He probably had this manner in recollection, when, dedicating the *History of the Corruptions* to Mr. Lindsey, in 1782, he says, "If, on any occasion, I have indulged too much asperity, I hope I shall by your example learn to correct myself, and without abating my zeal in the common cause."

As to the effect of the *Examination* on the three writers, Dr. Oswald does not appear to have noticed his opponent. Dr. Reid also was silent on the *Examination*, but amused himself with a passage in the *Introductory Essays*; and made one of the occasional occupations of his retirement from public employment, “An Examination of Priestley’s Opinions concerning Matter and Spirit.” Dr. Beattie, as advised by his friends, said nothing, contented to have described Hartley’s Theory, as Priestley’s Hobby-Horse. His biographer, the late Sir William Forbes, commends his friend’s discretion, since the *Examination*, according to him, is neglected, while Dr. Beattie maintains his *classical* reputation, as if the questions between him and Dr. Priestley, concerned the *Belles Lettres*, in which Dr. Beattie may justly claim a respectable station.

In the preface to the *Examination*, Dr. Priestley mentioned his designed Selection of Hartley’s Theory, which appeared in 1775, and again in 1790, with *Introductory Essays*. To these Essays I have here added the *Contents* of the Selection, for the use of any possessor of Hartley’s complete work, who may wish to study him according to the plan of Dr. Priestley.

A passage in the *Introductory Essays*, to quote my Author’s Memoirs, “expressed some doubt of the immateriality of the sentient principle in man.” The alarm thus excited, and the censures of the Author, who was described “in all the newspapers and most of the periodical publications, as an unbeliever in revelation and no better than an Atheist,”—these could not deter such a mind, conscious of a pure and worthy purpose, from pursuing the inquiry. He proceeded till he had attained “the firmest persuasion that man is wholly material, and that our only prospect of immortality is from the Christian doctrine of the resurrection.” Under these convic-

tions he published, first in 1777, and again in 1782, the *Disquisitions relating to Matter and Spirit*.

Of this publication the Author thus writes from *Cabre*, 8th December, 1776, to his friend, Dr. Toulmin: "I have just finished a pretty large metaphysical work, which I propose to call *Disquisitions concerning Matter and Spirit*. You will easily guess the principal design of it; but it has rather a greater extent than the title speaks. I shall probably send it to the press soon after Christmas, and in due time it will speak for itself. You will not easily imagine the connexion; but one great object of the book is to combat the doctrine of *pre-existence*, and especially that of our Saviour." I copy this passage from a letter, part of a *series*, with the use of which I have been favoured by Mr. J. B. Toulmin, the son of my venerable friend and early instructor.

If the hint of a suspicion that "the sentient principle in man" was *material*, thus excited alarm and censure, what might not have been expected from the declaration of a firm persuasion, that a consideration of his nature, and the doctrine of the Scriptures united to sustain that opinion? But my Author had counted the cost, and though *fallen on evil tongues* yet he bore *right onward*. It would however be unjust not to distinguish from his illiberal censors, two writers who differed from him on the subjects of the *Disquisitions*, as widely as possible. The one was M. De Luc, quoted in the notes on the Preface to the second edition of the *Disquisitions*: the other was the Rev. J. Duncan, a clergyman of South Warmborough, who publishing, in 1779, a work on the *Evidences of Reason, &c.*, by Andrew Baxter, prefixed a long Dedication to my Author, in which he says, "Habituated no less than Dr. Priestley to a calm contempt for bigotry in all its shapes, with a rooted aversion to the mean suggestions of a party-spirit, I humbly think myself animated with an equal zeal for the truth.

whose interests are manifestly best promoted by an unlimited freedom of inquiry. Believe me then, sincere in respecting the candour with which you maintain opinions different from those, which, appearing to me to be established on solid grounds, will I trust receive no lasting injury from your objections." Pp. vii. viii.

The *Disquisitions* and the *Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity Illustrated*, which were connected in the Author's plan, produced several publications from opponents, the answers to whom, and the friendly *Discussion* with Dr. Price will appear in the next volume.

In preparing the *Disquisitions* for the press, I have had frequent occasions to correct the references, the passages quoted, and sometimes the translations, especially those from *Beausobre*, whose words I have given where his authority appeared most important. Such inaccuracies as I have mentioned are fairly imputed to the Author's numerous avocations, but I should regret their re-appearance in any future edition of that work. Through the whole volume I have sedulously endeavoured to preserve my Author's own *Text* exactly as he left it in his last editions.

J. T. R.

Clapton, Jan. 18, 1818.



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AN
EXAMINATION
OF
DR. REID'S INQUIRY INTO THE HUMAN MIND
ON THE
Principles of Common Sense;
DR. BEATTIE'S ESSAY
ON THE
NATURE AND IMMUTABILITY OF TRUTH;
AND
DR. OSWALD'S APPEAL TO COMMON SENSE
IN
Behalf of Religion.

As some men have imagined innate ideas, because they had forgot how they came by them; so others have set up almost as many distinct instincts as there are acquired principles of acting.

Preliminary Dissertation to Law's Translation of King's Origin of Evil.

[*First published 1774. Reprinted from the 2d Edition 1775.*]

TO

DR. REID, DR. BEATTIE, AND DR. OSWALD.

GENTLEMEN,



I TAKE the liberty to present each of you with a copy of my remarks on your writings, requesting that you would give them that attention which, according to your own ideas, the subject deserves.

You cannot be justly offended at me for treating you with the same freedom with which you have treated others.* If the public voice, which has hitherto seemed to incline to your side, should, notwithstanding, finally determine in my favour, you will be considered as bold and insolent innovators in what has hitherto been the received doctrine concerning *human nature*, and in the fundamental principles of *truth* and *reason*. But if your tenets be admitted, and my objections to them be deemed frivolous, I must be content to cover my head with infamy, and fall under the indelible disgrace of a weak or wicked opposer of new and important truth.

I should not have written this book, Gentlemen, if I had not meant to call you forth to defend the ground which you have boldly seized and occupied. It is, therefore, my expectation, and my wish, that you would all of you, either jointly or separately, enter into an open and free discussion of the questions which are now before the public. I promise to proceed with equal *fairness* and *freedom*, acknowledging, with the greatest frankness, any mistakes or oversights of which I shall be convinced; and, judging by your professed liberality and candour, I and the public shall expect the same conduct from you.

Sincerely wishing you all possible success in your laudable endeavours to serve the cause of *truth*, *virtue* and *religion*, though my writings, and myself, should be the victims at their shrine,

I am, Gentlemen,
Your most obedient humble servant,

J. PRIESTLEY.

Calne, August 10, 1774.

* Whatever offensive manner these writers had adopted, it has been justly regretted that the Author should, in some parts of this *Examination*, have fallen into a style of censure unworthy of his cause, and unlike his usual conduct as a controversialist, even when defending himself against an assailant. In his *Memoirs* he has recorded his disapprobation of the *manner* in which this piece was written.

THE
P R E F A C E.



NOTHING could be more unexpected by me, but a very few months ago, than this publication. *Dr. Reid's Inquiry into the Principles of the Human Mind* fell into my hands presently after the first publication of it;* but being at that time intent upon my electrical pursuits, and others of a similar nature, I did no more than look very slightly into it. Finding his notions of human nature the very reverse of those which I had learned from Mr. Locke and Dr. Hartley (in which I thought I had sufficient reason to acquiesce), I did not give myself the trouble to read the book through.

It appeared to me to be an ingenious piece of sophistry, and had it been written for the purpose of *amusement*, I might have been pleased with it; but I own I was rather surprised to see such a production ushered into the world with great gravity, by a professor in a public university;† and I was more surprised to find that the work was very seriously admired both in Scotland and England. Afterwards a friend of mine referred me to Dr. Reid's treatise for some observations on the subject of *squinting*, which I read, and quoted in my *History of Optics*,‡ but I did not at that time look any farther into the book than the passages to which my friend had directed me.

Dr. Beattie's Essay on Truth I read through at its first coming out, and though his principles appeared to me to be very wrong, I was much pleased with the good intention with which the book seemed to have been written, and with some of his lively strictures upon Mr. Hume; but I had not the most distant thought of animadverting upon it.

* The first edition of Dr. Reid's *Inquiry* appeared in 1764.

† Glasgow, where Dr. Reid was Professor of Moral Philosophy.

‡ The *History and present State of Discoveries relating to Vision, Light, and Colours*. 2 vols. 4to. 1772. See II. pp. 658 and 665.

Dr. Oswald's Appeal to Common Sense, I believe, I should never have heard of, if I had not been referred to it by the author of the *Remarks on my Publications*.* This, therefore, I procured, but I hardly so much as looked into it, till after the publication of the second volume of my *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion* [in 1773], when, finding the work quoted with much respect by Dr. Beattie and others, and hearing it in general well spoken of, I was determined to give it a careful reading; which I did with great astonishment and indignation, but not without some entertainment.

Unaccountable as it appeared to me that such a performance should ever have excited any other sentiments than those of contempt, in any person who had been initiated into the elements of this kind of knowledge by Mr. Locke, and who entertained any opinion of the *defenceableness of his religion*, I thought it might not be amiss to make a few remarks upon it, in a short *Essay*, which I might prefix to the third volume of my *Institutes*. And there would have been a sufficient propriety in it; because, if this new scheme of an immediate appeal to *common sense* upon every important question in religion (and which superseded almost all *reasoning* on the subject) should take place, the plan of my work, with which I had taken some pains, and which I hoped would be of some use to young persons, was absurd from the very beginning.

Accordingly I made some notes upon Dr. Oswald's Treatise with this view; but finding that I had entered upon a copious, amusing, and not uninteresting subject, I determined to consider it more at large. I therefore contented myself with a few general remarks upon the subject, and an extract or two from Dr. Oswald, in the preface to that third volume,† just to give some idea of the nature and spirit of the principles I meant to oppose; promising to discuss the subject more at large in a separate work, in which I might also take some notice of Dr. Reid, who first advanced the principles of which Dr. Beattie and Dr. Oswald had made so much use. This has produced the present publication, in which I have introduced several of the remarks and quotations contained in the above-mentioned *preface*; supposing that, as this work is of a very different

* "Remarks on several late Publications relative to the Dissenters, in a Letter to Dr. Priestley," who replied in "A Letter to the Author." 1770.

† See Vol. II. pp. 250—257.

nature from that, the same persons might not be possessed of them both.

Thinking farther upon this subject, it occurred to me, that the most effectual method to divert the attention of the more sensible part of the public from such an incoherent scheme as that of Dr. Reid, and to establish the true science of human nature, would be to facilitate the study of *Dr. Hartley's Theory*. I therefore communicated my design to the son* of that extraordinary man, who was pleased to approve of my undertaking. Accordingly I have now in the press an edition of so much of the *Observations on Man* as relate to the doctrine of association of ideas, leaving out the doctrine of *vibrations*, and some other things which might discourage many readers, and introducing it with some dissertations of my own.†

Also, to shew the great importance and extensive use of this excellent theory of the mind, I thought it might be of service to give some specimens of the application of Dr. Hartley's doctrine to such subjects of inquiry as it had a near relation to, and to which I had had occasion to give particular attention. And as I had, on other accounts, been frequently requested to publish the *Lectures on Philosophical Criticism*,‡ which I composed when I was tutor in the Belles Lettres at the academy at Warrington, this was another inducement to the publication. For it appears to me, that the subject of criticism admits of the happiest illustration from Dr. Hartley's principles; and accordingly, in the composition of those lectures, I kept them continually in view.

But the most important application of Dr. Hartley's doctrine of the association of ideas is to *the conduct of human life*, and especially the business of *education*. I therefore propose to publish some observations on this subject, perhaps pretty soon; and I shall reserve for a time of more leisure, and more advanced age, the throwing together and systematizing the observations that I am from time to time

* Mr. David Hartley, who in 1801 republished the *Observations*, "with Notes and Additions by Pistorius." There has lately been a new edition, with some Devotional Pieces of the Author. Mr. Hartley was in 1783 the British Minister at Paris, where, in concert with Dr. Franklin, he signed the Peace between Great Britain and the United States. He had the merit of first bringing before Parliament the case of Negro-Slavery. In 1776, when Member for Hull, "he made a motion in the House of Commons, that the *Slave-Trade* was contrary to the laws of God, and the rights of men. He had obtained some of the chains used in this cruel traffic, and laid them upon the table." The motion, which was, of course, lost, was seconded by Sir George Saville. See Clarkson's *History of the Abolition*, 1808, I. p. 84.

† The *Introductory Essays*. See the next article.

‡ "A Course of Lectures on Oratory and Criticism." 1777.

making on the general conduct of *human life and happiness*, and on the natural *progress and perfection of intellectual beings*.

This work, if I be able, in any tolerable measure, to accomplish my design, will contain not merely *illustrations*, and the most important *applications* of Hartley's Theory, but may contribute in some measure to the *improvement and extension* of it.* Speculations of this kind contribute to my own entertainment and happiness almost every day of my life; and were philosophers in general to attend to them, they would find in them an inexhaustible fund of disquisition, abounding with the most excellent practical uses; more especially inspiring the greatest elevation of thought, continually leading the mind to views beyond the narrow limits of the present state, and filling it with the purest sentiments of benevolence and devotion.

I am fully aware how exceedingly unpopular some of the opinions advanced in this work will be, not with the vulgar only, but also with many ingenious and excellent persons, for whom I have the highest esteem, and who are disposed to think favourably of my other publications. But as they have not disapproved of my usual freedom in avowing and defending opinions in which they concur with me, I hope they will bear with the same *uniform freedom*, and love of truth, though it should lead me to adopt and assert opinions in which they cannot give me their concurrence.

As to the doctrine of *necessity*, to which I now principally refer, it may possibly save some persons, who will think that I would not speak at random, not a little trouble, if I here give it as my opinion, that unless they apply themselves to the study of this question pretty early in life, and in a regular study of Pneumatology and Ethics, they will never truly understand the subject; but will always be liable to be imposed upon, staggered, confounded and terrified by the representations of the generality of writers, who, how speciously soever they declaim, in reality know no more about it than themselves. The common Arminian doctrine of *free will*, in the only sense of the words in which mankind generally use them, viz. *the power of doing what we please, or will*, is the doctrine of the Scriptures, and is what

* This design was entirely frustrated by the *Church and King* mob of Birmingham, in 1791, who destroyed "the hints and loose materials written in several volumes." See *Appeal*, Pt. 1. MS. *Papers* destroyed, No. xi. Mr. Belsham justly regards this as "the greatest and the most irreparable" of the losses "which the theological, the philosophical and the learned world sustained from this unparalleled outrage." *Memoirs of Lindsey*, p. 457. Note.

the philosophical doctrine of necessity supposes; and farther than this no man does, or need to look, in the common conduct of life, or of religion.

If any person, at a proper time of life, with his mind divested of vulgar prejudices, possessed of the necessary preparatory knowledge, and likewise of some degree of *fortitude*, which is certainly requisite for the steady contemplation of great and interesting subjects, should choose to inquire seriously into this business, I would recommend to him, besides the *study* (for the *perusal* is saying and doing nothing at all) of Dr. Hartley's *Observations on Man*, Mr. Jonathan Edwards's *Treatise on Free Will**. This writer discusses the subject with great clearness and judgment, obviating every shadow of objection to it; and, in my opinion, his work is unanswerable. But the concurrence of the philosophical doctrine of *necessity* with the gloomy notions of Calvin appears to me to be a strange kind of phenomenon†, and I cannot help thinking that had this

* See Extracts from this Work, in the "Remarks on Dr. Beattie's Essay." It was first published in 1754, and republished at London in 1768, under the following title: "A careful and strict Inquiry into the Modern prevailing Notions of that Freedom of Will, which is supposed to be essential to Moral Agency, Virtue and Vice, Reward and Punishment, Praise and Blame. By Jonathan Edwards, A. M." 3d Edition. This acute metaphysician was a native of North America, where he appears to have passed his life. He was born at Windsor, in Connecticut, in 1703, "entered Yale College when about twelve years of age—in the second year of his abode there he read Locke on the Human Understanding. From his own account he was inexpressibly entertained and pleased with that book." He became a preacher at New York in 1722, and afterwards for many years at Northampton. From thence he removed to Stockbridge, as superintendent of the Indian Mission. He died at Princeton in 1758, of the small-pox, a very few months after he had been elected President of New Jersey College. See Mem. of President Edwards, by Dr. Hopkins, annexed to his Works, in 8 vols. 1806.

† This writer adopted the system of Calvin in all its horrible consistency; and his imagination, like that of Jeremy Taylor, would often *luxuriate* on the dreadful possibilities of hell-torments. Yet, from the following account of himself, he had indulged other notions in early life, and ascribed to an influence not to be distinguished from miraculous, his later opinions. "From my childhood up, my mind had been full of objections against the doctrine of God's sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal life, and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in hell. It used to appear like a horrible doctrine to me. But I remember the time very well when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this sovereignty of God, and his justice, in thus eternally disposing of men according to his sovereign pleasure. But never could give an account how or by what means I was thus convinced, not in the least imagining at the time, nor a long time after, that there was any extraordinary influence of God's spirit in it; but only that now I saw further, and my reason apprehended the justice and reasonableness of it. However my mind rested in it; and it put an end to all those cavils and objections.—But I have often since that first conviction, had quite another kind of sense of God's sovereignty than I had then. I have often since had not only a conviction, but a *delightful* conviction. The doctrine has very often appeared exceeding pleasant, bright and sweet." Mem. p. 29. In his "Dissertation concerning the End for which God created the World," he represents "God's judgments on the wicked in this world, and also their eternal

ingenious writer lived a little longer, and reflected upon the natural connexion and tendency of his sentiments, as explained in his treatise, he could not but have seen things in a very different light, and have been sensible that his philosophy was much more nearly allied to Socinianism than to Calvinism.*

In reality, I can hardly help thinking it to have been a piece of artifice in Mr. Edwards to represent the doctrine of philosophical necessity as being the same thing with Calvinism, and the doctrine of philosophical liberty as the same thing with Arminianism.† Both Arminians and Calvinists had certainly the very same opinion concerning the freedom of the human will in general, though they differed in their notions of it where religion was concerned. In fact, the modern question of *liberty and necessity* is what those divines never understood, or indeed had so much as heard of. The Arminians maintained, in general, that it depends upon men themselves whether they will be saved or not; and the Calvinists maintained the contrary opinion, asserting that it depends wholly upon an arbitrary decree of God. At least, this was the case till, in the course of the controversy, they were led to refine upon the subject, and at length Mr. Edwards hit upon the true philosophical doctrine of *necessity*, which I scruple not to assert, that no other Calvinist ever did before.

Zealous Calvinists, who regard my writings with abhorrence, will be surprised to hear me so full and earnest in my

damnation in the world to come," as serving to increase in the *elect* "a relish of their own enjoyments:" and in one of his sermons he says, that "however the saints in heaven may have loved the damned while here, especially those of them who were near and dear to them in this world, they will have no love to them hereafter," but their sufferings "will be an occasion of their rejoicing, as the glory of God will appear in it." Works, I. pp. 513, 514. IV. p. 509.

* There is no appearance of any deviation from *Calvinism* at the close of this Author's life. His last work, which was in the press when he died, was to maintain "Original Sin," against Dr. Taylor, whom he mentions in the Inquiry as having "lately made a mighty noise in America." P. 275.

† See the *Conclusion* of the Inquiry, from which it is, perhaps, too much to infer the Author's *artifice*. His perplexity, from the incumbrance of his *theological* system, is much more apparent in the following passage, where he is obliged to *explain away* the scriptural representations of the *universality* of the Divine love to man, in the mission of Christ. "From these things it will inevitably follow, that however Christ in some sense may be said to *die for all*, and to redeem all visible Christians, yea the whole world by his death; yet there must be something particular in the design of his death, with respect to such as he intended should actually be saved thereby. As appears by what has now been shewn, God has the actual salvation or redemption of a certain number in his proper absolute design, and of a certain number only; and therefore such a design only can be prosecuted in any thing God does in order to the salvation of men." *Inquiry*, pp. 407, 408. On the distinction between *Calvinism* and *Necessity*, see Dr. P.'s *Illustrations*, Sect. xiii.

recommendation of a book which they themselves boast of, as the strongest bulwark of their own gloomy faith. And they must continue to wonder, as it would be to no purpose for me to explain to them why they ought not to wonder at the matter. What I should say on that subject would not be intelligible to them.

Those who are not fond of much close thinking, which is necessarily the case with the generality of readers, and some writers, will not thank me for endeavouring to introduce into more public notice such a theory of the human mind as that of Dr. Hartley. His is not a book that a man can read over in a few evenings, so as to be ready to give a satisfactory account of it to any of his friends who may happen to ask him what there is in it, and expect an answer in a few sentences. In fact, it contains a new and most extensive *science*, and requires a vast fund of preparatory knowledge to enter upon the study of it with any prospect of success.

But, in return, I will promise any person who shall apply to this work, with proper furniture, that the study of it will abundantly reward his labour. It will be like entering upon *a new world*, afford inexhaustible matter for curious and useful speculation, and be of unspeakable advantage in almost every pursuit, and even in things to which it seems, at first sight, to bear no sort of relation. For my own part, I can almost say, that I think myself more indebted to this one treatise, than to all the books I ever read beside, the Scriptures excepted.*

* Dr. Young, on the first appearance of that work, recommended it to the author of *Clarissa* in the following letter, preserved in the "Correspondence of Richardson." See also *Mon. Repos.* I. p. 569.

TO MR. RICHARDSON.

DEAR SIR,

May 8, 1749.

When I was in town, I asked you if you had read Dr. Hartley's book. You told me you had not. I was sorry for it; for I have a curiosity to know your opinion of it. I have since read it a second time, and with great satisfaction. It is certainly a work of distinction; by men of distinction, therefore, it ought to be read. It is calculated for men of sense. I make no doubt but that it has its gainsayers; but therefore it is a proper subject for your discussion and discernment. So few books have any thing new in them, that those which have are entitled to our particular regard. All I will venture to say about it is, that there is no man who seriously considers himself as immortal, but will find his pleasure, if not his profit, in it. And if you are not one of those men, give me leave to say, you have greatly imposed on,

Dear Sir,

Your very affectionate humble servant,

E. YOUNG.

P. S. It is evident that Dr. Hartley has thought for himself; a character without which no writer can be of any considerable value. And thus far the author I recommend to your perusal resembles yourself, which is a sort of bribe to you in his favour.

On the other hand, such a theory of the human mind as that of Dr. Reid, adopted by Dr. Beattie and Dr. Oswald (if that can be called a *theory* which in fact *explains* nothing), does not, indeed, require much study; but when you have given all possible attention to it, you find yourself no wiser than before. Dr. Reid meets with a particular sentiment, or persuasion, and not being able to explain the origin of it, without more ado he ascribes it to a *particular original instinct*, provided for that very purpose. He finds another difficulty, which he also solves in the same concise and easy manner. And thus he goes on accounting for every thing, by telling you, not only that he cannot explain it himself, but that it will be in vain for you, or any other person, to endeavour to investigate it farther than he has done. Thus avowed ignorance is to pass for real knowledge, and, as with the old Sceptics, that man is to be reckoned the greatest philosopher who asserts that he knows nothing himself, and can persuade others that they know no more than he does. There is this difference between the ancient and these modern sceptics, that the ancients professed neither to *understand* nor *believe* any thing, whereas these moderns believe every thing, though they profess to understand nothing. And the former, I think, are the more consistent of the two.

Those of my readers who have not been much conversant with metaphysical writers, and are not acquainted with the artful manner in which some of them draw consequences from their doctrines, in order to enhance the value of their speculations, cannot possibly be aware how much, in the opinion of those whose sentiments I am opposing, depends upon the controversy in which I am now engaged. I shall, therefore, in order to excite his attention to the subject (besides what I have observed of this nature in the body of the work) quote a few passages from Dr. Reid's *Dedication*, which shew what important service he imagined he was doing to mankind by his performance; and his disciples Dr. Beattie and Dr. Oswald are not behind their master, in the ideas they entertain of the value of their respective writings.

He begins with observing, p. 3, that, though the subject of it had been canvassed by men of very great penetration and genius, such as Descartes, Malebranche, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume; yet he has given a view of the human understanding so very different from them, as to be apprehensive of being condemned by many for his temerity and vanity. P. 4.

A whole system of scepticism, he says, p. 5, has been fairly built upon the principles of Mr. Locke. Then he observes, p. 6, that if all belief be laid aside, piety, patriotism, friendship, parental affection and private virtue appear as ridiculous as knight-errantry. Upon the hypothesis that he combats, he says, p. 8, the whole universe about him, body and spirit, sun, moon, stars and earth, friends and relations, all things without exception, vanish at once, and, *like the baseless fabric of a vision, leave not a track behind.* He therefore informs his patron, that he thought it unreasonable, upon the authority of philosophers, to admit an hypothesis, which, in his opinion, overturned all philosophy, all religion, and virtue, and common sense. And finding that all the systems concerning the human understanding that he was acquainted with were built upon this hypothesis, he was resolved to inquire into the subject anew, without regard to any hypothesis; and the leisure of an academical life, p. 10, disengaged from the pursuits of interest and ambition, the duty of his profession, which obliged him to give prelections on these subjects to youth, and an early inclination to speculations of this kind, enabled him, he flatters himself, to give a more minute attention to the subject of this inquiry, than had been given before.

He concludes with hinting to his patron, p. 11, who, with many others, had approved of his sentiments, that in it he has justified the common sense and reason of mankind, against the sceptical subtilties which, in this age, have endeavoured to put them out of countenance, and to throw new light upon one of the noblest parts of the Divine workmanship; and therefore that his Lordship's respect for the arts and sciences, and his attention to the improvement of them, as well as to every thing else that contributes to the felicity of his country, leaves him no room to doubt of his favourable acceptance of his Essay.

According to this view of the subject, the interest and happiness of mankind are nearly concerned in this business; and therefore it behoves me to proceed with the greatest caution. If I deprive the world of the benefit of Dr. Reid's important services, I do them an irreparable injury; but, on the other hand, if I undeceive them with respect to the confidence they have been induced to put in one, who, notwithstanding his professions, in which I doubt not he is very sincere, cannot in reality be of any use to them, I shall be entitled to some portion of their gratitude, though I should confer upon them no positive benefit.

I have a slight apology to make to those persons who have not read the writings on which I have animadverted, for the *freedom* with which I have sometimes treated them. Those who have read them, and have observed the airs of self-sufficiency, arrogance, and contempt of all others who have treated or touched upon these subjects before them, and the frightful consequences which they perpetually ascribe to the opinions they controvert (and which are generally my own favourite opinions), will think me to have been very temperate in the use that I have made of such a mode of writing as tends to render metaphysical speculation not quite tedious, insipid and disgusting. At most I have treated them as they have treated others far superior to themselves.

As to Dr. Oswald, whom I have treated with the least ceremony, the disgust his writings gave me was so great, that I could not possibly shew him more respect. Indeed I think him in general not entitled to a grave answer; and accordingly have for the most part contented myself with *exhibiting* his sentiments, without *replying* to them at all. This will probably confirm him in the opinion which he has already expressed, viz. that *he sees I have not studied the subject of this controversy.*

As my remarks on these three writers are necessarily miscellaneous, I thought it would not be improper to prefix to them a *preliminary essay* on the nature of judgment and reasoning, with a general view of the progress of the intellect, especially with respect to our knowledge of the external world. By this means I hope my reader will enter upon the *particular remarks* with the advantage of a pretty good general knowledge of the subject; but for a more particular knowledge of it, I must refer him to the edition of Hartley above-mentioned, and the dissertations that I propose to prefix to it.

Some may wonder that I should be so severe on these three Christian writers, and take no notice of Mr. Hume, whose sophistry, being deemed by them to be unanswerable on the common principles, compelled them to have recourse to these new ones. And others may even think it wrong that, being a Christian myself, I should not join the triumph of my friends, though the victory was not gained with my weapons.

To the former I answer, that, in my opinion, Mr. Hume has been very ably answered, again and again, upon more solid principles than those of this new common sense; and

I beg leave to refer them to the two first volumes of my *Institutes* above-mentioned, and especially the second, which relates to the evidences of Christianity.* Besides, though I have not, in this treatise, answered Mr. Hume directly, I have done it, in some measure, *indirectly*, when I shew that there was no occasion to have recourse to this new mode of defending religion, the old being abundantly sufficient.

To the latter I would reply, that I respect Christianity chiefly as it is the cause of *truth*, and that the true interest of Christianity is promoted no less by throwing down weak and rotten supports, than by supplying it with firm and good ones.

After I had announced my intention to animadvert upon Dr. Reid, Dr. Beattie, and Dr. Oswald, I was told of an anonymous pamphlet, written to shew that Dr. Beattie's Essay on Truth is *sophistical, and promotive of scepticism and infidelity*. Though I do not approve of what seems to have been the design of this writer, I think his remarks are, in the main, just with respect to Dr. Beattie. My observations are frequently the same with his.†

It is necessary, for the sake of verifying my quotations, to observe, that I have made use of *Dr. Reid's Inquiry*, third edition, London, 1769; *Dr. Beattie's Essay*, fifth edition, London, 1774; and *Dr. Oswald's Appeal*, Vol. 1, second edition, London, 1768; Vol. 2, the first edition, Edinburgh, 1772; *Dr. Price's Review*, second edition, London, 1769; *Harris's Hermes*, London, 1751.

When no particular volume of Dr. Oswald is expressed, the first is always intended.

* See Vol. II. pp. 72—230.

† This pamphlet has the following title: "The Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth, in Opposition to Sophistry and Scepticism, by James Beattie, LL.D., &c. shewn to be sophistical, and promotive of Scepticism and Infidelity. With some Remarks on Priestcraft, Subscriptions and Establishments. In a Letter to a Friend. By a Professor of Moral Philosophy in the College of Common-Sense. 1773." It is not easy to discover the real purpose of the writer, whether he designed to expose Christianity, or to assist in the restoration of its purity, by the manner in which he has inveighed against priestcraft and established corruptions. He, however, quotes from Dr. Chandler, seemingly with approbation, the opinion that, by inquiry, "Christianity cannot suffer, but the rigid dictators of the faith and consciences of men will lose their authority; and human schemes and creeds, set up on the ruin of Christianity, will fall into the contempt they so justly deserve." P. 72.

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS ON THE NATURE OF
 JUDGMENT AND REASONING, WITH A GENERAL VIEW
 OF THE PROGRESS OF THE INTELLECT, WITH RE-
 SPECT TO THE PRINCIPAL SUBJECTS OF THIS TREA-
 TISE.

WHEN our minds are first exposed to the influence of external objects, all their parts and properties, and even accidental variable adjuncts, are presented to our view at the same time; so that the whole makes but one impression upon our organs of sense, and consequently upon the mind. By this means all the parts of the simultaneous impressions are so intimately associated together, that the idea of any one of them introduces the idea of all the rest. But as the necessary parts and properties will occur more often than the variable adjuncts, the ideas of these will not be so perfectly associated with the rest; and thus we shall be able to distinguish between those parts or properties that have been found separate, and those that have never been observed asunder.

The idea of any thing, and of its necessary inseparable properties, as those of *milk* and *whiteness*, *gold* and *yellow*, always occurring together, is the foundation of, and supplies the materials for *propositions*. in which they are affirmed of one another, and are *said* to be inseparable; or, to use the terms of logic, in which one is made the *subject*, and the other the *predicate* of a proposition; and nothing is requisite but *words* to denote the names of things and properties, and any arbitrary sign for a *copula*, and the proposition is complete; as *milk is white*, *gold is yellow*, or *milk has whiteness*, *gold has yellowness*. This class of truths contains those in which there is an universal, and therefore a supposed necessary connexion between the subject and the predicate.

Another class of truths contains those in which the subject and predicate appear, upon comparison, to be in reality nothing more than different names for the same thing. To this class belong all *equations*, or propositions relating to number and quantity, that is, all that admit of mathematical demonstration, as *twice two is four*, and *the three angles of a right lined triangle are equal to two right angles*.

For when the terms of these propositions are duly considered, it is found that they do not really differ, but express the very same quantity. This is, in its own nature, a conviction or persuasion of the fullest kind.

These two kinds of propositions, being very different in their natures, require very different kinds of *proof*.

The *evidence*, that any two things or properties are necessarily united, is the constant observation of their union. It having always been observed, for instance, that the milk of animals is white, the idea of *white* becomes a necessary part, or attendant of the idea of *milk*. In other words, we call it an *essential property* of milk. This, however, only respects the milk of those animals with which we are acquainted. But since the milk of all the animals with which we are acquainted, or of which we have heard, is white, we can have no reason to suspect that the milk of any new and strange animal is of any other colour. Also, since wherever there has been the specific gravity, ductility, and other properties of *gold*, the colour has always been *yellow*, we conclude that those circumstances are necessarily united, though by some unknown bond of union, and that they will always go together.

The proper *proof*, therefore, of universal propositions, such as the above, that milk is white, that gold is yellow, or that a certain degree of cold will freeze water, consists in what is called an *induction of particular facts*, of precisely the same nature. Having found, by much and various experience, that the same events never fail to take place in the same circumstances, the *expectation* of the same consequences from the same previous circumstances is necessarily generated in our minds, and we can have no more suspicion of a different event, than we can separate the idea of *whiteness* from that of the other properties of *milk*.

Thus when the previous circumstances are precisely the same, we call the process of proof by the name of *induction*. But if they be not precisely the same, but only bear a considerable resemblance to the circumstances from which any particular appearance has been found to result, we call the argument *analogy*; and it is stronger in proportion to the degree of resemblance in the previous circumstances. Thus if we have found the milk of all the animals with which we are acquainted to be nourishing, though the natures of those animals be considerably different, we think it probable that the milk of any strange animal will be nourishing. If, therefore, the evidence of a proposition of this kind be weak,

or doubtful, it can be strengthened only by finding more facts of the same, or of a similar nature.

If the truth of a proposition of the other class be not self-evident, that is, if the subject and predicate do not appear at first sight, to be different names for the same thing, another term must be found that shall be synonymous to them both. Thus, to prove that the three internal angles of a right lined triangle are equal to two right angles, I produce the base of the triangle: and having, by this means, made it evident that all the internal angles are equal to three angles formed by lines drawn from the same point in a right line, which I know to be equal to two right angles, the demonstration is complete.

This process exactly corresponds to the method of learning and teaching the signification of words in an unknown language, by means of one that is known. I may not know, for instance, what is meant by the Latin word *domus*; but if I be informed that it has the same meaning with *maison* in French, with which I am well acquainted, it immediately occurs to me, that it must have the same signification as *house* in English. And as the idea of a *house* was perfectly associated with the word *maison*, I no sooner put the word *domus* in its place, than the idea that was at first annexed to the word *maison* becomes connected with the word *domus*. For some time, however, the word *domus* will not excite the idea of a house without the help of the word *maison*; but by degrees it gets united to the idea immediately, so that afterwards they will be as inseparable as the same idea and the word *maison* was before.

In like manner, when *sylogisms* become familiar, the subject and predicate of the proposition to be proved unite, and coalesce immediately, without the help of the *middle term*; in which case the conclusion is as instantaneous as a simple judgment. In this manner it is that authority, as that of a parent, or of God, produces instant conviction. We first put confidence in them, and then the moment that any thing is known to have their sanction, it engages our assent and acquiescence.

I may see no natural connexion, for instance, between this life and another; but firmly believing that the declarations of Jesus Christ have the sanction of divine authority, which I know cannot deceive me, the moment I find that he has asserted that there will be a resurrection of the dead to a future life, it becomes an article of my faith; and

not the least perceivable space of time is lost in forming the two syllogisms, by which I conclude, first, that what Christ says is true, because he speaks by commission from God; and secondly, that the doctrine of the resurrection is true, because he has asserted it.

In fact, both *propositions* and *syllogisms* are things of *art* and not of *nature*. The ideas belonging to the two terms of milk and whiteness, out of which is formed the proposition *milk is white*, were originally impressed, as was observed before, at the same time, and only formed a single complex idea. So also the moment that any two terms coalesce, as *lac* in Latin, and *milk* in English, the ideas annexed to the word milk and that of whiteness among the rest, are immediately transferred to the word *lac*, without any formal syllogism.

The word *truth*, and the idea annexed to it, is also the child of art, and not of nature, as well as the ideas annexed to the words *proposition* and *syllogism*. Ideas coalesce in our minds by the principle of association; these associations extend themselves; and ideas belonging to one word are transferred to another, without our giving any attention to these mental operations or affections. But when these processes have taken place in our minds many times, we are capable of observing them, as well as the ideas which are the subject of them; and we give names to these mental processes just as we do to the affections of things without ourselves.

Thus the perfect *coincidence* of the ideas belonging to different terms, as *twice two* and *four*, and likewise the universal and necessary *concurrence* of two ideas, as those of *milk* and *whiteness*, having been observed, we make use of some term, *truth*, for instance, to express either of those circumstances; for being very much alike, it has not been found necessary to distinguish them by different appellations.

Since propositions and reasoning are mental operations, and in fact, nothing more than cases of the *association of ideas*, every thing necessary to the processes may take place in the mind of a child, of an idiot, or of a brute animal, and produce the proper affections and actions, in proportion to the extent of their intellectual powers. The *knowledge of these operations* which is gained by the attention we give to them, is a thing of a very different nature, just as different as the knowledge of the nature of vision is different from vision itself. The philosopher only is acquainted

with the structure of the eye, and the theory of vision, but the clown sees as well as he does, and makes as good use of his eyes.

Suppose a dog to have been pushed into a fire, and severely burned. Upon this, the idea of *fire* and the idea that has been left by the painful sensation of *burning* become intimately associated together; so that the idea of being pushed into the fire, and the idea of the pain that was the consequence of it are ever after inseparable. He cannot tell you in words, that *fire has a power of burning*, because he has not the faculty of speech; or, though he might have signs to express *fire* and *burning*, he might not have got so abstract an idea as that of *power*; but notwithstanding this, the two ideas of *fire* and of *burning* are as intimately united in his mind, as they can be in the mind of a philosopher, who has reflected upon his mental affections, and is able to describe that union, or association of ideas, in proper terms.

If you endeavour to push the dog into the fire, he will instantly spring from it, before he has felt any thing of the heat; which as clearly shews his apprehension of danger from a situation in which he suffered before, as if he could have explained the foundation of his fear in the form of regular syllogisms and conclusions. No philosopher, who can analyze the operations of his mind, and discourse concerning them, could reason more justly, more effectually, or more expeditiously, than he does.

Words are of great *use* in the business of thinking, but are not necessary to it. In like manner though the knowledge of *logic* is not without its use, it is by no means necessary for the purpose of reasoning. And as the doctrine of *syllogisms* was deduced from observations on reasoning, just as other *theories* are deduced from facts previously known; so the doctrine of *propositions* and *judgment* was deduced from observations on the coincidence of ideas, which took place antecedent to any knowledge of that kind.

There is hardly any thing to which we give the name of *opinion*, or *belief*, that does not require some degree of abstraction, and knowledge of what passes within the mind. And the common actions of life, which may be *analyzed* into opinions and reasoning, and which discover what we call sagacity in a very high degree, may be performed without any such thing, that is, without any explicit knowledge of such mental affections and operations. Let us, for an example of this, take *the belief of an external world*. This

is thought to be universal; and yet it appears to me to be very possible, not only that the lower animals, but even that children, may not have reflected so much as that, properly speaking, they can be said to have formed any such opinion.

When sensation first takes place, the child has no notices of any thing but by means of certain impressions, generally called *sensations*, which objects excite in his mind, by means of the organs of sense, and their corresponding nerves. Supposing the senses to be perfect, and exposed to the influence of external objects, the child is immediately sensible of these impressions; some of which give him pleasure, others pain, and others sensations between both. At the same time the muscular system is peculiarly irritable, so that those muscles which are afterwards most perfectly subject to the voluntary power are almost continually in action, but in a random and automatic manner, as long as the child is awake and in health.

Let us suppose now that his own *hand* passes frequently before his eyes. The impression of it will be conveyed to the mind; and when, by any kind of mechanism (vibrations or any thing else) that impression is revived, he will get a fixed idea of his hand. Let now any painful impression be made upon his hand, as by the flame of a candle. The violence that is thereby done to his nerves will throw the whole nervous and muscular system into agitation, and will more especially occasion the contraction of those muscles which are necessary to withdraw his hand from the object that gave him pain, as Dr. Hartley has shewn by curious anatomical disquisitions in a variety of instances. Admitting then the principle of the association of ideas; after a sufficient number of these joint impressions, the action of drawing back his hand will mechanically follow the idea of the near approach of the candle.

In a manner equally mechanical, described at length by Dr. Hartley, the motions of *reaching* and *grasping* at things that give children pleasure are acquired by them. And in time, by the same process, the ideas of things that give us pleasure or pain become associated with a variety of other motions, besides the mere withdrawing of the hand and thrusting it forward, &c.; and these also, as well as many circumstances attending those states of mind, get their own separate associations: so that, at length, a great variety of methods of pursuing pleasure and avoiding pain is acquired by us.*

* *Observations*, Ch. i. Sect. iii. Prop. 9. Priestley's *Hartley*, p. 32, &c.

When the different impressions nearly balance one another, the ideas, or motions, in the brain, interfering with and checking one another, some sensible space of time intervenes before the final determination to pursue any particular object, or to use any particular method of gaining the object, takes place. To this state of mind, when we observe it, we give the name of *deliberation*, and to the determination itself, that of *will*. But still that motion, or connected train of motions, will take place which is the most intimately connected with and dependent upon the state of mind, or impressions, immediately previous to it.

It will readily be concluded from this, that the more extensive are the intellectual powers, that is, the greater is the number of ideas, and consequently their associations, the oftener will this case of *deliberation*, or *suspense*, occur. Brutes are hardly ever at a loss what to do, and children seldom; so that to explain their actions we have hardly any occasion for the use of the terms *deliberation*, *volition*, or *will*; the ideas of every pleasurable and painful object being immediately followed by one particular definite action, proper to secure the one and avoid the other; the tendencies to other actions having never interfered to check and retard it. Now it can only be during this state of deliberation and suspense, that we have any opportunity of perceiving and attending to what passes within our own minds; so that a considerable *compass of intellect*, a large stock of ideas, and much experience, are necessary to this reflection, and the knowledge that is gained by it.

We see, then, that a child, or brute animal, is in possession of a power of pursuing pleasure and avoiding pain, and, in like manner, a power of pursuing other intermediate and different objects, in consequence of impressions made upon their minds by things external to them, without their having given any attention to the affections or operations of their minds; and indeed, consequently, without having such an idea as that of *mind* at all, or hardly of *self*. Some brute animals may possibly never advance farther than this; excepting that, their pleasurable and painful impressions being associated with a variety of particular persons and circumstances, they will necessarily acquire the rudiments of all the *passions*, as of joy and sorrow, love and hatred, gratitude and resentment, hope and fear, &c.; each of which may be as *intense*, though less *complex* than they are found in the human species. Indeed, they will be more sensible and

quick in their operations and effects, from the want of that variety of associations which take place in our minds, and which check and over-rule one another.

It is evident, however, that if time and opportunity be given for the purpose (which, for the reason assigned above, can only be obtained where there is a considerable compass of intellect, and much exercise of it), the *affections* of our ideas are as capable of being the subjects of observation as the *ideas* themselves; just as the attractions, repulsions and various affections of external bodies may be observed, as well as the bodies themselves. And it is possible that, at length, no affection or modification of ideas shall take place, without leaving what we may call an *idea* of every part of the process. And as we give names to other things which are distinguished by certain properties, so we give the name of *mind*, *sentient principle*, or *intellect*, to that within ourselves in which these ideas exist, and these operations are performed.

At first a child can have no notion of any difference between external objects themselves, and the immediate objects of his contemplation. He has no knowledge, for instance, of impressions being made by visible things on his eye, and still less has he any knowledge of the nerves or brain. But having given sufficient attention to the phenomena of vision, and of the other senses, he is convinced, first, that the eye, the ear, or some other sense, is necessary to convey to him the knowledge of external objects; and that without these organs of sense, he would have been forever insensible of all that passed without himself.

By attending to these observations he is likewise convinced, that the immediate objects of his attention are not, as he before imagined, the *external things themselves*, but some affection of his senses, occasioned by them. Afterwards he finds that his eye, his ear, and other organs of sense, cannot convey to him the knowledge of any thing, unless there be a communication between these organs and the brain, by means of proper *nerves*; which convinces him that the immediate objects of his thoughts are not in the organs of sense, but in the *brain*, farther than which he is not able to trace any thing.

This kind of knowledge is gained by observation and experiment, as much as the theory of the eye and of light, though we ourselves are the subject of the observations and experiments. And our thinking and acting, in the conduct

of life, is as much independent of this branch of knowledge, as the powers of air and light are independent of our knowledge of them.

Having, by this process, gained the knowledge of the distinction between the immediate objects of our thoughts, and external objects, it may occur to some persons, that, since we are not properly *conscious*, or *know in the first instance*, any thing more than what passes within ourselves, that is, our own sensations and ideas, these may be impressed upon the mind, without the help of any thing external to us, by the immediate agency of the Author of our being. This no philosopher will say is impossible; but, of two hypotheses to account for the same phenomenon, he will consider which is the more probable, as being more consonant to the course of nature in other respects.

Half the inhabitants of the globe, for instance, may be looking towards the heavens at the same time, and all their minds are impressed in the same manner. All see the moon, stars and planets in precisely the same situations; and even the observations of those who use telescopes correspond with the utmost exactness. To explain this, Bishop Berkeley says, that the Divine Being, attending to each individual mind, impresses their sensoriums in the same or a corresponding manner, without the medium of any thing external to them. On the other hand, another person, without pretending that his scheme is impossible, where Divine power is concerned, may think, however, that it is more natural to suppose that there really *are* such bodies as the moon, stars and planets, placed at certain distances from us, and moving in certain directions; by means of which, and a more general agency of the Deity than Bishop Berkeley supposes, all our minds are necessarily impressed in this corresponding manner.*

It is sufficient evidence for this hypothesis, that it exhibits *particular appearances*, as arising from *general laws*, which is agreeable to the analogy of every thing else that we observe. It is recommended by the same *simplicity* that recommends every other philosophical theory, and needs no other evidence whatever; and I should think that a person must have very little knowledge of the nature of *philosophy*, who should think of having recourse to any other for the purpose. Dr. Reid, however, not satisfied with this evidence, pretends that the certain belief of the real existence of

* A paragraph copied from the *Institutes*. See Vol. II. pp. 253, 254.

external objects is arbitrarily connected with the ideas of them. “The hypothesis of *knowing things by means of ideas only*,” he says, “is ancient, indeed, and has been generally received by philosophers, but of which I could find no solid proof. The hypothesis I mean is, that nothing is perceived but what is in the mind which perceives it—that we do not really perceive things that are external, but only certain images and pictures of them, imprinted upon the mind, which are called *impressions* and *ideas*.”—*Dedication*, p. 7.

In fact, it is not true that we necessarily believe the existence of external objects, *as distinct from our ideas of toem*. Originally, we have no knowledge of any such thing as *ideas*, any more than we have of the images of objects on the retina; and the moment we have attained to the knowledge of ideas, the external world is nothing more than an *hypothesis*, to account for those ideas; so probable, indeed, that few persons seriously doubt of its real existence, and of its being the cause of our ideas. But still the contrary may be affirmed without any proper *absurdity*. Thus, also, the revolution of the planets round the sun best accounts for the appearances of nature; but the contrary may be supposed and affirmed without subjecting a person to the charge of talking *nonsense*. This, however, is the language that is now adopted when any of the dictates of a pretended principle of *common sense* is controverted; and one of the arbitrary decrees of this new infallible guide to truth is, it seems, the reality of an external world.

Such is the leading principle of that philosophy which I principally mean to combat in the ensuing Remarks on the writings of Dr. Reid, Dr. Beattie, and Dr. Oswald.



Remarks

ON

DR. REID'S INQUIRY

INTO THE

PRINCIPLES OF THE HUMAN MIND.

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THE

INTRODUCTION.

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THE great business of philosophy is to reduce into classes the various appearances which nature presents to our view. For by this means we acquire an easy and distinct knowledge of them, and gain a more perfect comprehension of their various natures, relations and uses. Nature presents to our view *particular effects*, in connexion with their *separate causes*, by which we are often puzzled, till philosophy steps in to our assistance, pointing out a similarity in these effects, and the probability of such similar effects arising from the same cause. Having got into this track of *simplifying* all appearances, and all causes, we are able to predict new appearances from their known previous circumstances; and thus we add to our own power, convenience and happiness, by availing ourselves of the powers of nature.

A very considerable advance has been made in this truly philosophical and useful progress with respect to the knowledge of the world around us, and the laws by which it is governed. And the knowledge of *ourselves*, both body and mind, has likewise advanced in the proportion that might have been expected from the natural order of our thoughts; which are first engaged by an attention to external objects before we reflect upon ourselves. Something was done in

this field of knowledge by Descartes, very much by Mr. Locke, but most of all by Dr. Hartley, who has thrown more useful light upon the theory of the mind than Newton did upon the theory of the natural world.

But while some are employed in making real advances in the knowledge of nature, there have always been others possessed not always, perhaps, of envious but of little and contracted minds, who, instead of doing, or attempting to do any thing themselves, are busily employed in watching the footsteps of others, and cavilling at every thing they do; which is not without a good effect, as it obliges philosophers to use greater caution and circumspection, to review their steps, and tread upon surer ground than they would otherwise do.

Every discovery in natural philosophy made by Copernicus, Galileo and Newton, was disputed inch by inch; and can we be surprised that the labours of Mr. Locke should share the same fate? As to Dr. Hartley, his *day of trial* is not yet come, and one of my views in this publication, and some others that I have projected, is to bring it on: not doubting but that it will stand the test, and be better known, and more firmly established after such a scrutiny.

The fate of Mr. Locke's Principles of the Human Mind has, however, been rather singularly hard. The systems of other philosophers, after having been fully and rigorously criticized, and then generally acquiesced in, have passed without much controversy: but his, after having undergone this strict examination from all the learned of his own age, and having been acquiesced in for near a century, has of late met with a more rude, and more pertinacious set of adversaries; who, instead of allowing the knowledge of the mind to advance with the knowledge of nature in general, appear to me to be throwing every thing into its pristine confusion, and even introducing more darkness than naturally ever belonged to the subject.

The outlines of Mr. Locke's system are, that the mind perceives all things that are external to it by means of certain impressions, made upon the organs of sense; that those impressions are conveyed by the nerves to the brain, and from the brain to the mind, where they are called *sensations*, and when recollected, are called *ideas*; that by the attention which the mind, or sentient principle, gives to these sensations and ideas, observing their mutual relations, &c. it acquires other ideas, which he calls *ideas of reflection*, and thereby becomes possessed of the materials of all its know-

ledge. Other things he has adopted, and taken for granted concerning the mind, which are not well founded; and I think he has been hasty in concluding that there is some other source of our ideas besides the external senses; but the rest of his system appears to me, and others, to be the corner-stone of all just and rational knowledge of ourselves.

This solid foundation, however, has lately been attempted to be overturned by a set of pretended philosophers, of whom the most conspicuous and assuming is Dr. Reid, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow, who, in order to combat Bishop Berkeley, and the scepticism of Mr. Hume, has himself introduced almost universal scepticism and confusion; denying all the connexions which had before been supposed to subsist between the several phenomena, powers and operations of the mind, and substituting such a number of *independent, arbitrary, instinctive principles*, that the very enumeration of them is really tiresome.

It is very possible indeed, and no person can deny it, that we may proceed too rapidly in simplifying appearances, and therefore such writers as Dr. Reid are an useful and seasonable check upon us. But, on the other hand, so loose and incoherent a system as he would substitute in the place of Mr. Locke's, ought not to be adopted without the most urgent necessity; since it wants the recommendation of that agreeable *simplicity*, which is so apparent in other parts of the constitution of nature. Appearances and analogy being so much against this system, we are justified in requiring the stronger evidence for it.

It is impossible to contemplate such a theory of the human mind as that of Dr. Reid with any satisfaction, and the farther study of the subject is thereby rendered exceedingly disgusting and unpromising. I flatter myself, therefore, that I may be doing some service to future inquirers, by endeavouring to shew that this new system has in it as little of truth, as it has of beauty, that we may safely take up the subject where Mr. Locke left it, and proceed to attend to what Dr. Hartley has done, by following his steps; when, if I have any foresight, we shall smile at Dr. Reid's hypothesis, or rather string of hypotheses, as a mere puzzle, and look back upon it as upon a dream.

To proceed with as much perspicuity as I possibly can in this perplexed subject, I shall first present my reader with a view of all the unconnected instinctive principles

which Dr. Reid pretends to have discovered in the mind, and I shall then examine, in distinct sections, his objections to Mr. Locke's doctrine, and the foundation he has laid for his own peculiar hypotheses.

That I may preserve at the same time the greatest distinctness with respect to my reader, and the greatest fairness with respect to the author on whom I am animadverting, I shall enumerate all the pretended instinctive principles of which he has given any account in this treatise, and exhibit them in the form of a *table*, subjoining my authorities, in quotations from those different parts of his work from which I have collected them, and also numbering the articles, so that they may correspond to one another, and be easily compared together.

SECTION I.

A Table of Dr. Reid's instinctive Principles.

1.	{ A present sensation	suggests	{ the belief of the present existence of an object.
	{ Memory	——	{ the belief of its past existence.
	{ Imagination	——	{ no belief at all.
2.	Mental affections	——	the idea and belief of our own existence.
3.	Odours, tastes, sounds, and certain affections of the optic nerve	} ——	{ their peculiar corresponding sensations.
4.	A hard substance	——	{ the sensation of hardness, and the belief of something hard.
5.	An extended substance	——	the idea of extension and space.
6.	All the primary qualities of bodies	} ——	{ their peculiar sensations.
5.	A body in motion	——	the idea of motion.
6.	Certain forms of the features, articulations of the voice, and attitudes of the body	} ——	{ the idea and belief of certain thoughts, purposes, and dispositions of the mind.
7.	Inverted images on the retina	——	upright vision.
8.	Images in corresponding parts of both eyes *	} ——	{ single vision.
9.	Pains in any part of the body	} ——	{ the idea of the place where the pain is seated.

He also enumerates the following among instinctive Faculties or Principles, viz.

10. The parallel motion of the eyes, as necessary to distinct vision.
11. The sense of veracity, or a disposition to speak truth.
11. A sense of credulity, or a disposition to believe others.
12. The inductive faculty, by which we infer similar effects from similar causes.

N. B. All these separate instinctive principles Dr. Reid considers as branches of what he terms *common sense*.

* Different animals are subject to different laws in this respect. (P.)

Authorities for the preceding Table.

1. "Sensation compels our belief of the present existence of a thing, memory the belief of its past existence, and imagination no belief at all. These are all simple and original, and therefore inexplicable acts of the mind." P. 31.

"The connexion between our sensations and the conception and belief of external existences cannot be produced by habit, education, or any principle of human nature that has been admitted by philosophers." P. 91.

"A third class of natural signs comprehends those which, though we never before had any notion or conception of the things signified, do suggest it, or conjure it up, as it were, by a natural kind of magic, and at once give us a conception, and create a belief of it." P. 90. "This class of natural signs is the foundation of *common sense*, a part of human nature which has never been explained." P. 91.

"Sensation, and the perception of external objects by the senses, though very different in their nature, have commonly been considered as one and the same thing." P. 288.

"I know that the perception of an object implies both the conception of its form, and a belief of its present existence. I know, moreover, that this belief is not the effect of argument and reasoning. It is the immediate effect of my constitution." P. 290.

2. "The idea of our own existence precedes all reasoning and experience." P. 48.

3. See p. 84, quoted below, and his treatise *passim*.

4. "By an original principle of our constitution, a certain sensation of touch both suggests to the mind the conception of hardness, and creates the belief of it, or in other words, this sensation is a natural sign of hardness." P. 86.

5. "Space, motion and extension, and all the primary qualities of bodies, have no resemblance to any sensation or any operation of our minds, and therefore cannot be ideas either of sensation or reflection. The very conception of them is irreconcilable to the principles of all our philosophical systems of the universe. The belief of them is no less so." P. 102.

"The notion of extension is so familiar to us from our infancy, and so constantly obtruded by every thing we see or feel, that we are apt to think it obvious how it comes into the mind; but upon a narrower examination we shall find it

utterly inexplicable. It is true we have feelings of touch, which every moment present extension to the mind; but how they come to do so is the question: for those feelings do no more resemble extension than they resemble justice or courage, nor can the existence of extended things be inferred from those feelings by any rule of reasoning; so that the feelings we have by touch can neither explain how we get the notion, nor how we come by the belief of extended things." P. 96.

6. "The thoughts, purposes, and dispositions of the mind, have their natural signs in the features of the face, the modification of the voice, and the attitude of the body." P. 87. "In these natural signs," he says, "there is, as in artificial signs, often neither similitude between the sign and the thing signified, nor any connexion that arises necessarily from the nature of things." *Ib.* Of these particular natural signs he says, that "they are not only established by nature, but discovered to us by a natural principle, without reasoning or experience. An infant," he adds, "may be put in a fright by an angry countenance, and soothed again by signs and blandishments." P. 89.

7. See Ch. i. Sect. xi. *passim*.

8. "The correspondence of certain points in the retinae is prior to the habits we acquire in vision, and consequently is natural and original." P. 261.

"Since there is a prodigious variety in the structure, the motions, and the number of eyes in different animals and insects, it is probable that the laws by which vision is regulated are not the same in all, but various, adapted to the eyes which nature has given them." P. 233. See also Ch. vi. Sect. xiii. *passim*.

9. "How do we know the parts of our body affected by particular pains? Not by experience, or by reasoning, but by the constitution of nature." P. 209.

10. "The parallel motion of the eyes we resolve into an original power and principle of the human mind, and not to be referred to custom, to anatomical or mechanical causes." P. 185. He also calls it a *natural instinct*, P. 187. But see Ch. vi. Sect. x. *passim*.

11. "There is in the human mind an early anticipation, neither derived from experience nor reasoning, nor from any compact or promise, that our fellow-creatures will use the same signs in language when they have the same sentiments. This is, in reality, a kind of prescience of human actions, and seems to me to be an original principle of the human consti-

tution, without which we should be incapable of language, and consequently incapable of instruction." P. 336.

"The wise Author of our nature has implanted in our natures two principles that tally with each other; the first is a propensity to speak truth, and to use the signs of language so as to convey our real sentiments." Ib. "Another original principle implanted in us by the Supreme Being, is a disposition to confide in the veracity of others, and to believe what they tell us. This is the counterpart to the former; and as that may be called *the principle of veracity*, we shall, for want of a more proper name, call this *the principle of credulity*."

12. "The belief of the continuance of the present course of nature must be the effect of instinct, and not of reason." P. 343. "All our knowledge of nature beyond our original perceptions is got by experience, and consists in the interpretation of natural signs. The appearance of the sign is followed by the belief of the thing signified. Upon this principle of our constitution, not only acquired perception, but also inductive reasoning, and all our reasoning from analogy is grounded; and therefore, for want of another name, we shall beg leave to call it *the inductive principle*. It is from the force of this principle that we immediately assent to that axiom, upon which all our knowledge of nature is built, that effects of the same kind must have the same cause." P. 347. "Take away the light of this inductive principle, and experience is as blind as a mole. She may indeed feel what is present, and what immediately touches her, but she sees nothing that is either before or behind, upon the right hand or upon the left, future or past." P. 349.

It will be observed, that in this table I have connected the name of the thing or circumstance that gives rise to the corresponding feeling, by the word *suggest*. This, however, is not to be mistaken for a mere form of connexion. Our author would have us to consider it in a much more serious light, as a real power of the mind, which had escaped the notice of all the philosophers who had gone before him in these researches. "*Suggestion*," he says, "is a power of the mind which seems entirely to have escaped the notice of philosophers, and to which we owe many of our simple notions which are neither impressions nor ideas, as well as many original principles of belief." P. 49.

My reader will, I suspect, imagine with me, that this catalogue of original instinctive principles is pretty large, and that when nature had gone so far in this track, but little

could be wanting to accomplish all her purposes ; and that, with respect to *principles*, little remained to be done by any other means. But our author, it seems, thinks differently. "The original perceptions which nature gives are insufficient," he says, "for the purposes of life, and therefore she has made men capable of acquiring many more perceptions by habit." P. 351. Now my view in the following inquiry is to relieve Dame Nature of the unnecessary load which Dr. Reid has laid upon her, by ascribing a little more to habit, and to the necessary connexions and consequences of things, than he has done.

When my reader shall have given sufficient attention to the preceding table, and the authorities from which it was collected, I hope that he, our author, and myself, may proceed with a perfectly right understanding of one another. However, to complete this good understanding, and to prevent the possibility of a mistake, I shall subjoin a few more extracts, which shew how perfectly independent of one another Dr. Reid imagined the principles enumerated in this table to be.

"No man can give a reason why the vibration of a body might not have given the sensation of smelling, and the effluvia of bodies affected our hearing, if it had so pleased our Maker. In like manner, no man can give a reason why the sensations of smell or taste might not have indicated hardness, as well as that sensation which by our constitution does indicate it. Indeed, no man can conceive any sensation to resemble any known quality of bodies ; nor can any man shew, by any good argument, that all our sensations might not have been as they are, though no body, or quality of bodies, had ever existed." P. 84.

"Perhaps we might have been so made as to taste with our fingers, to smell with our ears, and to hear by the nose. Perhaps we might have been so made as to have all the perceptions and sensations which we have without any impression made upon our bodily organs at all." P. 305.

"The perceptions we have, might have been immediately connected with the impressions of our organs, without any intervention of sensation. This last seems really to be the case in one instance, to wit, in our perception of the visible figure of bodies." *Ib.*

"We know nothing of the machinery by means of which every different impression upon the organs, nerves and brain exhibits its corresponding sensation, or of the machinery by means of which each sensation exhibits its corresponding

perception. We are inspired with the sensation, and we are inspired with the corresponding perception by means unknown." P. 306.

Our author seems, however, to be willing to provide a decent retreat from his doctrine of original instinctive principles, by saying, "If in any case we should give the name of a law of nature to a general phenomenon, which human industry should afterwards trace to one more general, there is no great harm done. The most general assumes the name of a law of nature when it is discovered, and the less general is contained and comprehended in it." P. 223.

But I must take the liberty to say, that if this should happen, harm *will* be done to the hypothesis of that man who had been so rash and unguarded as to advance, over and over, so that nobody could mistake his meaning, that a certain law of nature was absolutely *ultimate*, which afterwards appeared not to be so; who should have asserted that these principles are *simple, original*, and therefore *inexplicable acts of the mind*, and that they *cannot* be produced by any principle of human nature that has ever been admitted by philosophers. This is asserting that it is impossible to advance any farther in the investigation, for who can ever get beyond *simple, original and inexplicable acts of the mind?*

The suspicion that we are got to ultimate principles necessarily checks all farther inquiry, and is therefore of great disservice in philosophy. Let Dr. Reid lay his land upon his breast, and say, whether, after what he has written, he would not be exceedingly mortified to find it clearly proved, to the satisfaction of all the world, that all the instinctive principles in the preceding table were really acquired, and that all of them were nothing more than so many different cases of the old and well-known principle of *association of ideas*.

It must, moreover, be observed, that the table I have given by no means contains a view of *all* the original instinctive principles which our sagacious author finds in human nature. These are only such as have occurred to him in his survey of the external senses. "We have taken notice," he says, "of several original principles of belief in the course of this inquiry; and when other faculties of the mind are examined, we shall find more which have not occurred in the examination of the five senses." P. 378.

It may be said that, since our author has not finished his scheme, this critique upon it is premature, that we ought first to hear him out, and that it is not good manners to rise

from the table after the first course, though we be not disposed to partake of the second. I answer, that Dr. Reid's guests have already waited about ten years, and that possibly this account of the first course may induce our host to hasten his second.* To drop all figure: our author's scheme appears to be already complete as far as it goes, and the evidence of what is before us is altogether independent of what is to come; at least there is no hint given to us of the contrary.

SECTION II.

A View of the several Fallacies by which DR. REID has been misled in his Inquiry.

I NOW proceed to consider Dr. Reid's objections to the great outlines of Mr. Locke's doctrine, and the several principles on which he has founded his own; endeavouring, at the same time, to shew the sufficiency of the commonly received principles for those purposes for which Dr. Reid pretends that they are altogether insufficient, so as to oblige him to quit them for others of his own.

As my remarks on the Doctor's performance were made in the course of reading him, and thereby things of a different nature will be unavoidably a little intermixed (though I shall take all the care that I can in the arrangement of them), I shall introduce them with distinctly noting the several false steps which he has made in the course of it, or the different *fallacies* to which he seems to have been subject, and which have been the source of the principal of his mistakes.

1. Because he cannot perceive any resemblance between objects and ideas, he concludes, that the one cannot be produced by the other.

2. Because he cannot perceive any necessary connexion between sensations and the objects of them, and therefore cannot absolutely demonstrate the reality of external objects, or even the existence of mind itself, by the doctrine of ideas, he rejects that doctrine altogether, and has recourse to arbitrary instincts.

3. He takes it for granted, that our ideas have no existence but when we are conscious of them, and attend to them.

* Dr. Reid published, in 1785, his "Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man," and, in 1788, "On the Active Powers," to complete the system of philosophy begun in his *Inquiry*. Dr. Reid died at Glasgow in 1796, aged 86. See Gen. Biog. 4to. 1813, pp. 490—495.

4. He confounds the faculty of sensation with ideas of sensation.

5. Because we do not know the mechanism by which a particular motion, or a set of connected motions, is performed, he concludes that those motions are performed by instinctive principles, and were not acquired by experience and the association of ideas.

6. Supposing, without any foundation, that certain determinations or emotions were prior to experience, he concludes that they are instinctive.

Let it be noted, that I do not assert that our learned Professor is *uniform* in these mistakes, for by some of my remarks I think it will appear that he is not perfectly consistent with himself.

SECTION III.

Of DR. REID'S Objection to the Doctrine of Ideas from their want of Resemblance to their corresponding Objects.

DR. REID objects to every system which supposes that the mind receives images of things from without, by means of the senses, and thinks that they are sufficiently refuted by the observation, that sensations bear no resemblance to bodies, or any of their qualities. "The properties of extension, figure, solidity, motion, hardness, roughness, as well as colour, heat and cold, sound, taste and smell, which all mankind have conceived to be the qualities of bodies, have not," he says, "among them all, one single image of body, or any of its qualities. I am sure that, by proper attention and care, I may know my sensations, and be able to affirm with certainty what they resemble, and what they do not resemble. I have examined them one by one, and compared them with matter and its qualities, and I cannot find one of them that confesses a resembling feature." P. 147.

So very confident is our author of the strength of this argument, that he scruples not to rest the whole of his system upon it. "This," says he, "I would humbly propose as an *experimentum crucis*, by which the ideal system must stand or fall; and it brings the matter to a short issue. Extension, figure, motion, may, any one, or all of them, be taken for the subject of this experiment. Either they are ideas of sensation, or they are not. If any one of them can be shewn to be an idea of sensation, or to have the least resemblance to any sensation, I lay my hand upon my

mouth, and give up all pretence to reconcile reason to common sense in this matter, and must suffer the ideal scepticism to triumph. But if, on the other hand, they are not ideas of sensation, nor like to any sensation, then the ideal system is a rope of sand, and all the laboured arguments of the sceptical philosophy against a material world, and against the existence of every thing but impressions and ideas, proceed upon a false hypothesis." P. 108.

Before our author had rested so much upon this argument, it behoved him, I think, to have examined the strength of it a little more carefully than he seems to have done; for he appears to me to have suffered himself to be misled in the very foundation of it, merely by philosophers happening to call ideas the *images* of external things; as if this was not known to be a figurative expression, denoting not that the actual shapes of things were delineated in the brain, or upon the mind, but only that impressions of some kind or other were conveyed to the mind by means of the organs of sense and their corresponding nerves, and that between these impressions and the sensations existing in the mind there is a real and necessary, though at present an unknown connexion.

I do not see but that by Dr. Reid's mode of reasoning, he might as well deny that the sound of a musical string is caused by the stroke of a *plectrum*, or that sounds considered as tremulous motions of the particles of the air, are produced by bodies striking against one another, because he can perceive no proper *resemblance* between the cause and the effect, between the sound that is produced and the shape of the thing or things by which the sounds are made; and yet these sounds vary according to the bodies that occasion them, and the circumstances that attend their impinging on one another; so that, without any such resemblance as the Doctor seems to expect, they correspond strictly to one another, and the one may be called the proper and *necessary*, and not the *arbitrary* (or as Dr. Reid would call it the *natural*) sign of the other.

The transferring of this comparison to the doctrine of ideas is very easy. If, as Dr. Hartley supposes, the nerves and brain be a vibrating substance, the analogy will hold very nearly indeed; all sensations and ideas being vibrations in that substance, and all that is properly unknown in the business being the simple power in the mind to perceive, or be affected by, those vibrations. And if, as Locke

and others suppose, matter itself may be indued with that sentient power,* even that difficulty, as far as the present question can be affected, is removed.

Our author's doubts are not confined to ideas being produced by external objects, but affect the use of the nerves belonging to the organs of sense, and the brain itself, as the instruments of transmitting them to the mind, reducing the supposition to a mere probability.

"It is very probable," he says, "that the optic nerve is the instrument of vision, no less necessary than the retina." P. 200. But it appears to me that, arguing in this manner, one might doubt of every thing; and that we might just as well say it is very *probable* only that the feet and legs are the instruments of walking, as that the optic nerve is only *probably* the instrument of vision.

In another place, he does not leave room to suppose that it is even probable that the optic nerves are the instrument of vision, calling the hypothesis a mere conjecture. "From the first dawn of philosophy to this day," he says, "it has been believed that the optic nerves are intended to carry the images† of visible objects from the bottom of the eye to the mind, and that the nerves belonging to the other senses have a like office. But how do we know this? We conjecture it, and taking this conjecture for a truth, we consider how the nerves may best answer the purpose." P. 277. It is agreeable to this that he says, "We are inspired with the sensation, and we are inspired with the corresponding perception, by means unknown." P. 303.

This scepticism with respect to the doctrine of ideas, the use of the organs of sense, and their corresponding nerves in transmitting them, appears to me to be very extraordinary indeed; and yet, such are the caprices of the human mind, Dr. Reid expresses as much surprise at the prevalence of the common opinion. "It is very strange," he says, "that philosophers of all ages should have agreed in this notion, that the images of external objects are conveyed by the organs of sense to the brain, and are there perceived by the mind. Nothing can be more unphilosophical. For first

* "I see no contradiction in it, that the first, eternal, thinking Being should, if he pleased, give to certain systems of created senseless matter, put together as he thinks fit, some degrees of sense, perception and thought." Locke's *Essay*, B. iv. Ch. iii. Sect. 6. See also his "Second Reply to the Bishop of Worcester," *Stillingfleet*. Works, Fol. 1740, pp. 588—596.

† If Dr. Reid thinks to reconcile these two passages by saying that by *images*, in this place, he did not mean *impressions* in general, but the real *shapes* and *forms* of things, the whole charge is false, and he is fighting a chimera of his own creating. (P.)

this notion has no foundation in fact and observation. Of all the organs of sense the eye only, as far as we can discover, forms any kind of image of its object, and the images formed by the eye are not in the brain, but only in the bottom of the eye; nor are they at all perceived or felt by the mind. Secondly, it is as difficult to conceive how the mind perceives images in the brain, as how it perceives things more distant. If any man will shew how the mind may perceive images in the brain, I will undertake to shew how it may perceive the most distant objects: for if we give eyes to the mind, to perceive what is transacted at home in its dark chamber, why may we not make these eyes a little longer-sighted, and then we shall have no occasion for that unphilosophical fiction of images in the brain. In a word, the manner and mechanism of the mind's perception is quite beyond our comprehension." P. 201.

In this way of arguing we might say that the whole system of our senses, nerves and brain is of no real use whatever; for it is impossible to say *how* they act upon the mind, or the mind upon them. But by the same reasoning we may deny every principle in nature. For when we have traced it as far as we can, we are still compelled to stop somewhere, and to confess our inability to proceed any farther.

¶ I know, however, very well, that an eye is the instrument of vision, because without it nothing can be seen. I also know that the retina and optic nerve are likewise necessary, because if they be disordered, vision is still wanting; and lastly, I am equally certain that the brain is necessary to all perception, because if that be disordered, thinking either entirely ceases, or is proportionably disturbed.

For my part, I know no conclusions in philosophy more certain than these, and they are not rendered at all less certain by our not being able to go a step farther, so as to know in what *manner* the brain, or the affections of it, can be the instrument or subject of perception. I may conjecture that the brain itself may be the ultimate cause, or I may substitute something else that I may think better adapted to answer the purpose, that is, to suit the phenomena.

SECTION IV.

Of DR. REID'S Objection to MR. LOCKE'S Division of Ideas into those of Sensation and Reflection.

HAVING examined one great pillar of our author's scheme,

I now proceed to another, of which he likewise boasts great things; but if my reader be able to consider it with perfect seriousness, it is more than I can expect of him, for it is more than I am able to do myself. It is his objection to Mr. Locke's division of ideas into those of *sensation*, and those of *reflection*.*

“This,” he says, “is contrary to all rules of logic, because the second member of the division includes the first. For can we form clear and just notions of our sensations any other way than by reflection? Surely we cannot. Sensation is an operation of the mind, of which we are conscious, and we get the notion of sensation by reflecting upon that which we are conscious of. In like manner, doubting and believing are operations of the mind, whereof we are conscious, and we get the notion of them by reflecting upon what we are conscious. The ideas of sensation, therefore, are ideas of reflection, as much as the ideas of doubting or believing or any other idea whatsoever.” P. 575.

This I scruple not to say is as mere a quibble, as either the ignorance or the perversion of logic ever produced, arising from our author's confounding the proper *ideas of sensation* with the idea of *sensation itself*, which is, no doubt, of the same class with the ideas of *doubting*, *believing*, or those of any other operation of the mind; and so Mr. Locke would have acknowledged. But the ideas belonging to the class of sensation do not require any scientific knowledge of that power, or any reflection upon it. If this were the case, brute animals, having no proper ideas of reflection, could have no ideas of sensation. Indeed, it is questionable whether the bulk of mankind, who are not philosophers, could have them, and consequently whether they must not be destitute of all ideas.

A more palpable blunder than this I think I hardly ever met with in any argumentative treatise, and yet this is one of the great engines with which our author assails Mr. Locke's doctrine of ideas. Dr. Reid might just as well say, that *houses* and *utensils* necessarily belong to the same class of objects, and that they ought never to be distinguished, because the former contain the latter.

Besides, our author himself supposes that even human beings may have ideas of mere sensation some time before they discover any power of reflection, and that this power may discover itself and come into play afterwards. “Per-

haps," says he, "a child in the womb, or for some short period of his existence, is merely a sentient being; the faculty by which it perceives an external world, by which it reflects on its own thoughts and existence, and relation to other things, as well as its reasoning and moral faculties, unfold themselves by degrees; so that it is inspired with the various principles of common sense as with the passions of love and resentment, when it has occasion for them." P. 112. Let our author say how this supposition of his could be possible, if ideas of sensation were necessarily included under the head of ideas of reflection, when they are here said to have existed prior to the very power of reflection, or at least to any exercise of that power.

By the way, this hypothesis of the gradual *unfolding* of the powers of the mind very much resembles the gradual *acquisition* of them, from the impressions to which we are exposed. I should have thought that Dr. Reid would hardly have had an idea of real *powers* lying so long dormant as this notion may require some of them to do, while other faculties were awake and vigorous. He will not, I find, assert of *powers* what he does of *ideas*, viz. that they have no existence but when they are in use and exercise.

SECTION V.

DR. REID'S *Position, that Sensation implies the Belief of the present Existence of external Objects, and his View of BERKELEY'S Theory, particularly considered.*

HAVING replied to our author's capital objections to Mr. Locke's, or the common hypothesis, concerning sensations, ideas and objects, I come to consider what he has farther to advance in support of his own. Now one would imagine, *a priori*, that a man who should have assumed the airs and tone that Dr. Reid has given himself through the whole of this treatise, as if he had utterly demolished all the preceding systems of the mind, and erected another quite different from any thing that was ever heard or thought of before, would be able to produce something like *positive evidence* for it. But, behold, when we have got to the end of these *negative arguments*, he has, in fact, nothing more to offer, besides his own very confident assertions (repeated, indeed, without end, if that would give them any weight) that the thing must certainly be as he represents it.

Now, though I, who do not pretend to advance any hypo-

thesis of my own, might very reasonably imitate this example; and, having shewn the futility of his objections to the commonly received hypothesis, content myself with leaving things in *statu quo*; yet, for the greater satisfaction of my readers, I shall make a few more observations on the subject of our author's instinctive principles, selecting for a more particular examination that by which he says *our perceptions necessarily imply the belief of the present existence of external objects*. There is no one article of his whole system of common sense that he can less scruple to submit to this examination; for there is no one thing that he repeats so often, or seems to triumph in, so much as this; imagining that his method of considering the subject is an effectual antidote, and the only effectual antidote, to all the scepticism of the present age.

Now, excepting what our author has said about the absurdity of Mr. Locke's principles, of which I think I have offered a sufficient vindication, and of the peculiarly absurd and dangerous consequences which he ascribes to Berkeley's theory, and which I shall presently shew to be no better founded, all that he says amounts to nothing more than this, that he cannot, in his own mind, separate the belief of the existence of external objects from his sensations, as those of taste, touch, sight, &c. With respect to this I would make the following observations.

First, There are many opinions which we know to be acquired, and even founded, on prejudice and mistake, which, however, the fullest conviction that they are void of all real foundation cannot erase from the mind; the groundless *belief* and *expectation*, founded upon it, being so closely connected with the idea of certain circumstances, that no mental power of which we are possessed can separate them.

Though, for instance, Dr. Reid, no doubt, as well as other philosophers, believes the earth to be spherical, and consequently is sensible that no one part of its surface can be *uppermost* and another part under it; or, that if there were such a thing as an uppermost part, every part must become so in its turn; yet he always considers the place on which he stands as constantly uppermost, and conceives of his antipodes as hanging with their heads downwards. Nay, he cannot help having an idea of their having a tendency to fall down into the void space below the earth. He may talk as a philosopher, but I am confident he conceives and thinks as the vulgar do; and though in many things our author appeals to the sentiments of the vulgar as the test of

truth, in opposition to the philosophers, I think he will hardly choose to do so in this case. He cannot, however, possibly separate in his imagination the idea of a tendency to fall from his idea of the situation of the antipodes. Now, why may not this be the case with respect to Berkeley's theory, so that though we cannot separate the idea of the real existence of external objects and our sensations, it may, like the other, be no more than a prejudice, void of all real foundation. As we cannot pretend to distinguish between our feelings in these two cases, and one of them we know to be fallacious, why may not the other be fallacious also? There must be some *other kind* of evidence besides *feeling*, to prove that it is not so.

Secondly, This scheme of Dr. Reid's supposes that an extraordinary provision is made for a *kind* of faith, that is by no means necessary for the purpose of it, viz. with respect to the conduct of life. For a very high degree of probability, not to be distinguished in feeling from absolute certainty, is attainable without it. Now since it cannot be denied but that the Divine Being leaves us to be governed by a kind of faith far inferior to mathematical certainty in things of infinitely more consequence (in this, however, I do not appeal to Dr. Oswald), it is absolutely incredible that he should have implanted in us a peculiar instinctive principle, merely for the sake of giving us a *plenary conviction* with respect to this business, which is comparatively of very trifling consequence.

Thirdly, Our author's scheme has this farther untoward circumstance attending it, that it supposes the Divine Being to have formed us in such a manner, as that we must necessarily believe what, by our author's own confession, *might not have been true*. For "no man," says he, "can shew, by any good argument, that all our sensations might not have been as they are, though no body or quality of body had ever existed." P. 85. Now this I should think to be, upon the face of it, so very unlikely to be true, that no person who considers the case can admit of it. For this is very different from those deceptions which necessarily arise from general laws, and to which all mankind are subject; but with respect to which it is in their power, by the proper use of their faculties, to relieve themselves.

It appears, therefore, that, confident as our author is of the truth and importance of his system, he acknowledges it to be founded not on *absolute* but *relative truth*, arising from his constitution, which (contrary to what is advanced by his

followers Dr. Beattie and Dr. Oswald) is essentially different from that kind of evidence by which we are satisfied that two and two are four, which is independent of any *arbitrary constitution* whatever.

I wonder it should not have a little staggered Dr. Reid, to consider that his whole system must fall at once before the faintest suspicion, that God may think proper that mankind should be subject to deceptions for their good, at which my mind does not shudder, when I see it to be the necessary consequence of the most excellent general laws. Do we not see that the bulk of mankind live and die in the belief that the sun moves round the earth, and of other things in which they are deceived by the testimony of their senses? Now let Dr. Reid assign a *good reason*, why the same Being who permits his creatures to believe that the sun moves round the earth, might not permit them to believe that there was a sun, though, in reality, there should be no such thing; at the same time that, by his own immediate power, without the aid of any real sun, he should afford them all the benefit of light and heat which they had falsely ascribed to that luminary. I allow it to be as *improbable* as any person pleases, but the supposition is certainly not directly absurd and *impossible*, and this is the only thing in debate.

Fourthly, I wonder that our author should not have attempted some solution of the phenomena of *dreams*, *reveries* and *visions* upon his hypothesis. In all these circumstances it cannot be denied that men imagine themselves to be surrounded with objects which have no real existence, and yet their sensations are not to be distinguished from those of men awake; so that, if *sensations, as such*, necessarily draw after them the belief of the present existence of objects, this belief takes place in dreams, reveries and visions, as indeed is the case; and if there be a fallacy in these cases, it is certainly *within the compass of possibility* that there may be a fallacy in the other also.

Notwithstanding these obvious difficulties with which our author's scheme is clogged, and which a genius of any order less than *the most daring* would think to be insuperable, nothing can exceed the confidence with which he expresses his full persuasion of the truth of it, from the supposed impossibility of believing the contrary, or the supercilious and cavalier manner in which he treats all objections to it.

“I am aware,” says he, “that this belief which I have in perception stands exposed to the strongest batteries of scep-

ticism. But they make no great impression upon it. The sceptic asks me, Why do you believe the existence of the external object which you perceive? This belief, Sir, is none of my manufacture; it came from the mint of nature; it bears her image and superscription; and if it is not right, the fault is not mine. I even took it upon trust, and without suspicion. Reason, says the sceptic, is the only judge of truth, and you ought to throw off every opinion, and every belief, that is not grounded on reason. Well, Sir, why should I believe the faculty of reason more than that of perception? They both came out of the same shop, and were made by the same artist; and if he puts one piece of false ware into my hands, what should hinder him from putting another?

“Perhaps the sceptic will agree to distrust reason, rather than give any credit to perception. For, says he, since, by your own confession, the object which you perceive, and that act of your mind by which you perceive it, are quite different things, the one may exist without the other; and as the object may exist without being perceived, so the perception may exist without an object. There is nothing so shameful in a philosopher as to be deceived and deluded, and therefore you ought firmly to withhold your assent, and throw off this belief of external objects, which may be all delusion. For my part, I will never attempt to throw it off; and although the sober part of mankind will not be very anxious to know any reasons, yet if they can be of use to any sceptic, they are these.” P. 291.

Now, as I do not pretend to rank myself with those whom Dr. Reid will call the *sober part of mankind*, I frankly acknowledge that I have had a little curiosity to look at these reasons.

The first I find is, that it is not in his power to believe otherwise, which I presume I have considered sufficiently above.

His second argument is derived from the dangerous consequences which he ascribes to Berkeley's hypothesis, and which he expresses in that ludicrous and contemptuous manner in which the greatest part of this *philosophical treatise* is written.

“I think,” says he, “it would not be prudent to throw off this belief, if it were in my power. If nature intended to deceive me, and impose upon me by false appearances, and I, by my great cunning and profound logic, have discovered the imposture, prudence would dictate to me in

this case even to put up this indignity done me, as quietly as I could, and not to call her an impostor to her face, lest she should be even with me in another way. For what do I gain by resenting this injury? You ought, at least, not to believe what she says. This, indeed, seems reasonable, if she intends to impose upon me. But what is the consequence? I resolve not to believe my senses. I break my nose against a post that comes in my way; I step into a dirty kennel; and after twenty such wise and rational actions, I am taken up, and clapt into a mad-house. Now I confess I had rather make one of the credulous fools whom nature imposes upon, than of those wise and rational philosophers, who resolve to withhold assent at all this expense." P. 291.

But all this profusion of genuine wit and humour turns upon a gross misrepresentation of Berkeley's theory; and it is really a pity that what is so excellent in its kind should be thrown away, by being misplaced.

This misrepresentation and abuse is exactly the conduct of many divines, who charge one another with actually maintaining the supposed consequences of their respective opinions. But this is no *fair* consequence. Berkeley did not exclude from his system *sensations* and *ideas*, together with matter, the *necessary connexions* that subsist among them, or our *power* over them. He only ascribed to them a *different origin*; so that all the rules of conduct depending upon them are the same on his scheme as on ours. Our philosophical language only is different.

I say there is a post in my way, and I must turn aside, lest I hurt myself by running against it. He, in the same situation, is as apprehensive of danger as myself, though he says he has only the idea of a post before him; for if he do not introduce the idea of avoiding it, he is sensible that he shall experience a very painful sensation, which may bring on other sensations, till death itself ensue. I may smile at his language, but he is consistent with himself, and his fears have as much foundation as mine.

This representation of Berkeley's theory, which is common to Dr. Reid, Dr. Beattie, and Dr. Oswald, and with which they often make themselves and their readers foolishly merry, is exceedingly unjust; but when considered by philosophers, the laugh must rebound upon themselves.

The third reason, as our author is pleased to call it, why he believes in the existence of a material world, or the evidence of his senses, is, that he does not find that he has

been imposed upon by this belief. "I find," says he "that without it I must have perished by a thousand accidents. I find that without it I should have been no wiser now than when I was born," &c. &c. &c. P. 293. But all this goes upon the same misrepresentation with the former argument, and is not, in fact, at all different from it. Besides, a reasonable degree of evidence, which may be attained without this extraordinary, instinctive, absolute, and as our author calls it, *inspired belief*, is just as useful for any real purpose.

SECTION VI.

MR. LOCKE'S *Doctrine not so favourable to BERKELEY'S Theory as DR. REID'S.*

IT is by an evident abuse and perversion of Mr. Locke's doctrine that Dr. Reid pretends that it is favourable to Bishop Berkeley's notion of there being no material world; when, in reality, our author's own principles are much more favourable to that notion than Mr. Locke's.

"If," says he, "impressions and ideas are the only objects of thought, then heaven and earth, and body and spirit, and every thing you please, must signify only impressions and ideas, or they must be words without any meaning." P. 42.

But it was never supposed by Mr. Locke, or any other advocate for ideas, that they were more than the *immediate* object of our thoughts, the things of which we are properly speaking *conscious*, or that we know in the *first instance*. From them, however, we think we can *infer* the real existence of other things, from which those ideas are derived; and then we can reason about those *objects*, as well as about the *ideas* themselves. In fact, ideas being only the signs of external things, we reason about the external things themselves, without ever attending to the ideas which represent them, and even without knowing that there are any such things in the mind, till we come to reflect upon the subject. In like manner, a person may see perfectly without ever thinking of his eyes, or indeed knowing that he has any such organs.

Mr. Locke would not, indeed, pretend to such an absolute *demonstration* of the reality of an external world as Dr. Reid pleads for; but neither is that strict demonstration necessary. It is quite sufficient if the supposition be the easiest hypothesis for explaining the origin of our ideas.

The evidence of it is such that we allow it to be barely possible to doubt of it; but that it is as certain as that two and two make four, we do not pretend.

Strongly attached as our author is to this material world of ours, let us see whether his own system, in other respects, be sufficiently adapted to it. Now it appears to me that his notions of mind, ideas, and external objects, are such as are hardly compatible with one another, that he puts an impassable gulph between them, so as intirely to prevent their connexion or correspondence; which is all that the bishop could wish in favour of his doctrine.

“I take it for granted,” says Dr. Reid, “upon the testimony of common sense, that my mind is a substance, that is, a permanent subject of thought, and my reason convinces me that it is an unextended and indivisible substance; and hence I infer that there cannot be in it any thing that resembles extension.” P. 381. But with equal appearance of truth he might infer that the mind cannot be *affected* by any thing that has extension; for how can any thing act upon another but by means of some common property? Though, therefore, the Divine Being has thought proper to create an external world, it can be of no proper use to give us sensations or ideas. It must be he himself that impresses our minds with the notices of external things, without any *real instrumentality* of their own; so that the external world is quite a superfluity in the creation. If, therefore, the Author of all things be a *wise* being, and have made nothing in vain, we may conclude that this external world, which has been the subject of so much controversy, can have no existence.

If then we wish to preserve this external world, which is very convenient for many purposes, we must take care to entertain notions of mind and ideas more compatible with it than those of Dr. Reid.

Our author's fallacious argument from the want of resemblance between our ideas and external objects leads him into many difficulties. It makes him, in several respects, allow too much to Dr. Berkeley, and to come nearer to him than he is aware. And in spite of his aversion to the union, and of every thing that he can do or say, their common principles will bring them together. “Our sensations,” he says, “have no resemblance to external objects, nor can we discover by our reason any necessary connexion between the existence of the former and that of the latter.” P. 305. “No man,” says he, “can shew by any good

argument, that all our sensations might not have been as they are, though no body or quality of body had ever existed." P. 85. He even says, "that when we consider the different attributes of *mind* and *body*, they seem to be so different, and so unlike, that we can find no handle by which one may lay hold of the other." P. 304.

According to our author, therefore, Berkeley's theory is at least *possible*; and if, as he says, "sensations and ideas in our minds can resemble nothing but sensations and ideas in other minds," p. 117, it may well appear *probable*, that they are transferred (as Malebranche, I think, supposes) immediately from the Divine mind to ours, without any real agency of a material world.* If I could admit Dr. Reid's premises, I think I could hardly help drawing this conclusion from them; especially as nothing can be pleaded for the existence of this same material world, but a mere *unaccountable persuasion* that it *does* exist. This persuasion, Dr. Reid says, arises from a branch of his new common sense. But if I cannot discover or imagine any *end* or *reason* why it should exist, common sense, in its old and familiar acceptation, would tell me that it does not exist at all.

SECTION VII.

A Sophism of MR. HUME'S in pursuance of BERKELEY'S Theory, adopted by DR. REID.

OUR author, struck with a panic fear of scepticism, has been no less misled, and thrown off his guard, by the dangerous sophisms of Mr. Hume, than by the innocent ones of Bishop Berkeley.

"The *new system*," by which he means that of Descartes and Locke, &c. he says, "admits only of the principles of common sense as a first principle, and pretends by strict argumentation to deduce all the rest from it. That our thoughts, our sensations, and every thing of which we are conscious, has a real existence, is admitted in this system as a first principle, but every thing else must be made evident by the light of reason. That the rational issue of this system is scepticism, with regard to every thing excepting the

* His opinion has been described by the terms *seeing all things in God*. A biographer of his own country says of Malebranche, "L'illustre Philosophe compare l'Être Suprême à un miroir, qui représente tous les objets et dans lequel nous regardons continuellement. Dans ce système nos idées découlent du sein du Dieu-même." *Nor. Dict. Hist.* Paris, 1772. IV. p. 299. Father Malebranche, who died in 1715, aged 77, was chiefly opposed by his countryman *Arnauld*. *Id.* I. p. 215.

existence of our ideas, and their necessary relations, which appear upon comparing them, is evident. For ideas being the only objects of thought, and having no existence but when we are conscious of them, it necessarily follows, that there is no object of our thought which can have a continued and permanent existence. Body and spirit, cause and effect, time and space, to which we were wont to ascribe an existence independent of our thought, all are turned out of existence by this short dilemma. Either these things are ideas of sensation or reflection, or they are not. If they are ideas of sensation or reflection, they can have no existence but when we are conscious of them. If they are not ideas of sensation or reflection, they are words without any meaning." P. 369—373.

From this pitiful sophism, advanced by Mr. Hume, and deemed unanswerable by Dr. Reid, have been derived to us all the instinctive principles contained in this curious treatise. For being determined at all adventures to maintain the reality of body and spirit, cause and effect, time and space, &c. and the old theory of the mind not being, in his opinion, sufficient for the purpose, a new one must be found; and if nothing else can be had, still the good things above-mentioned must be retained, though we can say nothing in their favour but *they are so, because they are so*, which is Dr. Reid's common sense, and his short irrefragable argument.

But if, instead of such a *plenary assurance* as only this new common sense promises, he would have been content with a *reasonable degree of evidence* for the reality of all the things above-mentioned, the old hypothesis would have been quite sufficient. It suits every case of sensations and ideas; and, therefore, according to the received rules of philosophizing, has a just claim to be admitted.

That *mind* exists I have the very same reason to believe as I have that *body* exists; since it is only by that name that I distinguish that to which certain powers and properties, of which I am conscious, as *perception, memory, will, &c.* belong.

I am surprised that it should have been so readily admitted, that even ideas have no existence but when we are conscious of them. We have just the same reason to believe the identity of an idea, as that of a tree, that of any external body, or that of our own minds themselves. The idea that I have of my wife or child to-day as much resembles the idea I had of them yesterday, though some hours of

sound sleep have intervened, as my house of to-day resembles my house of yesterday. In this case I only judge by the resemblance of my ideas of it; and if the ideas of my house yesterday and to-day were not the same, I should have no medium by which to prove the identity of the house.

SECTION VIII.

Cases of the Association of Ideas which had escaped the Attention of DR. REID.

I HAVE observed that one of the fallacious mediums of proof which our author makes much use of, in order to prove that we judge and act from original instinct, and not by any acquired power, is our ignorance of the means by which any action is performed, and our having made those judgments, and performed those actions, prior to experience. In the former of these cases he draws *wrong conclusions* from his premises, and in the latter I have no doubt but he is mistaken with respect to the *facts* from which he argues. I shall now present my readers with some instances of both these kinds of fallacy.

“ In some of the voluntary, as well as the involuntary motions, (which Dr. Reid exemplifies by that of the parallel motion of both the eyes, which he says takes place previous to custom, in consequence of some natural instinct) many muscles, he says,” “ which have no material tie or connexion, act in concert, each of them being taught to play its part in exact time and measure; yet we see such actions no less skilfully and regularly performed in children, and those who know not that they have such muscles, than in the most skilful anatomist and physiologist.” P. 187.

From these premises he might just as well have inferred, that we have no such muscles. In fact, our *knowledge* of the particular muscles employed in any motion is of no consequence whatever to the *performance* of it. Nature has sufficiently provided for that in the simple power of association, whereby one idea or motion introduces another associated idea or motion mechanically, and without the exertion of any voluntary power in us: and this is equally the case whether volition was employed in forming the original association, or not.

It was my misfortune to have the idea of darkness, and the ideas of invisible malignant spirits and apparitions very closely connected in my infancy; and to this day, notwith-

standing I believe nothing of those invisible powers, and consequently of their connexion with darkness, or any thing else, I cannot be perfectly easy in every kind of situation in the dark, though I am sensible I gain ground upon this prejudice continually.

I likewise sometimes amuse myself with playing on a flute, which I did not learn very early, so that I have a perfect remembrance that I exerted an express voluntary power every time that I covered any particular hole with my finger. But though I am no great proficient on the instrument, there are some tunes which I now very often play without ever attending to my fingers, or explicitly to the tune. I have even played in concert, and, as I was informed, perfectly in tune, when I have been so absent, that, excepting at the beginning, I did not recollect that I had been playing at all. The same is also frequently the case with persons who are reading.

Now, reasoning as Dr. Reid does, I should conclude that, in this case, no skill, acquired by habit, was employed, but that my fingers were guided by some original instinctive principle; and if I had been able to do this earlier than my remembrance of any thing, I must have said that this was one of those powers, which being latent in the mind, was called forth by proper circumstances. Whereas, I think it more natural to say, that the association between the ideas of certain sounds and the cause of certain motions of the fingers became in time so perfect, that the one introduced the other, without any attention; the intervening express volition, previous to each motion, having been gradually excluded. Facts of this kind demonstrate that the power of association is so great, and so extensive, that even whole trains and very long trains of ideas, are by this means so connected, that if the first take place, all the rest will follow of course, without our giving any attention to them, and even while we are attending to other things, and things of a very different nature.*

“Who,” says our author, “taught all the muscles that are concerned in sucking, in swallowing our food, in breathing, and in several natural expulsions, to act their part in such regular order, and exact measure? It was not custom surely.” P. 188. But in these, and many such instances, it is exceedingly probable that the actions of the muscles were originally *automatic*, having been so placed by our

* See various instances in Dr. Rees's *Cyclopadia*, Philosophy *Mental*. Divis. I.

Maker, that at first they are stimulated, and contract mechanically whenever their action is requisite; and though the muscles themselves have no connexion, their nerves are connected, and they may be so situated, that the same causes of contraction shall necessarily affect several of them at the same time, or in a certain regular succession. In some of the actions to which Dr. Reid refers, we see evident marks of such a mechanical progress; and more knowledge of nature and physiology may lead to the discovery of more of them, provided this system of having recourse at once to *ultimate causes* does not prevent men from giving proper attention to them.

The *faces* are at first expelled involuntarily, and a voluntary power over the muscles, which are subservient to that operation, is evidently acquired gradually. The same is the progress in the action of blowing the nose. Children have not, naturally, the least notion how to do it, any more than they have how to walk. The action of *sucking*, I am also confident, from my own observations, is not natural, but acquired; and so I believe are all the actions which Dr. Reid and others, who judge superficially in these cases, refer to instinct; and with respect to which I would refer him to Dr. Hartley, who has written expressly, and pretty largely upon these subjects.*

With respect to seeing objects erect by means of inverted images, Dr. Reid says, that "the premises from which all mankind are supposed to draw the conclusion, (referring to the Cartesian hypothesis,) never entered into the minds of the far greater part, but are absolutely unknown to them. In order to see objects erect, according to the principles of Kepler, we must previously know that the rays of light come from the object in straight lines, we must know that the rays from the different points of the object cross one another before they form pictures upon the retina, and lastly we must know that these pictures are really inverted. Now though all these things be true, and known to philosophers, yet they are absolutely unknown to the far greatest part of mankind; nor is it possible that they who are absolutely ignorant of them should reason from them, and build conclusions upon them." P. 151.

I do not know how this may affect others, but it really surprises me to hear a man of any understanding reason so very weakly. To *feel* a thing, to be *affected* by it, and to

* See *Observations*, Pt. I. Prop. xlvi. and xlvii.

be influenced and directed in our future conduct by that feeling, certainly cannot require that we should *know* the connexion there is between the objects and our preceptions of them, but simply that there *be* that connexion. They who are the most ignorant of the laws of vision are nevertheless *subject* to them; so that their retinas, optic nerves, brains and minds, are differently affected in consequence of the rays of light coming in straight lines, crossing one another before they reach the retina; and pictures are actually formed there, whether we know of them or not. All men, even the most ignorant, find by experience which way they must turn their heads and eyes to look for any object by which they are impressed; and these associations are so frequent, that we pass immediately and mechanically, from the one to the other; so that the moment we perceive an object we throw our heads and direct our eyes into the most proper position for the distinct view of it. If, for this purpose, we find that we must turn our heads and eyes upwards, we say the object is above us; but if we must turn them downwards, we say it is below us, without knowing any thing farther about the matter.

SECTION IX.

Concessions of DR. REID, and other Circumstances, which might have led him to have recourse to the ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS, rather than to his INSTINCTIVE PRINCIPLES.

THOUGH it is apparent, from the whole of Dr. Reid's treatise, that he has given very little attention to the doctrine of the *association of ideas*, (far less than its obvious importance demanded,) yet, in some cases, it could not possibly escape his notice; and he has expressed himself in such a manner with respect to some of them, as makes me wonder that he did not see that more use might be made of it, and that the phenomena would admit of a very easy explanation, without having recourse to his instinctive principles; which ought to have been kept for great emergencies only, *nodi Deo vindice digni*.

I am particularly surprised that Dr. Reid should hesitate to acknowledge that our judgment of the unity of an object seen with both eyes is acquired, when he owns that we do acquire a judgment which appears to me to be exactly similar to it.

He says, that "Dr. Smith* justly attributes to custom

* "Compleat System of Optics, by Dr. Robert Smith, 2 vols. 4to. Camb. 1738."

that well-known fallacy in vision, whereby a button pressed with two opposite sides of two contiguous fingers, laid across, is felt double." He adds that, "as custom produces this phenomenon, so a contrary custom destroys it. For if a man frequently accustoms himself to feel the button with his fingers across, it will at last be felt single, as I have found by experience." P. 363. Now why may not custom do the same thing with respect to vision? It is evident, from these similar facts, that it is within the *power* of custom, and of the association of ideas to do it. I can see no more occasion for *naturally corresponding points* of the retina, than for naturally corresponding places in the fingers.

But he says, "If single vision is the effect of custom, it must appear very strange that not one instance has been found of a person who had acquired the habit of seeing objects single with both eyes, while they were directed in any other manner," p. 261, viz. than so that the centres correspond. But are not all our eyes similar, and are they not all exposed to similar influences; and what can result from this but uniformity in our rules of judging by their affections?

Our author allows that, "although it appears to be by natural instinct that both eyes are always turned the same way, there is still some latitude left for custom. Nature has wisely left us the power of varying the parallelism of the eyes a little, so that we can direct them to the same point, whether remote or near. This, no doubt, is learned by custom, and accordingly we see that it is a long time before children get this habit in perfection." P. 188. But, according to Dr. Reid's general rule, we ought to have referred this case also to original instinct, because we are possessed of this power prior to any experience that we can remember, and we are not conscious of the means by which we exert it, or indeed know that we do any such thing at all. Previous to reflection, we imagine that we have simply a power of seeing distinctly at different distances. We are conscious of nothing farther; and therefore, according to this new mode of philosophizing, we may reasonably acquiesce in the fact, and call the power original and instinctive; in other words, one of the many branches of the new common sense.

"Though we are not conscious," says Dr. Reid, "of the motions we perform in order to fit the eyes to the distance of objects, we are conscious of the effort employed in producing these motions, and probably have some sensation

which accompanies them, to which we give as little attention as to other sensations." P. 310. But unless the distance be considerable, we are not conscious of using any effort at all. Besides, according to this new mode of reasoning, how can the mind employ the muscles that are requisite to make this effort, when it has no knowledge of them, or indeed of the nature and mode of action of any muscle whatever?

As our author generally refers that to instinct which has been acquired by experience and the association of ideas, so he gives to custom and experience what properly belongs to reasoning and judgment; though here also his own concessions might have led him to a right judgment in the several cases.

"When I hear a certain sound," he says, "I conclude immediately, without reasoning, that a coach passes by. There are no premises by which this conclusion is inferred by any rules of logic. It is the effect of a principle of our nature common to us with the brutes." P. 71. This principle he before called custom or experience.

In what different lights may the same thing be seen by different persons, according as their different hypotheses incline them to regard it! In this very mental operation, or process, in which Dr. Reid can find no trace of reasoning or judgment, I think I see every part of a complete argument; and even that facility, and readiness, in passing from the premises to the conclusion, which argues the very perfection of intellect in the case. For in my idea it is only in consequence of the mode of reasoning being very familiar, that the mind jumps with such rapidity to the final judgment, that it requires some attention to discover the medium of proof. The process, when properly unfolded, is as follows: The sound I now hear is, in all respects, such as I have formerly heard, which appeared to be occasioned by a coach passing by; *ergo*, this is also occasioned by a coach. Into this syllogism it appears to me that the mental process that Dr. Reid mentions may fairly be resolved; and I am surprised he should not have thought so himself, when he expressly allows that "the operations of the mind may be so subtle, that we draw conclusions without ever perceiving that the premises entered the mind." P. 128. This concession, which is a very just and reasonable one, certainly overturns the very foundation of his argument in the preceding case.

In this one case Dr. Oswald, more consistently with the

system, decides against his master. "The supposition," says he, "of a process of reasoning which passes so quickly through the mind as not to be perceived, is altogether arbitrary; and arbitrary suppositions are extremely injurious to truth; and give birth to that multitude of chimerical hypotheses by which mankind have been misled." Vol. II. p. 56.

If a dog can form the same conclusion from the same premises, I would not scruple to say that the dog reasoned as well and as justly as myself. I see no reason to deny brute animals the power of reasoning concerning the objects about which they are conversant. They certainly act as *consequentially*, as if they reasoned.*

Again, upon our author's mistaking a sea-gull for a man on horseback, he says, "the mistake and the correction of it are both so sudden, that we are at a loss whether to call them by the name of judgment, or by that of simple perception." P. 319. In fact, these things run insensibly into one another.

Lastly, he acknowledges that "it must be extremely difficult to distinguish the immediate and natural objects of sight, from the conclusions which we have been accustomed to draw from them." P. 154.

SECTION X.

Of DR. REID'S Principle of Credulity, and his Idea of the Principles of Induction and Analogy.

THAT any man should imagine that a peculiar instinctive principle was necessary to explain our giving credit to the relations of others, appears to me, who have been used to see things in a different light, very extraordinary; and yet this doctrine is advanced by Dr. Reid, and adopted by Dr. Beattie. But really what our author says in favour of it is hardly deserving of the slightest notice.

"If credulity," he says, "were the effect of reasoning and experience, it must grow up and gather strength in the same proportion as reason and experience do. But if it is the

* See p. 21. Mr. Layton, who has been frequently quoted in the second volume, says of Baxter, on his *Dying Thoughts*, 1688, p. 38, "Our author is so moved with the considerations, as he there says, 'that, in their own low concerns, a fox or a dog, nay, even an ass or a goose, have such actions as we know not well how to ascribe to any thing below some kind of reasoning, or perception of the same importance.' Whence he infers, that the difference betwixt men and beasts is rather in the objects and work of our reason, than in our reason itself as such; and that the old difference between man and beast in the word *rationale* should be changed into *religiosum*."—*Search after Souls*, 1691, p. 41.

gift of nature, it will be the strongest in childhood, and limited and restrained by experience; and the most superficial view of human life shews that this last is really the case, and not the first." P. 340.

This reasoning is exceedingly fallacious. It is a long time before a child hears any thing but truth, and therefore it can *expect* nothing else. The contrary would be absolutely miraculous. Falsehood is a *new circumstance*, which he likewise comes to expect in proportion as he has been taught by experience to expect it. What evidence can we possibly have of any thing being necessarily connected with experience and derived from it, besides its never being prior to it, always consequent upon it, and exactly in proportion to it?

I shall now consider what our author says of the nature of reasoning by *induction* and *analogy*. "If," says he, "a certain degree of cold freezes water to-day, and has been known to do so in all time past, we have no doubt but the same degree of cold will freeze water to-morrow, or a year hence. When I compare the idea of cold with that of water hardened into a transparent solid body, I can perceive no connexion between them. No man can shew the one to be the necessary effect of the other. No man can give a shadow of a reason why nature has conjoined them. But do we not learn that conjunction from experience? True, experience informs us that they have been conjoined in time past, but no man ever had any experience of what is future; and this is the very question to be resolved. How come we to believe that the future will be like the past? Children and idiots have the belief of the continuance of the present course of nature as soon as they know that fire will burn them. It must, therefore, be the effect of instinct, not of reason." P. 340.

But experience does a great deal more than Dr. Reid here supposes. It not only informs us that cold and freezing have been conjoined in time past, but also that what is now time *past*, was once *future*; and, therefore, that there is no more reason to suspect that cold will not freeze water now, than there was to doubt yesterday that it would freeze it to-day. It is only puzzling the question to consider time as *past* or *future* in this case. We also find by experience that we have not hitherto been deceived in our expectation that the future will be like the past in former instances, and therefore cannot have any suspicion of being deceived in a similar expectation in other instances. It is really astonish-

ing that any man should ask the question that Dr. Reid does here, "How came we to believe that the future will be like the past? It is certainly sufficient to say, in answer to this, Have we not always found it to be so; and, therefore, how can we suspect the contrary? Though no man has had any experience of what *is* future, every man has had experience of what *was* future. Every step that I take among this writer's sophisms raises my astonishment higher than before.

He farther says, "If any reader should imagine that the inductive principle may be resolved into what philosophers usually call association of ideas, let him observe that by this principle natural signs are not associated with ideas only, but with the belief of the things signified. Now this can with no propriety be called an association of ideas, unless ideas and belief be one and the same thing." P. 347.

This appears to me to be a mere quibble; for not only may *ideas*, properly so called, but every thing that is *mental*, as *belief*, and every other operation or affection of the mind, and even the immediate cause of muscular motion, be the subject of association, as we see it to be in fact. Not to say that *belief*, as Dr. Hartley has explained it, consists of ideas, and is, in fact, nothing but a complex idea, or feeling.

I could have had no conception that a professed enemy to scepticism, as Dr. Reid is, should himself be so sceptical as he is with respect to many of the most uncontroverted maxims of philosophy. But, indeed, it is no uncommon thing to charge another with our own peculiar failings, and to see a mote in our brother's eye, when we cannot discern a beam in our own. And as scepticism and credulity go hand in hand with unbelievers, so they do with Dr. Reid, Where all the rest of the world see the most closely connected chain of reasoning, he is always ready to suspect that some link is wanting, and as ready to supply the imaginary defect, not with another link, but with something that is no proper part of a chain, but some invisible power to keep the two parts together.

He is so eager to find *arbitrary connexions* between objects and sensations, and between sensations and judgment, that he sometimes overlooks the most necessary connexions of things. He says, that "the material impression upon the retina, by means of the rays of light, suggests colour, and the position of some external object; but no man can give a reason why the same material impression might not have

suggested sound, or smell, or either of these, along with the position of the object. And since there is no necessary connexion between these two things, it might, if it had so pleased our Creator, have suggested one of them without the other." P. 163. But, it is obvious to remark, that then *rays of light* must not have been made use of, for these *necessarily* suggest both colour and form.

SECTION XI.

Of the Natural Signs of the Passions.

ONE would think that a man must never have heard of the general principle of the *association of ideas*, who could possibly take it into his head that certain features, modulations of the voice, and attitudes of the body, require any other principle, in order to suggest the idea and belief of certain thoughts, purposes, and dispositions of mind. Dr. Reid indeed asserts, in proof of this, that "an infant may be put into a fright by an angry countenance, and soothed again by smiles and blandishments." P. 89. Now I have had children of my own, and have made many observations and experiments of this kind upon them, and upon this authority I do not hesitate absolutely to deny the fact with respect to them; and I have no doubt but the same is the case with respect to all other infants; unless those of Dr. Reid should be as different from mine as are our notions of human nature. But nature, I believe, is pretty uniform in her operations and productions, how differently soever we may conceive of them.

Dr. Reid talks of an *infant* being put into a fright. On the contrary, I assert that an infant (unless by an infant he should mean a child who has a good deal of experience, and of course has made many observations on the connexions of things) is absolutely incapable of terror. I am positive that no child ever shewed the least symptom of fear or apprehension, till he had actually received hurts, and had felt pain; and that children have no fear of any particular person or thing, but in consequence of some connexion between that person or thing and the pain they have felt.

If any instinct of this kind was more necessary than another, it would be the *dread of fire*. But every body must have observed that infants shew no sign of any such thing; for they will as readily put their finger to the flame of a candle as to any thing else, till they have been burned.

But after some painful experience of this kind their dread of fire becomes one of Dr. Reid's original instinctive principles, and it is as quick and as effectual in its operations as the very best of them.

I, moreover, do not hesitate to say, that if it were possible always to beat and terrify a child with a placid countenance, so as never to assume that appearance but in those circumstances, and always to soothe him with what we call an angry countenance, this natural and necessary connexion of ideas that Dr. Reid talks of would be reversed, and we should see the child frightened with a smile, and delighted with a frown.

In fact, there is no more reason to believe that a child is naturally afraid of a frown, than he is afraid of being in the dark; and of this children certainly discover no sign, till they have either found something disagreeable to them in the dark, or have been told that there is something dreadful in it.

SECTION XII.

Of the Judgment we form concerning the Seat of Pain.

It also appears to me that a man must be strangely prepossessed in favour of instinctive principles, who should think of having recourse to them for distinguishing the parts of our bodies affected with particular pleasures or pains, when the case is so easily explained by the general laws of association, aided by experience.

“The sensation of pain,” Dr. Reid says, “is no doubt in the mind, and cannot be said to have any relation, from its own nature, to any part of the body. But this sensation by our constitution gives a perception of some particular part of our body whose disorder causes the uneasy sensation. If it were not so, a man who never before felt either the gout or tooth ache, when he is first seized with the gout in his toe might mistake it for the tooth ache.” P. 209.

Now this, I believe, would be the case if a man had never before had any sensation of any kind, either in his toe or in his tooth. For though Dr. Reid says that judgments of this kind are antecedent to all experience, I am positive he can have no authority from fact, for the assertion, or for believing that an infant can distinguish the seat of any sensation, or so much as know to which of his organs to refer any of them, the first time that they are perceived.

Indeed, there is no sort of *occasion* for any such early knowledge of this kind; for though the very first time that a child should make use of his ears or nose, he should not know which of them it was that was affected by a smell or a sound, he would soon acquire that knowledge by experience; finding himself relieved by stopping his nose when he perceived a disagreeable smell, and by stopping his ears when he perceived a disagreeable sound.

In the same manner in which we learn to refer the several sensations to their proper organs, we learn to refer pains and impressions of all kinds to the places from which the nerves convey them. If Dr. Reid has ever made observations upon children, he must have observed that they do this in a very imperfect manner, making many mistakes, and growing more perfect in the exercise by degrees.

Even men cannot accurately distinguish the part of the body affected with pain without the assistance of sight, in those parts which have not been the seat of any very distinguishable sensation. Let the experiment be made by pricking the part, and requiring the person to put the tip of his finger exactly upon it, when he is blindfolded.

Of the seat of *internal pains*, mankind in general have very little knowledge. But in this respect also men improve by observation and experience, and those who have had the most experience have the most accurate knowledge of this kind, as is the case of all other knowledge acquired by experience. Let Dr. Reid apply to this case his own observations concerning the sense of credulity.

From the whole of Dr. Reid's reasoning on these subjects, one would think that he had never heard of such things as *nerves* proceeding from all the different parts of the body to the brain, all appropriated to their respective uses, such as the optic nerves, the auditory nerves, the olfactory nerves, each of which conveys sensations of different kinds, entering the brain at different places; but that the business of sensation and perception was performed in some strange arbitrary manner without them, or any thing of the kind.

SECTION XIII.

Miscellaneous Observations.

I SHALL close these animadversions on Dr. Reid's performance with a few miscellaneous articles which shew the extreme inattention of our author, in condemning others

for faults of which he himself is guilty, claiming discoveries which have really nothing in them, or making great boasts when he appears to have been exceedingly ignorant with respect to the subject of which he writes, and the history of it.

Dr. Reid joins in the general laugh at Descartes's argument to prove his own existence from an act of his mind, viz. *doubting*. "For he takes his existence for granted in this argument, and proves nothing at all." P. 11. Yet this author himself argues in a manner exactly similar to this of Descartes. "No man," says he, "can conceive or believe smelling to exist of itself without a mind, or something that has the power of smelling." P. 39. "It appears to be an undeniable fact, that, from thought or sensation, all mankind, constantly and invariably, from the first dawning of reflection, do infer a power or faculty of thinking, and a permanent being, or mind, to which that faculty belongs." P. 48. Though, how this is consistent with what he had said just before, viz. that "the belief of our existence precedes all reasoning and experience," I do not see.

Certainly the first thing that the mind attends to is not *itself*, but the things that affect it, or operate upon it. We first perceive some *property* of every thing before we think of the thing itself. Let Dr. Reid, or any other person, say how the existence of the mind must be evidenced, but by its affections or operations. Our author even allows that a person may have existed a considerable time without any power of reflection, and consequently without having an idea of his own existence. In reality we smile at Descartes's argument, not because it is an inconclusive or improper one, but because the thing to be proved is so evident that it needs no proof.

Our author argues largely, p. 135, in favour of the opinion of the vulgar, that colour is a quality of bodies. Of this he makes a great parade, as of some very serious business; but I shall not argue the matter seriously with him, because I take it for granted he has seen optical experiments, and therefore cannot possibly differ from me, except in words. I shall only observe with respect to the subject, that the vulgar are easily brought to acknowledge their mistake, and never fail to express their surprise, as at a real discovery, and what was utterly inconsistent with their former notions of the matter, when they are shewn pieces of white paper assuming all the colours of the rainbow by means of a prism, without any real change in the paper. This has convinced

every person to whom I have ever shewed the experiment, that colour is in the *rays of light*, and not in the body.

“Nothing,” says our author, “shews more clearly our indisposition to attend to visible figure, and visible extension, than this, that, although mathematical reasoning is no less applicable to them than to tangible figure and extension, yet they have entirely escaped the notice of mathematicians.” P. 167.

By visible figure, &c. our author means the projection of the forms of external objects on the concave bottom of the eye. But to what *purpose* would it have been to have taken any pains with the subject, when it can be of no possible *use*, and all that we have really any thing to do with are the properties of the *things* of which these images are merely the *signs*. No man who had any thing serious to attend to, would ever think of it. I do not remember ever to have seen a more egregious piece of solemn trifling than the chapter which our author calls *the geometry of visibles* and his account of the *Idomenians*,* as he terms those imaginary beings who had no ideas of substance but from sight. Besides, our author acknowledges that the figures upon the retina differ exceedingly little from the real figures which they represent.

Another affectation of originality we see in what our author says concerning the idea of *hardness*. “The sensation of hardness,” he says, “is so much unknown, as never to have been the object of thought and reflection, nor to have been honoured with a name in any language. May we not hence conclude that the knowledge of the human faculties is but in its infancy?” P. 83.

Now I see nothing particularly *hard*, to use a pun, in the case of this same idea of hardness. Indeed, it is very rarely that we bestow a name upon the *idea* of any thing. It is very well if the thing itself have got a name; for many are obliged to go without names. But though I shall not take the trouble to look into Mr. Locke for the purpose, I make no doubt but that he, and many others, have mentioned the idea of hardness † among other abstract ideas of much more importance, without confounding it with the hard substance that occasioned the idea. At least Dr. Reid's observation does not strike me as any thing either new, or at all important.

That our author is extremely ignorant of what has been

* “An extract from the travels of *Johannes Rudolphus Anepigraphus, a Rosierucian Philosopher*.” See Reid's *Inquiry*, Ch. vi. Sect. 9, Ed. 6, 1810, pp. 224—231.

† See *Hardness* distinguished from *Solidity*, Hum. Und. B. ii. Ch. iv. Sect. 4.

written by others on the subject of the human mind, is evident, not only from his total silence concerning Dr. Hartley, (whose name, however, appears to have reached Scotland; for his work is quoted with some degree of respect by Dr. Beattie,) but from his gross mistake concerning the hints that Newton and others have dropped on the subject.

“ About the time of Dr. Briggs,” he says, “ the system of the nerves was thought to be a stringed instrument, composed of vibrating chords, each of which had its proper tension and tone.” P. 278. I shall not explain to our author what kind of vibration was supposed to affect the nerves, that I may give him an opportunity of getting a little more knowledge of his subject, by looking into Newton or Hartley himself. But this I will venture to say, that such gross ignorance in a professor of this very subject, in so considerable an university, which has hitherto been distinguished for the real eminence of its professors in that department, is disgraceful to himself and to the university. I will even venture to call upon Dr. Reid to name any writer (that has ever had the least shadow of reputation) who seriously maintained that the system of the nerves does resemble *a stringed instrument, composed of vibrating chords*. If any such hypothesis was ever advanced, I own, it has escaped my notice. The hypothesis of Dr. Briggs* himself, to which our author probably refers, was very different from this.

To treat with contempt, as Dr. Reid does, every hypothesis that has been proposed, and to offer another still more absurd, merely to laugh at it, and to turn the whole subject into ridicule, certainly does not become a philosopher, who means to promote an inquiry into the powers of nature. I can compare Dr. Reid's conduct in this case to nothing but that of the dog in the manger; for he professedly has no knowledge of the subject himself, and does every thing in his power to prevent others from knowing any thing about it, or inquiring into it.

To give my reader an idea of our author's talent for irony, and at the same time to afford him a little respite from metaphysical reasoning, I shall subjoin his account of this new hypothesis of the use of the nerves. After enumerating and laughing at every other hypothesis, he says :

“ These, I think, are all the engines into which the

* Dr. Wm. Briggs, a physician, wrote the *Theory of Vision*, &c. He died in 1704, aged 62. See Ward's *Gresham Professors*, p. 259.

nervous system has been moulded by philosophers, for conveying the images of sensible things from the organ to the sensorium. And for all that we know of the matter, every man may freely choose what he thinks fittest for the purpose; for from fact and experiment no one of them can claim preference to another. Indeed, they all seem so unhandy engines for carrying images, that a man would be tempted to invent a new one.

“ Since, then, a blind man may guess as well in the dark as one that sees, I beg leave to offer another conjecture touching the nervous system, which I hope will answer the purpose as well as those we have mentioned, and which recommends itself by its simplicity. Why may not the optic nerves, for instance, be made up of empty tubes, opening their mouths wide enough to receive the rays of light which form the image upon the retina, and gently conveying them safe, and in their proper order, to the very seat of the soul, until *they flash in her face?** It is easy for an ingenious philosopher to fit the calibre of those empty tubes to the diameter of the particles of light, so as they shall receive no grosser kind of matter. And if these rays should be in danger of mistaking their way, an expedient may also be found to prevent this. For it requires no more than to bestow upon the tubes of the nervous system a peristaltic motion, like that of the alimentary tube.

“ It is a peculiar advantage of this hypothesis, that, although all philosophers believe that the species or images of things are conveyed by the nerves to the soul, yet none of their hypotheses shew how this may be done. For how can the images of sound, taste, smell, colour, figure and all sensible qualities, be made out of the vibrations of musical chords, or the undulation of animal spirits or of æther? We ought not to suppose means inadequate to the end. Is it not as philosophical, and more intelligible, to conceive, that as the stomach receives its food, so the soul receives her images by a kind of nervous deglutition? I might add, that we need only continue this peristaltic motion of the nervous tubes from the sensorium to the extremities of the nerves that serve the muscles, in order to account for muscular motion.

“ Thus nature will be consonant to herself, and as sensation will be the conveyance of the ideal aliment to the mind, so muscular motion will be the expulsion of the recremen-

* A very expressive and elegant phrase! (P.)

titious part of it. For who can deny that the images of things conveyed by sensation may, after due concoction, become fit to be thrown off by muscular motion? I only give hints of these things to the ingenious, hoping, that in time this hypothesis may be wrought up into a system, as truly philosophical as that of animal spirits, or the vibration of nervous fibres. To be serious"——P. 278, &c.

To be serious then. By some persons all this may be thought very ingenious and clever, the irony delicate, and the expression elegant. But while some laugh *with* the writer, others may be more disposed to laugh *at* him, both for his ignorance and his buffoonery. I shall only say, that if I have the least notion of what the true *spirit of philosophy* is, this is the very reverse of it; and that such a mode of writing ought to be treated with indignation and contempt.

Our author's *conclusion*, as well as his *dedication*, which, though printed first, supposes the book to have been written before it, shews a persuasion of his having done great things, though his style is unlike that of Horace or Ovid, *Jamque Opus exegi*——He imagined, I suppose, that he had thrown many *new* lights upon the subject of human nature, by throwing down the *old* ones erected by Descartes and Locke.

"I intended to have examined more particularly and fully this doctrine of the existence of ideas, or images of things in the mind, and likewise another doctrine which is founded upon it, to wit, that judgment or belief is nothing but a perception of the agreement or disagreement of our ideas; but having already shewn that the operations of the mind, which we have examined, give no countenance to either of these doctrines, and in many things contradict them, I have thought it proper to drop this part of my design. It may be executed with more advantage, if it is at all necessary, after inquiring into some other powers of the human understanding.

"Although we have examined only the five senses and the principles of the human mind which are employed about them, or such as have fallen in our way in the course of this examination, we shall leave the further prosecution of this inquiry to future deliberation. The powers of memory, of imagination, of taste, of reasoning, of moral perception, the will, the passions, the affections, and all the active powers of the soul, present a vast and boundless field of philosophical disquisition, which the author of this inquiry is far from thinking himself able to survey with accuracy. Many

authors of ingenuity have made excursions into this vast territory, and have communicated useful observations, but there is reason to believe that those who have pretended to give us a map of the whole, have satisfied themselves with a very inaccurate and incomplete survey."

Then speaking of what Galileo and Newton have done in the natural world, he adds, "Ambitious of following such great examples, with unequal steps, alas, and unequal force, we have attempted an inquiry only into one little corner of the human mind, that corner which seems to be most exposed to vulgar observation, and to be most easily comprehended; and yet, if we have delineated it justly, it must be acknowledged that the accounts heretofore given of it were very lame and wide of the truth."

The subjects our author here speaks of do certainly present a wide field of philosophical disquisition; and if so many new and important truths have occurred to our *philosopher and guide* in the examination of the five senses only, this *small corner of the human mind*, what may we not expect from his farther progress? which I hope the learned Bengeli will not fail to relate. Instinctive principles will then be as common and as cheap—but I forget the proverb—and as many distinct independent laws of nature will be found in this *microcosm* of man only, as have by others been thought necessary for the system of the universe. But what an idea must this author and his admirers have of the laws of nature!

Should another genius arise, and discover as many new laws in the system of *matter*, as Dr. Reid has in the system of *mind*, we should be so bewildered and confounded as hardly to retain the use of those five senses about which our author has taken so much elaborate pains. But I hope our knowledge of this part of nature is too far advanced to suffer ourselves to be so much bewildered and puzzled, as it seems the inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland have hitherto been, with the ingenious speculations of Dr. Reid.

Remarks

ON

DR. BEATTIE'S ESSAY

ON THE

NATURE AND IMMUTABILITY OF TRUTH.

THE

INTRODUCTION.

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HAVING animadverted so largely upon Dr. Reid's performance, I shall have the less to say with respect to that of Dr. Beattie, who adopts his general system of *instinctive principles of truth*, and discovers too much of his spirit and manner, which is exceedingly decisive, and insolent to those who think differently from himself; and he even exceeds Dr. Reid, in throwing an odium upon those whose sentiments he is willing to decry, by ascribing to them dangerous and frightful consequences, with which they are far from being justly chargeable.

I believe, however, that Dr. Beattie wrote his *Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth** with the very best intention in the world; and that it was nothing but his zeal in the most excellent cause, that of religion, which has betrayed him into these rash censures, and into a mode of reasoning which I cannot help thinking to be very preju-

* The *Essay* first appeared in 1770, and was rewarded with a "royal pension of £200, obtained through the influence of Lord Mansfield." In 1777 "a new edition was published by subscription, in which it received some corrections and a modification of some of its asperities." Dr. B., whose *Minstrel* and other poems are well known, published, in 1783, "Dissertations, Moral and Critical," and in 1786, "Evidences of the Christian Religion." He died at Aberdeen in 1803, aged 67. See Gen. Biog. Sup. pp. 237—239.

dicial to the cause of that very *truth* which he means to support, and favouring that very *scepticism* which he imagined he was overthrowing.

I believe farther, and I most sincerely rejoice in it, that Dr. Beattie's treatise has done a great deal of good to the cause of religion; and I hope it will still continue to do so, with a great majority of those who are most in danger of being seduced by the sophistry of Mr. Hume and other modern unbelievers; I mean with *superficial thinkers*, who are satisfied with seeing superficial objections answered in a lively, though a superficial manner. Besides, I do think that, in several respects, Dr. Beattie's strictures on Mr. Hume are just; and, therefore, that they will be an useful antidote to the mischief that might be apprehended from his writings.

But there is danger lest other persons of greater penetration, finding that Dr. Beattie argues on fallacious, unphilosophical principles, should reject at once, and without farther examination, all that he has built upon them. With respect to such persons, it may be of importance to shew that religion, though assailed from so many quarters as it has been of late, is under no necessity of taking refuge in such untenable fortresses as Dr. Reid, Dr. Beattie and Dr. Oswald have provided for her; but that she may safely face the enemy on his own ground, opposing argument to argument, and silencing sophistry by rational discussion.

In this opinion I am by no means singular. Many judicious persons, excellent scholars and divines, and whose metaphysical system is very different from mine, think Dr. Beattie's book by no means calculated to serve the cause of truth with philosophical and thinking men; and that it will be doing service to truth and religion to point out the faults and defects of it. And as I believe Dr. Beattie to be a man of candour, I doubt not but he will himself take in good part the following free animadversions. If *truth* be really our object, as it is in the titles of our books, and we be free from any improper bias, we shall rejoice in the detection of error, though it should appear to have sheltered itself under our own roofs. I am very serious when I add, that such a degree of candour and impartiality may be more especially expected of *Christians*, and more especially still, of those who stand forth as champions in the cause of Christianity, which is, at the same time, the cause of the most important truth, and of the most generous and disinterested virtue.

To preserve as much order as I well can in my remarks on Dr. Beattie's performance, I shall first consider his account of the foundation of truth, and then the several particular doctrines that he has built upon it.

SECTION I.

Of DR. BEATTIE'S Account of the Foundation of Truth.

OUR author adopts Dr. Reid's general idea of *common sense*, as the faculty by which we perceive self-evident truth, p. 37, and always considers it as of the nature of a peculiar kind of *instinct*, and very different from Locke's idea of *judgment*, in the first instance, as resulting from comparing our ideas. This I cannot help thinking to be, theoretically speaking, a very fundamental error, affecting the very *essence of truth*, and leading to endless absurdities.

Had these writers assumed, as the elements of their common sense, certain truths which are so plain that no man could doubt of them, (without entering into the ground of our assent to them,) their conduct would have been liable to very little objection. All that could have been said would have been, that, without any necessity, they had made an innovation in the received use of a term. For no person ever denied that there *are* self-evident truths, and that these must be assumed as the foundation of all our reasoning. I never met with any person who did not acknowledge this, or heard of any argumentative treatise that did not go upon the supposition of it. The most rigorous reasoners are mathematicians, and they all begin with laying down certain *axioms*, and *postulata*, which must be admitted without proof, in order to the demonstration of every thing else; and therefore I am really surprised that Dr. Beattie, and Dr. Oswald should take so much pains to prove it. Had the thing been really disputable, they have said enough upon the subject to be quite tiresome.

But if we consider the general tenour of their writings, it will appear that they are saying one thing and really doing another, talking plausibly about the necessity of admitting *axioms in general*, as the foundation of all reasoning, but meaning to recommend *particular positions* as axioms, not as being founded on the perception of the agreement or disagreement of any ideas, which is the great doctrine of Mr. Locke, and which makes truth to depend upon the necessary nature of things, to be *absolute, unchangeable* and *everlasting*;

but merely some unaccountable *instinctive persuasions*, depending upon the arbitrary constitution of our nature, which makes all truth to be a thing that is *relative* to ourselves only, and consequently to be infinitely vague and precarious.

This system admits of no appeal to *reason*, properly considered, which any person might be at liberty to examine and discuss; but, on the contrary, every man is taught to think himself authorized to pronounce decisively upon every question according to his present *feeling* and persuasion, under the notion of its being something original, instinctive, ultimate and uncontrovertible; though, if strictly analyzed, it might appear to be a mere prejudice, the offspring of mistake.

This may appear to some to be, after all, a business of *metaphysics* only, and a refinement of no real importance to mankind; but it is a mistake that has really very serious and alarming consequences; for instead of leading to humility, caution and patience in the investigation of truth, it necessarily inspires conceit, and leads to great arrogance and insolence with respect to our opponents in controversy, as persons defective in their constitution, destitute of common sense, and therefore not to be argued with, but to be treated as idiots or madmen.

These objections affect the *general scheme* and plan of Dr. Beattie and Dr. Oswald. My particular objection to both these writers, as well as to Dr. Reid, is, that they have adopted their elements of knowledge too hastily, and that they have acquiesced in certain maxims, as self-evident truths, and have treated with great insolence and contempt all endeavours to disprove them; though some of these maxims are so far from being self-evident, that in my opinion they are not true, but capable of a satisfactory refutation. At the same time, since no man can pretend to any natural right to fix the principles of faith for another, they teach unbelievers, and by their example *authorize* them, to reject the principles of religion by the same summary and superficial process, as what appear to them to be, at first sight, too absurd and ridiculous to be admitted as true and divine.

Though I shall never quarrel with any man for the mere use of his terms, since they are, in their own nature, nothing more than the arbitrary signs of ideas, I cannot help thinking that the inconveniencies above-mentioned may attend even the calling of that faculty by which we discern truth by the name of *sense*. By this term philosophers in general have hitherto denominated those faculties in consequence of

which we are liable to *feelings* relative to *ourselves* only, and from which they have not pretended to draw any conclusions concerning the *nature of things*; whereas truth is a thing not relative, but *absolute* and real, independent of any relation to this or that particular being, or this or that order of beings. And I think I can evidently perceive that Dr. Beattie and Dr. Oswald have both been misled by this new application of the term *sense*; having been led by it to consider all truth as an arbitrary thing, relative to particular beings, and even particular persons, like the perceptions of any of our external senses. In consequence also of the same fundamental error, after having degraded the judgment to the level of the senses, they naturally consider the senses as entitled to the same respect, which had usually been appropriated to that superior faculty by which we distinguish truth.

“All that we know of truth or falsehood,” says Dr. Beattie, “is that our constitution determines us in some cases to believe, in others to disbelieve; and that to us is truth which we *feel* that we must believe, and that to us is falsehood which we *feel* that we must disbelieve.” P. 196. “If a creature of a different nature from man were to say that snow is black and hot, I should reply, it may possibly have that appearance to your senses, but it has not that appearance to mine. It may therefore, in regard to your faculties, be true; and if so, it ought to constitute a part of your philosophy; but of *my* philosophy it cannot constitute a part, because, in respect of my faculties, it is false, being contrary to fact and experience.” P. 209.

To me this doctrine appears to be entirely subversive of all truth; since, speaking agreeably to it, all that we can ever say is, that certain maxims and propositions appear to be true with respect to *ourselves*, but how they may appear to *others* we cannot tell; and as to what they are in *themselves*, which alone is, strictly speaking, the *truth*, we have no means of judging at all; for we can only see with our own eyes, and judge by our own faculties, or rather feelings.

If this be not a fair conclusion from Dr. Beattie's representation of the principles of truth and common sense, I am not capable of drawing a conclusion. I am sure I do not mean to be uncandid. I hope, indeed, and believe, that he will be staggered when he attends to the unavoidable consequences of his doctrine, so very unsuitable to a discourse on the *immutability of truth*; because it is almost the very thing that he objects to Mr. Locke, whose principles he

thinks *erroneous* and *dangerous*, p. 16; for, speaking of one part of his philosophy, he says, "If it be true, it would go near to prove that truth and virtue have at least nothing permanent in their nature, but may be as changeable as the inclinations and capacities of men." P. 239.

All the reason that our author assigns why the principle by which we judge of self-evident truth may be called a *sense* is, that such judgments are instantaneous and irresistible, like impressions made upon the mind by means of the external senses. "The term *common sense*," he says, "has, in modern times, been used by philosophers to signify that power of the mind which perceives truth or commands belief, not by progressive argumentation, but by an instantaneous, instinctive and irresistible impulse, derived neither from education nor from habit, but from nature, acting independently on our will, whenever the object is presented, according to an established law, and therefore not improperly called sense; and acting in a similar manner upon all, or, at least, upon a great majority of mankind, and therefore properly called *common sense*." P. 45.

But should we, out of complaisance, admit that what has hitherto been called *judgment* may be called *sense*, it is making too free with the established signification of words to call it *common sense*, which in common acceptance has long been appropriated to a very different thing, viz. to that capacity for judging of common things that persons of middling capacities are capable of.

If the determinations of this new principle of common sense be so instantaneous, irresistible and infallible as Dr. Reid, Dr. Beattie and Dr. Oswald represent, how can we account for all the error there is in the world? When we see how miserably bewildered the bulk of mankind are, one would think that this principle of truth is like the god Baal, who, when he was most wanted, and ought to have made a point of being present, to assist his worshippers, was asleep, or on a journey, or engaged some other way. See 1 Kings, xviii.

If we apply to Dr. Beattie in this great difficulty, he tells us, that "common sense may languish for want of exercise, as in the case of a person who, blinded by a false religion, has been all his days accustomed to distrust his own sentiments, and to receive his creed from the mouth of a priest." P. 49.

But if this languishing of common sense resembles the languishing of any other sense, I should expect that the

consequence would be our seeing very dimly and obscurely, as with a weak eye, only bearing to be used with great tenderness and caution. But though a weak eye cannot bear a strong light, and only admits of faint and indistinct vision, yet it exhibits all things on which it is exercised truly, and in their just proportions, or without distorting one thing more than another. If a man be so blind that he cannot see a house, neither can he see a tree, or any other object. I should, therefore, expect that, if a man was so totally deprived of common sense, as not to be able to distinguish truth from falsehood in one case, he would be equally incapable of distinguishing it in another; and, therefore, that the man who should put implicit faith in his priest would, if he wanted common sense, be equally absurd in his whole conduct, which is far from being the case; for in other respects no men think or act more rationally than the Roman Catholics. How then do the affections of this common sense resemble those of the other senses? The analogy appears to me to fail most essentially. It does not at all resemble the eye, the ear, the nose, or any other of the organs of sense.

Since Dr. Beattie writes with a practical, and indeed an excellent design, let us consider, for a moment, the *practical influence* of this new, and to me strange doctrine. A man who finds that he thinks differently from the rest of mankind, with respect to any of the principles which Dr. Beattie shall be pleased to call *primary* and *fundamental* (suppose the doctrine of *human liberty*, or take the case of the poor priest-ridden mortal above-mentioned, who may with equal right consider his own principles as fundamental), if he believes, with myself, and those who have not yet heard of this new principle of faith, that all just knowledge results from a just view of things and a comparing of his ideas, and that a habit of just thinking may be acquired by a course of observation and reflection duly persisted in; and, consequently, that, if he be in an error, it is in his own power to set himself right (for that, naturally, he has as good a power of distinguishing truth from falsehood as his neighbours); a man, I say, who has these views of the nature of truth, and of the faculties by which it is perceived, is encouraged to indulge a freedom of inquiry, and to persist in his investigations, though they should prove very laborious.

Whereas, if he should have read the writers on whom I am animadverting, or Dr. Beattie only, and, in consequence of it, be persuaded that he perceives all fundamental truths

by something that is of the nature of a *sense*, he may, indeed, see reason to look at any principle pretty attentively; but if, after giving this kind of attention to it, he perceives that he is not affected in that *instantaneous, instinctive and irresistible* manner that Dr. Reid describes, he necessarily concludes that either it was not truth that he was contemplating, or that he is not one of that *great majority of mankind* who are endued with the faculty that is necessary to the perception of it. But whichever of these he concludes to be the case, he remits his attention, satisfied that his view of the object is constitutional and irremediable.

And certainly his determination would be sufficiently countenanced by Dr. Beattie, who says, that "common sense, which, like other instincts, arrives at maturity with almost no care of ours, cannot possibly be taught to one who wants it." P. 47. "You may," says our author, "make him remember a set of first principles, and say that he believes them, even as you may teach one born blind to speak intelligibly of colours and light; but neither to the one nor to the other can you, by any means, communicate the *peculiar feeling* which accompanies the operation of that faculty which nature has denied him. A man defective in common sense may acquire learning, he may even possess genius to a certain degree, but the defect of nature he never can supply. A peculiar modification of scepticism, or credulity, or levity, will to the end of his life distinguish him from other men." Ib. Then, after mentioning the different *degrees* in which different men are possessed of common sense, he says, "These diversities are, I think, to be referred, for the most part, to the original constitution of the mind, which it is not in the power of education to alter." P. 48.

Dr. Beattie may imagine, and I believe does, that he is serving *the cause of God and of truth* by such views of things as these; but it appears very clearly to me, who have no pretensions to the common sense that he describes, that, as far as speculation can go, he is subverting it all.

I am aware that Dr. Beattie will reply, that this doctrine of his concerning common sense is only to be applied to *first principles*. But who is to tell us what are first principles? The man who has from his infancy laboured under a mistake, will imagine his most fundamental errors to be first principles. With a Papist, implicit confidence in his priest, or holy church, which he takes for granted is the same thing with faith in God and the Bible, acts upon his mind as *instantaneously and irresistibly* as any of Dr. Beattie's

first principles; and this principle in the poor Papist cannot appear more absurd to Dr. Beattie, than some of Dr. Beattie's first principles appear to me.

Now who is to help us in this case? Must we, in good earnest, put the question to the vote, being previously assured, by Dr. Beattie, p. 45, that a *great majority* of mankind are possessed of the true principles of common sense, and therefore cannot mistake concerning it? But I appeal from a tribunal whose decisions have been so unsteady, and may change again; and think that nothing is so likely to serve our purpose, and the purpose of truth, as a persuasion the very reverse of Dr. Beattie's, viz. that the faculty by which we perceive truth is the farthest possible from any thing that resembles a *sense*; that every misfortune we do, or may labour under, with respect to *judgment*, is naturally remediable; and consequently that it depends upon ourselves, as far as any thing of practical importance is concerned, to be as wise, judicious and knowing as any other person whatsoever.

Dr. Beattie seems to place the same confidence in his external senses that Dr. Reid does, which is much more than I can persuade myself to put in them; but with respect to the various instinctive principles of truth which our Maker has arbitrarily annexed to them, Dr. Beattie speaks sometimes with more caution; as if he had now and then some secret distrust of them. I shall, with this view, quote what he says of the foundation of reasoning by induction and analogy.

"The mind," he says, "by its own innate force, and in consequence of an irresistible and instinctive impulse, infers the future from the past, without the intervention of any argument. The sea has ebbcd and flowed twice every day in time past, therefore the sea will continue to ebb and flow every day in time to come, is by no means a logical deduction of a conclusion from premises." P. 122. "Reasoning from analogy, when traced up to its source, will be found in like manner to terminate in a certain instinctive propensity, implanted in us by our Maker, which leads us to expect that similar causes, in similar circumstances, do probably produce, or will produce, similar effects." P. 126. "A child who has been burned with a red-hot coal is careful to avoid touching the flame of a candle. And it deserves to be remarked, that the judgment a child forms on these occasions may arise, and often does arise, previous to education and reasoning, and while experience is very limited." P. 128.

It is in this last clause that Dr. Beattie shews his caution, and betrays his suspicion of these new principles. He does not choose to say that children judge in this manner with *no experience at all*, which, if the judgment was properly *instinctive*, ought to be the case, (but which happens to be too notoriously contrary to fact,) but only *when their experience is very limited*. But if they had had any experience at all, it cannot be said with truth that they were without *education*; for experience is the school of nature; and in this course of education we make much use of our *reason*, and the power of *association* is very busily employed.

By the simple principle of the association of ideas, the idea of the flame of a candle is intimately associated with the idea of the pain which it has occasioned, insomuch, that ever after they are considered in the closest connexion, as it were the inseparable parts of the same thing; so that whatever recalls the idea of the one recalls likewise the idea of the other, and a dread of the one cannot be separated from a dread of the other.

Supposing, therefore, that the child has an aversion to pain, and that he is master of those actions by which it is avoided, he will mechanically, and instantly, draw back his hand from the near approach of a candle, without any intermediate idea whatever.

As to Dr. Reid's general principle, that *the laws of nature will continue*, (with which he supposes that the mind of a child is inspired) or, as Dr. Beattie here expresses it, that *similar causes, in similar circumstances, will probably produce similar effects*, as a foundation for its concluding, that a candle which has burned him once will burn him again, it is not certainly at all probable that he has the least notion of any such thing. It is a long time before a child attains to any such *general knowledge*. Particular facts are first discovered, and general propositions, or principles, are formed from them. But according to the hypothesis of Dr. Reid and Dr. Beattie, the mind is, prior to any experience, either furnished with the general maxims, that there are laws of nature, and that these laws will continue, or else with a thousand particular independent maxims, comprehended under that general one. But these provisions are equally unnecessary, when the simple law of association of ideas so easily supplies the place of them both.

SECTION II.

Of the Testimony of the Senses.

THROUGH a degree of fairness and ingenuousness, for which very shrewd disputants are not always remarkable, Dr. Beattie is no less unfortunate with respect to that part of his system which relates to the *external senses*, than we have seen him to be in the instances mentioned in the last section. He speaks in general with more confidence than Dr. Reid himself does of his faith in his eyes, ears, nose, taste and feeling, (though it is possible that his writing with more strength and eloquence upon this subject may only proceed from his having a greater command of language, and not from a stronger conviction of mind,) but then he inadvertently subjoins such *concessions*, and *exceptions*, as, in fact, overturn all his preceding doctrine, and throw us back into all our former distrust of our senses.

“ Upon the evidence of the external senses,” he says, “ hearing, seeing, touching, tasting and smelling, is founded all our knowledge of natural or material things; and therefore all conclusions in natural philosophy, and all those prudential considerations which regard the preservation of our body, as it is liable to be affected by the sensible qualities of matter, must finally be resolved into this principle, that *things are as our senses represent them*. When I touch a stone, I am conscious of a sensation, or feeling in my mind, accompanied with an irresistible belief, that this sensation is excited by the application of an external and hard substance to some part of my body. This belief as certainly accompanies the sensation, as the sensation accompanies the application of the stone to my organs of sense.” P. 63. “ I am as certain that at present I am in a house, and not in the open air, that I see by the light of the sun, and not by the light of a candle, that I feel the ground hard under my feet, and that I lean against a real material table, as I can be of the truth of any geometrical axiom, or of any demonstrated conclusion. Nay I am as certain of all this as of my own existence. But I cannot prove by argument that there is such a thing as matter in the world, or even that I myself exist.” P. 65.

All this is perfectly agreeable to the new system, and an extremely short, easy and convenient one it certainly is, for those who are not disposed to take much pains in the

investigation of truth ; but it is certainly not agreeable to nature and fact ; and as the old proverb says, *Naturam furca licet expellas, tamen usque recurret* ; so here Dr. Beattie could not help saying, " A distempered sense, as well as an impure and unequal medium, may doubtless communicate false sensations ; but we are never imposed upon by them *in matters of consequence.*" P. 189.

Now I can easily conceive how all this might have been said by Dr. Beattie very innocently, and without the least suspicion that any caviller, like myself, could possibly make any use of it to his prejudice ; when, in fact, it effectually overturns his whole system of *implicit confidence in his senses*, as the sure guides to truth. For certainly, if they be capable of deceiving us *at all*, they are no more to be trusted without some guard of a different nature. The man who is under the deception has no help *from them* to undeceive himself. Thus if all mankind had jaundiced eyes, they must have been under a necessity of concluding that every object was tinged with yellow ; and indeed, according to this new system, as explained before, it would then have been so not in appearance only, but also in *reality* ; nay this would have begun to be true, when only a *great majority of mankind* had their eyes thus affected.

Our author is, farther, so very much off his guard upon this unfortunate subject, as to allow that some of our senses give us information that is contradicted by the testimony of others, which certainly very ill agrees with his idea of them as infallible guides to truth.

" Of magnitude," he says, " we judge both by sight and touch. With regard to magnitude we must, therefore, believe either our sight, or our touch, or both, or neither. To believe neither is impossible. If we believe both, we shall contradict ourselves," p. 179, and at length he determines in favour of the touch. If we ask why we believe the touch rather than the sight, he says, " it is instinct, and not reason, that determines me to believe my touch." P. 177.

But did not he that made the sense of feeling make the sense of sight also ; and if, as our author pretends, he had designed that our senses, *as such*, should give us true information concerning external objects, would he not have provided that their testimony should have been in all respects perfectly consistent ? Besides, it is obvious to remark, that if the eye require to be corrected by the touch, the touch may possibly require to be corrected by something

else. Dr. Beattie may say that the same common sense that bids him believe his touch in preference to his sight, and to correct the evidence of sight by that of touch, assures him that the touch requires no correction whatever. But this can have weight only with those who have faith in this same common sense.

I should be glad to ask Dr. Beattie, and others who admit it as a maxim, that *things are as their senses represent them to be*, what a man of common sense, and altogether without experience, (which indeed can hardly be the case in fact) would say upon looking at a straight stick held obliquely, with half of it under water. Would he not be positive that it was bent in the middle; and would he not have the plain testimony of his eyes for it? If you should take the stick out of the water, and bid him look at it again, and handle it, would he not assert the very reverse of Dr. Beattie's maxim, viz. that his eyes had *imposed* upon him, and that *the thing was not as his senses had represented it?*

Do not the bulk of mankind believe that the earth is at rest, and that the sun, moon and stars have a diurnal revolution; and have they not the testimony of their senses for it? They certainly *think* so. They also all believe (as Dr. Reid himself pretends to believe with them) that colour is a property of bodies,* and yet are easily convinced that it is a mistake.

If, after all, it really be a dictate of this new common sense, that, notwithstanding all this, things still are as our senses represent them to be, I think that in these cases our common sense is in league with our other senses to impose upon us, and therefore that we are justified in excluding it, as well as them, from being the test of truth.

SECTION III.

DR. BEATTIE'S *View of BERKELEY'S Theory.*

IT is curious to observe how much our acquaintance both with truth and error resembles the introduction of the fox to the lion, in the fable of Esop. We grow bolder by degrees, and each encourages his neighbour to go a few steps farther than himself.

The principles both of Dr. Reid and Dr. Beattie lead

* "Colour is a quality of bodies, not a sensation of the mind." *Inquiry*, Ch. vi. Sect. 4, Ed. 6, p. 171.

them to reject Berkeley's hypothesis. Indeed, their whole scheme appears to me to have been, in a great measure, suggested by it; but Dr. Beattie rises greatly upon Dr. Reid in his tone and emphasis upon this occasion. If Dr. Reid conquered and slew his adversary, Dr. Beattie not only conquers, and puts him to death a second time, but tramples upon him. Dr. Reid did not vanquish him till after a pretty hard combat, in which some skill and dexterity in the use of his weapons was requisite; but Dr. Beattie does it at once, without giving him an opportunity of drawing, in his own defence. Hear his own account of their different modes of conducting this controversy.

“Though it be absurd,” says Dr. Beattie, “to attempt a proof of what is self-evident, it is manly and meritorious to confute the objections that sophistry may urge against it. This, with respect to the subject in question, has been done in a decisive and masterly manner by Dr. Reid, who proves that the reasonings of Berkeley and others, concerning primary and secondary qualities, owe all their strength to the ambiguity of words.” P. 290. This, then, is the *manly* and *meritorious* conduct of Dr. Reid; but being only of relative use and importance, and *absurd in itself*, our author takes a different ground, which he immediately describes. “I have proved that though this fundamental error had never been detected, the philosophy of Berkeley is, in its own nature, absurd, because it supposes the original principles of common sense controvertible and fallacious; a supposition repugnant to the genius of the true” (alias the *new*) “philosophy, and which leads to universal credulity or universal scepticism, and consequently to the subversion of knowledge and virtue, and”—but first guess reader, if you can, what follows—“the extermination of the human species.” He even fixes the time, very nearly, in which this calamitous event would take place.

Describing what he imagined would follow if all mankind should, in one instant, be made to believe that matter has no existence, he says, “Doubtless this catastrophe would, according to our metaphysicians, throw a wonderful light on all the parts of knowledge. I pretend not even to guess at the number, extent or quality, of the astonishing discoveries that would then start forth into view. But of this I am certain, that, in *less than a month* after, there could not, without another miracle, be one human creature alive on the face of the earth.” P. 281.

Dr. Reid fairly encounters his enemy, vanquishes, slays

and buries him, all in their proper order; but Dr. Beattie begins at once with the last act of burying, without troubling himself whether he be dead or alive, thinking the act of burying will suffice for all. This is that curious and summary process which Dr. Oswald is taking, to rid the world of all dangerous errors in religion. Without giving himself the unnecessary trouble to argue the matter, except for his own amusement and that of his readers, he only throws himself back in his chair, shuts his eyes, sees them to be absurd, and the delusion vanishes. This is indeed fighting with the spear of Ithuriel, at the touch of which all imposture vanishes.*

I shall quote one passage more from Dr. Beattie on this subject, in which he expresses the nature and fulness of his persuasion concerning the reality of the material world, in a manner that is peculiarly emphatical, and, therefore, must be very satisfactory to men of *taste*, who can feel the beauties of fine writing. "That matter has a real, separate and independent existence, is believed, not because it can be proved by argument, but because the constitution of our nature is such, that we *must* believe it. There is here the same ground of belief, that there is in the following propositions. I exist; whatever is, is; two and two make four. It is absurd, nay it is impossible to believe the contrary." Accordingly, he says, "I have known many who could not answer Berkeley's arguments, I never knew one who believed his doctrine." P. 261.

I find, however, that I have travelled a little farther than Dr. Beattie, for I have met with a very ingenious man who maintained Berkeley's doctrine with great seriousness, and I have known others who have espoused the same opinion. But perhaps Dr. Beattie may have the indulgence of the Welch jury I have heard of, who would not believe a man who confessed himself to be guilty, and fairly acquitted him.

My friend and I used to debate this subject, but for want of being acquainted with the principles of Messrs. Reid, Beattie and Oswald, I was glad to plead for the existence of the material world only as the most probable hypothesis

* The passage in Dr. Oswald, to which I here allude, is so very curious, that I think my reader will not be displeased to see it quoted in a note on this part of my remarks on Dr. Beattie, though he will find it quoted again in its proper place. "A real believer will not despise the well-meant labours of those who have endeavoured to demonstrate the primary truths by reducing their opposites to absurdity; but knows, that, without their help, he can, *by a single thought*, reduce those chimeras to the grossest of all absurdities, namely, to nonsense." P. 255. (P.)

to account for appearances, and never thought of there being the same kind of evidence for it, as of two and two being equal to four. Had I been acquainted with these new principles, I might have saved myself a great deal of trouble; but I am apprehensive that I should hardly have escaped a great deal of *ridicule*; and we ought not to forget that ridicule has been deemed the *test of truth*, as well as this new common sense.* I think with equal reason, and I flatter myself that the reign of this new usurper will not be much longer than that of his predecessor, to whom he is very nearly related.

In this some may think that I only mean to be jocular, but really I am serious. Why was *ridicule* ever thought to be the test of truth, but because the things at which we can laugh were supposed to be so absurd, that their falsehood was self-evident; so that there was no occasion to examine any farther? We were supposed to *feel* them to be false; and what is a *feeling* but the affection of a *sense*? In reality, therefore, this new doctrine of common sense being the standard of truth, is no other than ridicule being the standard of truth. The words are different, but not the things. I should be glad to see so acute a metaphysician as Dr. Reid, so fine a writer as Dr. Beattie, and, to adopt Dr. Beattie's compliment, so *elegant an author* as Dr. Oswald, separately employed to ascertain the precise difference between these two schemes.

In my opinion, the chief difference, besides what I said above, consists in this, that the one may be called the *sense of truth*, and the other the *sense of falsehood*. There is also some doubt whether Shaftesbury was really in earnest in proposing ridicule as the test of truth. Many think that he never could be so absurd. † Whereas, there can be no doubt but that this triumvirate of authors are perfectly serious. There is, however, another difference that will strongly recommend the claims of common sense in preference to those of ridicule, which is, that *this* was advanced in support of infidelity, but *that* in support of religion. But I should think that the greater weight we have to support, the stronger buttresses we should use.

In remarking upon Dr. Reid, I pointed out the inconclu-

* The Second Treatise of Lord Shaftesbury's *Characteristics*, in which he has been supposed to maintain that opinion, is entitled "*Sensus Communis, an Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humour.*"

† See *Treat.* ii. Pt. iv. Dr. Brown, on the *Characteristics*, Ess. i. and Bulkeley's *Vindication*, quoted in *Biog. Brit.* IV. p. 275.

siveness of the consequences he drew from Berkeley's hypothesis. Dr. Beattie says the same things after him, but with considerable improvements in point of diction and energy, and with an air of much greater seriousness with respect to *religion*, which appears to me to have nothing to do in the business. I do not wonder, however, at Dr. Beattie's zeal in the case, when he imagined that so much depended upon it, any more than I do at Don Quixote's heroic enthusiasm, when he mistook inns for castles, a flock of sheep for an army, and a barber's bason for Mambrino's helmet.

"Sure," says our author, "the laws of nature are not such trifles as that it must be a matter of perfect indifference whether we act or think agreeable to them or no." P. 283. I think if I had not apprised my reader of it beforehand, he would not have guessed that, in this solemn sentence, our author had nothing in view but this same innocent theory of Berkeley; and especially if he had not seen, in the preceding quotation, that the very *extermination of the human species* is the consequence of this same scheme; which appears to me to be as complete raving as any thing in Don Quixote himself.

Our author farther says, "Berkeley's doctrine is subversive of man's most important interests, as a moral, intelligent and percipient being. I doubt not," says he, p. 289, "but it may have overcast many of his days with a gloom, which neither the approbation of his conscience, nor the natural serenity of his temper, could entirely dissipate." *Ib.* Now I can see no difficulty in conceiving that I myself might have adopted this opinion, and yet have been very easy, chearful, virtuous, religious and happy, in the full expectation of a restoration to a future life, as real as that which I enjoy at present, and in circumstances infinitely superior. In so very different lights do we sometimes see the same thing, though we are all, at least we all *think* ourselves, possessed of this same infallible standard of truth, *viz. common sense.*

SECTION IV.

DR. BEATTIE'S *Account of the Source of MORAL OBLIGATION, and of the fundamental Principles of Religion.*

HITHERTO, I must acknowledge that I have not always been able to resist the temptation to divert myself with my author's Quixotism. For, serious as he himself has been,

his adventures have sometimes appeared laughable enough to me. But I must now begin to be a little more serious, because I apprehend the consequences are so. For our author, after having made his common sense the *test of truth*, proceeds to make it the standard of *moral obligation*, expressly excluding all reasoning upon the subject.

“They,” says Dr. Beattie, meaning mankind, “believe a certain mode of conduct to be incumbent upon them in certain circumstances, because a notion of duty arises in their mind when they contemplate that conduct in relation to those circumstances. I ought to be grateful for a favour received. Why? Because my conscience tells me so. How do you know that you ought to do that of which your conscience enjoins the performance? I can give no further reason for it, but I *feel* that such is my duty. Here the investigation must stop; or if carried a little farther, it must return to this point. I know that I ought to do what my conscience enjoins, because God is the author of my constitution, and I obey his will when I act according to the principles of my constitution. Why do you obey the will of God? Because it is my duty. How know you that? Because my conscience tells me so,” &c. P. 74.

In any other case, therefore, if a man *feels* that any thing is his duty, or, which is the same thing with respect to himself, if he *thinks* he feels it, he has no occasion to trouble himself with examining into the ground of that feeling. He must follow it without hesitation or reserve. So that even the poor priest-ridden mortal above-mentioned will be justified, if, at the command of his ghostly superior, he murders his heretical neighbour; for had he gone the round of the self-examination described by Dr. Beattie, it would have been like travelling round the world for nothing but to come to the same place from which he set out, viz. *so my conscience dictates*.

Judging in the first and last instance by mere *feeling*, it is impossible to distinguish the injunctions of a *well-informed* from those of an *ill-informed* conscience. Many, I doubt not, have felt as real remorse upon the omission of a superstitious ceremony, and have been as unhappy in consequence of it, as they have ever been for the neglect of the most important moral duty. As, on the other hand, they have felt as real satisfaction after confessing to a priest, and having received his absolution, as others have felt from the consciousness of genuine repentance, or of a well-spent life.

Yea, some, I am persuaded, have felt as perfectly easy at a Portuguese *act of faith*, as if they had been *glorifying God* in any other manner.

Not content with this, Dr. Beattie scruples not to rest all the future hopes and expectations of man, as derived from religion, on the foundation of this same principle of common sense. "Sceptics," says Dr. Beattie, "may wrangle, and mockers may blaspheme; but the pious man knows, by evidence too sublime for their comprehension, that his affections are not misplaced, and that his hopes shall not be disappointed; by evidence which to every sound mind is fully satisfactory, but which to the humble and tender-hearted is altogether overwhelming, irresistible and divine." P. 113.

With whatever feelings Dr. Beattie might compose this paragraph, it strikes me as containing matter that is exceedingly dangerous and alarming; setting aside all reasoning about the fundamental principles of religion, and making way for all the extravagancies of credulity, enthusiasm and mysticism.

The *plenary persuasion* that our religious *affections are not misplaced*, and that our *hopes shall not be disappointed*, evidently supposes the belief of the being, the perfections, and moral attributes of God, and a state of future retribution; and what *kind* of evidence has Dr. Beattie spoken of as *overwhelming* and *irresistible*, but this of common sense; the effects of which he always describes in that style, and to which he had before applied those very epithets, and others of a similar import? And yet this common sense appears to me and to others, who seem to be in our sober senses, to be very insufficient for this purpose; though Dr. Oswald has attempted to prove at large, and in detail, all the particulars which Dr. Beattie only asserts in gross. But I am afraid that, after all his pious pains, the evidence will be found to be what Dr. Beattie here says of it, *too sublime for our comprehension*.

That our author imagined he had sufficiently established some very important religious and practical principles, is evident from what he says in the conclusion of his work, where he is reciting his achievements in it. "That the human soul is a real and permanent substance," he says, "that God is infinitely wise and good, that virtue and vice are essentially different, that there is such a thing as truth, and that man, in many cases, is capable of dis-

covering it, are some of the principles which this book is intended to vindicate from the objections of scepticism." P. 491.

Now I do not recollect, after reading Dr. Beattie's book through (with how much attention and care let the reader judge), that he has attempted a demonstration of the human soul being a rational and permanent substance, of the infinite wisdom and goodness of God, that virtue and vice are essentially different, &c. by any proper medium of proof whatever; but only, if he has proved them at all, by an appeal to this principle of common sense, which is said to assure us, *without reasoning*, that such and such doctrines are true.

Also, though Dr. Beattie has not taken the same large field of argument that Dr. Oswald has done, thinking probably that, after him, it was unnecessary, yet he quotes from him with respect, and no doubt with entire approbation, (or why did he quote him at all?) a passage in which he not only asserts the propriety of defending primary truths on the sole authority of common sense, but vindicates the doing of it with a peculiar *emphasis*, and without much delicacy. And I have already shewn in what an extensive sense Dr. Oswald considers the primary truths of religion, a sense with which Dr. Beattie could not be unacquainted.

Dr. Beattie's quotation, in vindication of his vehemence of expression in this treatise, is as follows. "There is no satisfying the demands of false delicacy," (says an elegant and pious author,) "because they are not regulated by any fixed standard. But a man of candour and judgment will allow that the bashful timidity, practised by those who put themselves on a level with the adversaries of religion, would ill become one who, declining all disputes, asserts primary truths on the authority of common sense; and that whoever pleads the cause of religion in this way has a right to assume a firmer tone, and to pronounce with a more decisive air, not upon the strength of his own judgment, but on the reverence due from all mankind to the tribunal to which he appeals. *Oswald's Appeal in Behalf of Religion*, p. 14." P. 512. These gentlemen, therefore, having discarded all pretences to *reasoning*, think themselves justified in discarding all *good manners*, and in assuming an arrogance and insolence which does not become us poor reasoners. A happy privilege truly!

From these circumstances it appears to me to be impossible not to conclude, that Dr. Beattie approved, in the

main, of what Dr. Oswald had written. Indeed, writing upon this subject, and mentioning him at all, it behoved him to have guarded his readers against his dangerous extravagancies, if he had not gone the same lengths himself. His candid letter to me, however, which the reader will find at the end of this book, makes me conclude, that he does not *now* approve of Dr. Oswald's writings; and I hope that, after more reflection, he will acknowledge that he has given his absurd and dangerous principles too much countenance by what he has written himself.

SECTION V.

DR. BEATTIE'S *View of the Doctrine of NECESSITY.*

AFTER the very severe and injurious treatment that Bishop Berkeley's amusing theory has met with, it cannot be expected that the doctrine of *necessity*, which, like many other very good things, has had the misfortune to fall into the hands of some unbelievers, should escape Dr. Beattie's censure; especially as, like other great truths, removed from the conception of the vulgar, (as that of the revolution of the earth upon its axis,) it necessarily stands exposed to some plausible, but superficial, objections. There is, at the bottom, however, something so ingenuous in Dr. Beattie, that, notwithstanding the vehemence of his assertions, he has not been able to conceal evident marks of the impression that has been made upon him by the arguments of the Necessarians. These, I doubt not, have had no small influence in determining him to shut his eyes so obstinately, to disclaim all *argument* upon the subject, and to take refuge in his most convenient and never-failing principle of *common sense*.

Both the thorough satisfaction that Dr. Beattie has in his own principles, and the manner in which he attained and preserves that satisfaction, notwithstanding the *unanswerable arguments* (as he can hardly help acknowledging) of the Necessarians, may be seen in the following quotations, which I can read and transcribe without feeling myself more offended than I should be at hearing any person assert his full conviction of *the earth standing still*; being fully satisfied with the evidence that I have of the very superficial grounds on which his opinion has been formed.

“ My intention is to treat the doctrine of necessity as I have treated that of non-existence of matter, by inquiring whether the one be not, as well as the other, contrary

to common sense, and therefore absurd." P. 295. "Both doctrines are repugnant to the general belief of mankind; both, notwithstanding all the efforts of the subtlest sophistry, are still incredible; both are so contrary to nature, and to the condition of human beings, that they cannot be carried into practice, and so contrary to true philosophy, that they cannot be admitted into science, without bringing scepticism along with them, and rendering questionable the plainest principles of moral truth, and the very distinction between truth and falsehood. In a word, we have proved that common sense, as it teaches us to believe, and be assured of the existence of matter, doth also teach us to believe, and be assured, that man is a free agent." P. 360. "My liberty, in these instances, I cannot prove by argument, but there is not a truth in geometry of which I am more certain." P. 295. Speaking of the same thing, he says, "Some philosophers want to prove what I know by instinct to be unquestionably certain." P. 311. "I am as conscious that some actions are in my power, and that others are not, &c. as I am of my own existence." P. 70.

I have no occasion to enter into a discussion of this question with Dr. Beattie. Indeed, I am precluded from doing it; for what can it avail to argue with a man who declares that he will neither argue himself, nor hear the arguments of others upon the subject? But to answer this very pertinacious believer, in something of his own way, I will tell him that, if I were to take my choice of any metaphysical question, to defend it against all oppugners, it should be this very absurd and obnoxious doctrine of *necessity*, of the falsehood of which our author is as certain as he is of his own existence. There is no truth of which I have less doubt, and of the grounds of which I am more fully satisfied; and I am likewise fully persuaded, not only of the perfect *innocence*, but also of the *happy moral influence* of it. Indeed, there is no absurdity more glaring to my understanding than the notion of *philosophical liberty*; and (judging as Dr. Beattie does of Berkeley's Theory) of more dangerous consequence. But I have long learned to entertain no great dread of opinions theoretically dangerous; and to repeat what I have said upon a former occasion, "notwithstanding some sects do, in words, subvert the foundations of all virtue, they have always some *salvo* whereby they preserve a regard to it, and in reality enforce it. Such a foundation has the God of nature laid for the practice of virtue in our hearts,

that it is hardly in the power of any error in our heads to erase it."*

What could lead Dr. Beattie to quote Dr. Hartley upon the subject I cannot tell, as he does not propose to enter into any discussion of the question, except it was to take an opportunity of contradicting him, in his appeal to experience with relation to it. "In all my experience," says he, "I have never been conscious of any such necessity as the author (Dr. Hartley) speaks of." P. 333. But so very little attention did Dr. Beattie give to any thing like *reasoning* on this subject, or even necessary explanations of it, that though Dr. Hartley, in the very passage that Dr. Beattie quotes from him, gives a very accurate state of the question, defining philosophical liberty to be *a power of doing different things, the motives, or previous circumstances, remaining precisely the same*,† all that our author says upon the subject shews that the liberty which he contends for is *the power of doing what we please, or will*, which Dr. Hartley is far from denying.

It makes me smile, and I am confident it must make others smile, who shall read both these writers, to find Dr. Beattie calling Dr. Hartley *a fanciful author*.‡ To judge by the style and manner of the two writers, I think any indifferent person would see that serious and dispassionate argument was with Dr. Hartley, and *fancy* and *imagination* wholly with Dr. Beattie.

There is something very singular in the *manner* in which Dr. Beattie treats this subject of necessity; first disclaiming all reasoning about it, then, from his natural ingenuousness, not being able entirely to satisfy himself with this conduct, half hinting at some objections, and subjoining some half answers to them; then acknowledging that the arguments on both sides *come at last to appear unanswerable*, p. 362, and so reverting to his common sense again, just as he did in his account of the foundation of moral obligation, in which he both began and ended with an appeal to the same common sense.

Among other things, our author gently touches upon the objection to the contingency of human actions from the doctrine of the *Divine prescience*. In answer to which, or rather in *descanting* upon which, (thinking I suppose, to

* Discourse on the Lord's Supper, third edition, p. 107. (P.)

† See *Observations* Pt. I. *Conclusion*, "On the Mechanism of the Human Mind."

‡ See p. 10, for a very different opinion, by Dr. Young.}

choose the less of two evils,) he seems to make no great difficulty of rejecting that most essential prerogative of the Divine nature, though nothing can be more fully ascertained by independent evidence from revelation, rather than give up his darling hypothesis of human liberty; satisfying himself with observing, that "it implies no reflection on the Divine power, that it cannot perform impossibilities." P. 352. In the very same manner he might make himself perfectly easy, if his hypothesis should compel him to deny any other of the attributes of God, or even his very being, for what reflection is it upon any person that things impossible cannot be? Thus our author, in the blind rage of disputation, hesitates not to deprive the ever-blessed God of that very attribute by which, in the books of Scripture, he expressly distinguishes himself from all false gods, and than which nothing can be more essentially necessary to the government of the universe, rather than relinquish his fond claim to the fancied privilege of *self-determination*; a claim which appears to me to be just as absurd as that of *self-existence*, and which could not possibly do him any good if he had it.*

Terrified, however, as I am willing to suppose (though he does not express any such thing, as he seems to be ready, upon any emergency, with all the *sang-froid* in the world, to strike from his creed the doctrine of the Divine prescience,) at this consequence of his system, he thinks, with those who maintain the doctrine of a *trinity* of persons in the unity of the Divine essence, and with those who assert the doctrine of *transubstantiation*, to shelter himself in the *obscurity* of his subject; saying, that "we cannot comprehend the manner in which the Divine Being operates." P. 353. But this refuge is equally untenable in all the cases, because the things themselves are in their own nature impossible, and imply a contradiction. I might just as well say that, though to us, whose understandings are so limited, *two* and *two* appear to make no more than *four*; yet in the Divine mind, the comprehension of which is infinite, into which, how-

* Mr. Toplady, a Calvinistic Necessarian, referring to this paragraph, adds, "I cannot help observing, what, by this time, almost every person knows, and every impartial judge must acknowledge, viz. the energy and success with which Dr. Priestley has battered the Free-will Lanthorns, (the *Inquiry*, the *Appeal* and the *Essay*), in which the three Northern Lights had respectively stuck themselves and hung themselves out to public view. It lay, peculiarly, in Dr. Priestley's department, to examine the Theory of those new lights and colours. And he has done it to purpose." *The Scheme of Christian and Philosophical Necessity asserted* 1775, p. 52.

ever, we cannot look, and concerning which it is impossible, and even dangerous to form conjectures, they may make *five*.

Were I possessed of Dr. Beattie's talent of declamation, and had as little scruple to make use of it, what might I not say of the absurdity of this way of talking, and of the horrible immoral consequences of denying the fore-knowledge of God? I should soon make our author and all his adherents as black as atheists. The very admission of so untractable a principle as *contingency* into the universe would be no better than admitting the Manichean doctrine of an *independent evil principle*; nay it would be really of worse consequence, for the one might be controuled, but the other could not. But I thank God my principles are more generous, and I am as far from ascribing to Dr. Beattie all the real consequences of his doctrine, (which, if he could see with my eyes, I believe he would reprobate as heartily as I do myself.) as I am from admitting his injurious imputations with respect to mine.

Notwithstanding Dr. Beattie, confiding in the solidity of his own judgment, strengthened by the sanction of a *great majority of mankind*, is pleased to call Dr. Hartley a *fanciful author*, he does vouchsafe, at the same time, to call him *an ingenious and worthy one*, which, considering the horrid consequences he deduces from his principles, must argue a great deal of candour. But, indeed, I think it absolutely impossible for any person to read his *Observations on Man*, and not lay down the book with the fullest conviction both of the amazing comprehensiveness and strength of his mind, (to which the trifling epithet of *ingenious* is very inadequate,) and of the piety, benevolence, and rectitude of his heart. All who were acquainted with him* join their testimony to this internal evidence from his writings.

Without, however, attempting to account for this, or any facts of the same kind, our author takes it for granted, p. 473, 351, that the doctrine of necessity is inconsistent with the first principles of natural religion. After enumerating a number of absurd and atheistical tenets, he sums up the whole with saying,——“and now the liberty of the human will is questioned and debated. What could we expect but that it should share the same fate?” P. 317. “To believe,” says he, “that the dictates of conscience are false, un-

* Bishops Law, Butler and Warburton, and Dr. Jortin “were his intimate friends.” Dr. Priestley “commenced a correspondence” with him “a short time before his death,” in 1757. See Hartley's Life, prefixed to his *Observations*, pp. v. and x.

reasonable, or insignificant, is one certain effect of my becoming a fatalist, or even sceptical with regard to moral liberty." P. 355. If I could think that this would be the consequence, I should be very sorry to hear of Dr. Beattie's changing his sentiments on this subject; but we know very little of our own hearts, and what we should think, feel, or do, in very new situations. For my own part, I doubt not but that this very change of opinion, which he dreads so much, (if it be not too late for him to bear the shock that so total a revolution in his system of thinking would occasion,) would bear a very favourable aspect on his virtue, and even make him a better man than he is at present; though, by all accounts, he is a very good one.

As to the hackneyed objection to the doctrine of necessity, from its being inconsistent with the idea of virtue and vice, as implying praise and blame, it may be fully retorted upon its opponents. For as to their boasted *self-determining power* (were the thing possible in itself, and did not imply an absurdity,) by which they pretend to have a power of acting independently of every thing that comes under the description of *motive*, I scruple not to say, that it is as foreign to every idea of virtue or vice, praise or blame, as the grossest kind of mechanism, that the most blundering writer in defence of liberty ever ascribed to the advocates for moral necessity.

It is true that, strictly speaking, the doctrine of necessity would oblige a man to depart from the common *language* in speaking of human actions; but this makes no change with respect to his *conduct*. The very same is the case with respect to the doctrine of the *sun standing still*. Philosophers use the language of the vulgar with respect to this subject, and even *think* with them too, except in their closets, and when they are explicitly attending to it. Copernicus and Newton themselves, I will venture to say, not only talked of the sun rising and setting, but, *in their ordinary conceptions*, had the very same ideas that a common farmer annexes to those words. So also it is impossible that, with respect to common life, a Necessarian should have any other ideas to the words praise and blame, (which however are equally foreign to both the schemes of liberty and necessity, philosophically and strictly considered,) than other people have, and he will be influenced as much by them. And as to the different views that he will be able to take of these things in *contemplation*, they appear to me only to

remove virtue from one foundation to place it upon another, much broader and firmer. Our conduct depends not upon what we *think* our constitution to be, but upon what it really *is*. But upon this subject I refer to Dr. Hartley, both for argument and example.

Upon this, as upon a former occasion, I cannot help observing what different company I and Dr. Beattie have kept. "I have found," says he, p. 344, "all the impartial, the most sagacious, and worthy part of mankind, enemies to fatality in their hearts." On the contrary, a considerable majority of my acquaintance, men of whose understandings and hearts not myself only, but all who know them, have the highest opinion, have been, and are confirmed Necessarians.

For my own part, if I might be allowed to follow Dr. Beattie's example, in appealing to my own experience, I would tell him, that I embraced the doctrine of necessity from the time that I first studied the subject;* I have been a firm believer of it ever since, without having ever entertained the least suspicion of there being any fallacy belonging to it; I meditate frequently upon it, and yet every consideration of it, and every view of things suggested by it, appears to me to give an elevation to the sentiments, the most exalted conceptions of the great Author of nature, and of the excellence and perfection of his works and designs, the greatest purity and fervour to our virtue, the most unbounded benevolence to our fellow-creatures, the most ardent zeal to serve them, and the most unreserved and joyful confidence in Divine Providence, with respect to all things past, present, and to come.

In short, I have no conception that the man whose mind is capable of entertaining, and duly contemplating what is called the doctrine of necessity, and its genuine consequences, as unfolded by Dr. Hartley, can be a bad man; nay that he can be other than an extraordinary good one. I am confident that I shall improve myself continually by frequent and *steady* views of this subject, and such as are connected with it, and by being actuated by them more than I have been. It is true that I had the unspeakable happiness of a very strict and religious education; but notwithstanding

* More than twenty years before, having "first learned the doctrine from Collins's Philosophical Inquiry, concerning Human Liberty," which he afterwards published. He was confirmed in the opinion by Hartley's Observations, while at the Academy. See the Author's own *Memoirs*.

this, had the doctrine of necessity, in reality, any immoral tendency, I am positive it would have done me an irreparable injury at the time that I adopted it.

Let Dr. Beattie reflect upon these things with the candour that I am willing to think is natural to him, and I doubt not he will feel himself disposed to unsay some of the harsh things that have dropped from him on this subject.

That my reader may enjoy the pleasure of *contrast* in a higher degree, I shall subjoin to this section a few extracts from Mr. Jonathan Edwards, in which he expresses his opinion of the unfavourable tendency of the doctrine of philosophical liberty, which he calls the *Arminian* doctrine, with respect to virtue and religion, &c. in his *Treatise on Free Will*;* which I had not read till after the whole of this book, and even the preface, except the paragraph relating to it, was transcribed for the press.

“ Arminian principles and notions, when fairly examined, and pursued in their demonstrable consequences, do evidently shut all virtue out of the world, and make it impossible that there should ever be any such thing, in any case, or that any such thing should ever be conceived of. For by these principles the very notion of virtue or vice implies absurdity and contradiction.” P. 267.

“ A moral necessity of men's actions is not at all inconsistent with any liberty that any creature has, or can have, as a free, accountable, moral agent, and subject of moral government.—This moral necessity is so far from being inconsistent with praise and blame, and the benefit and use of men's own care and labour, that, on the contrary, it implies the very ground and reason why men's actions are to be ascribed to them as their own, in that manner as to infer desert, praise and blame, approbation and remorse of conscience, reward and punishment; and—it establishes the moral system of the universe, and God's moral government, in every respect, with the proper use of motives, exhortations, commands, counsels, promises and threatenings, and the use and benefit of endeavours, care and industry; and—therefore there is no need that the strict philosophic truth should be at all concealed from men.—So far from this,—the truth in this matter is of vast importance, and extremely

* See an account of this work and the author.

needful to be known, and—the more constantly it is in view the better.”* Appendix, p. 16.

“The moral necessity of men's actions—is requisite to the being of virtue and vice, or any thing praise-worthy or culpable;” and “the liberty of indifference, and contingency, which is advanced in opposition to that necessity, is inconsistent with the being of these.” P. 7. “If we pursue these principles, we shall find that virtue and vice are wholly excluded out of the world, and that there never was, or ever can be, any such thing as one or the other either in God, angels or men.” P. 258.

“The doctrine of necessity, which supposes a necessary connexion of all events, on some antecedent ground and reason of their existence, is the only medium we have to prove the being of God. And the contrary doctrine of contingency,—which certainly implies, or infers, that events may come into existence, or begin to be, without dependence on any thing foregoing, as their cause, ground or reason, takes away all proof of the being of God.” P. 386.

“It is so far from being true that our minds are naturally possessed with a notion of such liberty as this, so strongly that it is impossible to root it out, that, indeed, men have no such notion of liberty at all, and—it is utterly impossible, by any means whatsoever, to implant or introduce such a notion into the mind.—The greatest and most learned advocates themselves for liberty of indifference and self-determination have no such notion; and—indeed they mean something wholly inconsistent with, and directly subversive of, what they strenuously affirm, and earnestly contend for.” Appendix, p. 15.

“All the Arminians on earth might be challenged, without arrogance, to make these principles of theirs—consistent with common sense, yea and perhaps to produce any doctrine ever embraced by the blindest bigot of the Church of Rome, or the most ignorant Mussulman, or extravagant enthusiast, that might be reduced to more and more demonstrable inconsistencies and repugnancies to common sense, and to themselves; though their inconsistencies, indeed, may not lie so deep, or be so artfully veiled by a deceitful ambiguity of words, and an indeterminate signification of phrases.” P. 411.

* “Remarks on the *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*, in a Letter to a Minister of the Church of Scotland.” 1757. These *Essays* were written by Lord Kames, and published in 1751. See his *Life* by *Tytler*, Ed. 2. 1814, l. p. 182.

How very different is the *common sense* of Mr. Edwards from the common sense of Dr. Beattie! How uniform and infallible is this guide to truth!

SECTION VI.

The Conclusion.

WHEN I consider the many seemingly plain and unequivocal marks of a good intention, and good disposition in Dr. Beattie, I am puzzled to account for his gross and injurious misrepresentations of the sentiments of his adversaries, and at the violence with which he is actuated, bordering sometimes upon a spirit of persecution.

“The vulgar,” he says, “when they are puzzled with argument, have recourse to their common sense, and acquiesce in it so steadily, as often to render all the arts of the logician ineffectual; *I am confuted, but not convinced*, is an apology sometimes offered when one has nothing to oppose to the arguments of the antagonist, but the original undisguised feelings of his own mind. This apology is, indeed, very inconsistent with the dignity of philosophic pride, which, taking for granted that nothing exceeds the limits of human capacity, professes to confute whatever it cannot believe, and, which is still more difficult, to believe whatever it cannot confute; but this apology may be perfectly consistent with sincerity and candour, and with that principle, of which Pope says, that, *though no science, it is fairly worth the seven.*” P. 49.

Now what is this but insinuating, nay it is something more than insinuating, that all those who do not admit this new doctrine of *the infallibility of common sense*, are possessed of so much philosophic pride, that they take it for granted that nothing can exceed the limits of their capacity; that we profess to confute whatever we cannot believe, and to believe whatever we cannot confute! But whatever effect this representation may have upon those who, knowing but little of men and books, are disposed to take for granted whatever such a man as Dr. Beattie will venture to assert so roundly, it is a mere chimera of his own brain: and this mode of writing is a most unjustifiable method of drawing an odium upon his opponents, who, perhaps, have no more philosophic pride than himself. If arrogance and insolence be an indication of pride, Dr. Beattie has certainly no small share of it, though it may hitherto have escaped his own search.

His tacking the doctrine of necessity to the end of a list of peculiarly obnoxious and atheistical tenets, as if it was the natural and necessary completion of the whole scheme, in the preceding quotation, is another instance of his unfairness, that looks very like *artifice*; and which I think exceedingly unjustifiable. A little of *irony* and *satire*, and something approaching to *asperity*, may, perhaps, be indulged, as in a manner necessary to enliven controversial writing; at least it may be apologized for, as almost unavoidably suggested by the heat of debate; but the passages I have quoted above have a very different and a more malignant aspect.

Dr. Beattie's vehemence, and his antipathy to those who differ from him, though he is quite a *volunteer* in the controversy, and cannot plead that he was heated by any *personal opposition*, approaches too near to the spirit of persecution. At least I do not see how else to interpret the following passage, and I earnestly wish that the ingenuous author would do it himself, and help us, if it be possible, to interpret it without having recourse to so unfavourable a comment. "Had I done but half as much as he (Mr. Hume) in labouring to subvert principles which ought ever to be held sacred, I know not whether the *friends of truth* would have granted me any indulgence, I am sure they ought not. Let me be treated with the lenity due to a good citizen no longer than I act as becomes one." P. 20.

Certainly the obvious construction of this passage is, that Mr. Hume ought not to be treated with the indulgence and lenity due to a good citizen, but ought to be punished as a bad one.* And what is this but what a Bonner or a Gardiner might have put into the preamble of an order for his execution? Judging, as Dr. Beattie does, by his own ideas of the tendency of principles, expressed in this book, he will, I doubt not, think several of my writings, if they have happened to fall in his way, and especially these remarks on his treatise (in which I own I have endeavoured to lay the axe to the very root of his fundamental principles of virtue, religion and truth) to be equally dangerous, provided he should think them in equal danger of spreading; and, if

* Dr. Beattie, as a member of the established church of Scotland, professed to believe that "the civil magistrate" ought "to take order that—the truth of God be kept pure and entire, that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed." Also to regard as a sin the "tolerating a false religion." See "The Confession of Faith, &c. of public Authority in the Church of Scotland, with Acts of Assembly and Parliament approbative of the same." *Glasgow*, 1753, pp. 128 and 242.

he be consistent with himself, and think me worthy of his notice, I shall expect, after a summary process before the tribunal of his common sense, to be consigned to the disposal of his *friends of truth*, who may not be equally the friends and lovers of *mercy*. But, thanks to a good superintending Providence, which influences the hearts, and directs the affairs of men, our governors either do not entertain the sentiments, or are not inspired with the zeal of our author.

Dr. Beattie and I must certainly think and feel very differently with respect to many things. His dread of infidel writings, and his apprehension of the mischief they may do, far exceeds mine. "The writings of Mr. Hume," he says, "notwithstanding their obscurity, have done mischief enough to make every sober-minded person earnestly wish that they had never existed." P. 472.

Now I, for my part, am truly pleased with such publications as those of Mr. Hume, and I do not think it requires any great sagacity, or strength of mind, to see that such writings must be of great service to religion, natural and revealed. They have actually occasioned the subject to be more thoroughly canvassed, and consequently to be better understood than ever it was before; and thus *vice cotis funguntur*.

In what a wretched state would Christianity have universally been at present, loaded with such absurdities and impieties as all the establishments of it contain, (that of Scotland by no means excepted,*) if it had not been for such a scrutiny into it as the writings of unbelievers have promoted, and indeed have made absolutely necessary!

Infidelity appears to me to have been the natural and necessary produce of corrupted Christianity; but I have no doubt but that this evil will find its own remedy, by purging our religion of all the absurdities it contains, and thereby enabling it to triumph over all opposition. Things are now in such a train that infidelity will have every day less and less to carp at in Christianity, till at length its excellence and divine authority will be universally acknowledged.

* "The Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechism, National Covenant, Solemn League and Covenant, Directory," &c. established by the *Long Parliament* in 1647, on the recommendation of *The Assembly of Divines*, these continue to form the only true religion, as established in North Britain. See "The Confession," &c. Mr. Toplady, in the work quoted p. 91, diverts himself with the "*simplicity* and *godly sincerity* which seem to have actuated Dr. Reid, Dr. Oswald and Dr. Beattie, when they subscribed the Confession and Catechism of the Westminster Assembly." *Scheme*, p. 153.

Remarks

ON

DR. OSWALD'S APPEAL TO COMMON SENSE

IN

BEHALF OF RELIGION.



THE

INTRODUCTION.



THE controversy in which I am now engaged may perhaps illustrate the propriety of the old Latin proverb *Principiis obsta*. Dr. Reid's new principle of *Common Sense*, or, to give it a name less ambiguous, and more appropriated to its office, his *Sense of Truth*, notwithstanding the prodigious assurance with which it was ushered into the world, and notwithstanding the manifest inconsistency there is between it and the fundamental principles of Mr. Locke, concerning the human mind, was suffered to pass without any particular notice. I suppose because no particular *use* was made of it. It was considered as nothing more than a new-fashioned theory of the human mind, eagerly adopted and cried up by some, who, in my opinion were very superficial judges of such things; while those who thought with me, that the whole system was ill founded, did not, I suppose, think it worth their while to make any opposition to it; concluding that in due time the futility of it could not fail to be seen through, when it would fall into oblivion of itself.

Presently, however, we find two writers, men of some note, Dr. Beattie and Dr. Oswald, seeing that this new doctrine of a sense of truth was received without any oppo-

sition, beginning to avail themselves of it for the defence of religion, and of some peculiar tenets of their own, in the regular proof of which they had been embarrassed. Dr. Beattie, indeed, with some degree of moderation and timidity, and not much in the detail of things ; but Dr. Oswald with great particularity, and with as much bigotry and violence, as if his principles had been the established faith of all mankind in all ages, and not, as in truth they are, a thing of yesterday.

Finding this new power of the human mind to be decisive and irresistible within its jurisdiction, and requiring no aid from reason, he immediately sets about enlarging its province, (as the English government have lately done that of Quebec,) throwing into it, without any regard to reason or conscience, every thing that he thought of value, and which he had found any difficulty in defending upon other principles.

By this means he has eased himself at once of the defence of all the first principles, or, as he calls them, *primary truths of religion* ; such as the being, the unity, the moral perfections and providence of God, and a future state ; of the evidences also of Christianity, and even many of his favourite and least defensible doctrines in the Christian system. And, moreover, on this new ground, as from a sanctuary, he pours the grossest abuse both upon all unbelievers, and those who have opposed them on the principles of reason only ; treating them alike as fools or madmen. Dr. Oswald's treatise, however, as well as Dr. Beattie's, has many admirers, both north and south of the Tweed.

Finding things in this situation, I own I was willing to interpose my feeble endeavours to put a stop to this sudden torrent of nonsense and abuse that is pouring down upon us from the North, though at the evident *risk of my character*, as Dr. Oswald, Vol. II. p. 328, will tell me ; and laying my account with meeting all that magisterial insolence, which he, and indeed the whole *triumvirate*, have boldly assumed with respect to others.

But if this task should not be undertaken by some person, I am afraid we shall find these new principles extending their authority farther than the precincts of metaphysics, morals, religion, Christianity and Protestantism, to which they have been hitherto confined. Papists may begin to avail themselves of them for the support of all those doctrines and maxims for which the powers of reason had proved

insufficient; and politicians also, possessing themselves of this advantage, may venture once more to thunder out upon us their exploded doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance. For having now nothing to fear from the powers of *reason*, and being encouraged by the example of grave divines and metaphysicians, they may venture to assert their favourite maxims with the greatest confidence; appealing at once to this ultimate tribunal of common sense, and giving out their own mandates as the decisions of this new tribunal. For every man will think himself authorized to assume the office of interpreting its decrees, as this new power holds a separate office in every man's own breast. Indeed our author has left the politician but little to do with respect to this doctrine, having ranked *obedience to the magistrate* among the primary truths of nature, p. 247.

Considering the very late origin of this new empire of common sense, its conquests, it must be confessed, have been pretty rapid; and as it has subdued all the regions of metaphysics, morals and theology in the space of ten years, it may be computed that, with this addition of strength, it may, in ten years more, complete the reduction of all the seven sciences; when the whole business of *thinking* will be in a manner over, and we shall have nothing to do but to *see* and *believe*.

Now, being no friend to implicit faith, because, perhaps, it has been no friend to me, I am willing to oppose the farther encroachments of this bold invader, before it be quite too late. And having already made two campaigns in this just cause, as it appears to me, I am now preparing for a third, which I foresee will be more difficult and hazardous than both the former. Nevertheless, I will not despair; since, if I fail, I shall, at least, be entitled to the epitaph of Phaëton, *Magnis tamen excidit ausis*.

But, dropping this figure, I really am much more at a loss how to answer Dr. Oswald, than either Dr. Reid or Dr. Beattie, on account of the great incoherence of his work, and his remarkably loose and declamatory way of writing; on which account his argument is so involved, that there is hardly any such thing as coming at it; so that, though I have often said, that if I have any talent, it is a facility in arrangement, I own that, for once, I have been exceedingly puzzled, and do not clearly see my way. I shall proceed, however, in the best manner that I can; giving, in the first place, the history of this new science, as deduced by our author; then explaining the nature and

extent of it; after which I shall shew more particularly the relation it bears to reasoning, and point out some particular applications that our author has made of it.

In all this I shall do little more than select and arrange a number of passages that I have collected from our author. For I must acknowledge, that if he has embarrassed me, and taken up my time in the disposition of my materials, he has made me amends by saving me the trouble of making many observations. In fact, I shall have occasion to do little more than let our author speak for himself, only putting his words a little nearer together than he would have done. And as our author seems to have had great satisfaction in the first publication of his work, I hope he will not be displeased at this *new edition* of it. For whatever my reader may think of him as a *reasoner*, my quotations cannot fail to verify the character that Dr. Beattie (whose judgment in this case no person will call in question) gives of him, viz. that he is an *elegant writer*.

SECTION I.

Of the HISTORY of Common Sense.

It has been a great loss to history, that the principal actors in many great achievements have not themselves written the history of them. But Dr. Oswald has taken sufficient care that there should be no complaint of this kind with respect to the late triumph of *sense* over *reason*. For though he himself is but the second in succession from Dr. Reid, who planned and began the attack, he has taken an opportunity of fully stating the ground of the war, and informing us of the progress that his predecessor had made in it.

The more fully to explain the rise of this new system, our author goes back to the times preceding the reformation from Popery. Speaking of this Popish darkness, he says, "Upon consulting the sacred records, and appealing to them," (not *reasoning* from them) "one half of Christendom were made sensible of their folly, and shook off the dominion of ignorance and error.—They split again into sects, formed different creeds, and different plans of worship and government; and having been much exercised in subtle and hot disputes with the Romish doctors, they entered into contests of much the same kind, and in much the same spirit, with one another, about their peculiar tenets. Meantime,

a sect arose who called the whole in question; and, believing themselves equally privileged with others to sound unfathomable depths, they employed the same subtlety of reasoning against religion which contending divines had employed against each other; and the friends of religion, not aware of the consequence, did partly from their zeal for the truth, and partly from a habit of disputing, and a confidence of victory, admit the whole to debate." P. 52.

Religion being now, through the fatal imprudence of its best friends, and the ablest that the times (which produced no such men as Dr. Reid, Dr. Beattie, or Dr. Oswald) afforded, become a subject of debate, divines were obliged to make the best of the arms with which they were furnished for the engagement. How things were conducted before the time of Mr. Locke our author does not particularly say; but though his writings were universally thought to be of great advantage to the cause of truth and religion, yet Dr. Oswald informs us that he set out wrong, and thereby gave the enemy too great advantage.

"Mr. Locke, unfortunately, derived all our knowledge from sensation or reflection, entirely overlooking another principle, more important than them both, and without which they are of no avail. "Sensation and reflection," our author says, "do indeed give occasion to all our ideas, but they do not produce them. They may, in our present state, be considered as the *sine quâ non* to our most rational and sublime conceptions, but are not therefore the powers by which we form them. These conceptions are formed in us by another and different power, which Mr. Locke, and unhappily, after him, the bulk of the learned, have overlooked." P. 108. "In this he has committed a capital oversight of very bad consequence. He has not only put the learned upon a false scent, but has brought the primary truths of nature under suspicion, and opened a door to universal scepticism." P. 109.

At this door, set open by Mr. Locke, Mr. Hume and others have found admission. "Hence disputes upon the most important subjects have been maintained, to the detriment of religion, and the disgrace of the human understanding; nor will it be possible to put an end to these disputes, without searching farther into the powers of the human mind than Mr. Locke has done." P. 110.

To pursue this curious history a little farther: "Mr. Hume had penetration enough to perceive the defect of Mr. Locke's hypothesis, but had not the courage to supply that defect,

by the only way in which it could be supplied. Perhaps he suspected that philosophers would not submit to the authority of common sense, or was himself too much a philosopher to have recourse to an authority so vulgar and homely. He therefore found himself under a necessity of making the best account he could of the phenomena of nature by the received doctrine of the connexion and association of ideas; and it must be owned that his account is extremely ingenious." P. 110.

"The author of the *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*,* published, Edinburgh, 1751, alarmed at Mr. Hume's confounding rational belief with credulity, and denying the connexion between cause and effect, has said all that is necessary in confutation of his opinion; but he has confuted Mr. Hume upon principles too much a-kin to his own. He has recourse to our being so constituted that we must perceive, feel and believe certain truths, without laying open the human constitution, or once attempting to point out that in our frame which produces the way of thinking, which he justly says is unavoidable. That certain persons are so constituted is perhaps all the account that can be made of odd and fanciful perceptions or feelings; but a more satisfactory account ought to be given of the primary truths of nature. He has not bestowed that attention on the leading power which is due; nor seems he to have reached a true and full view of the characteristic of a rational being." Pp. 94, 112, 114.

After these gross blunders of Mr. Locke, Mr. Hume, and the author of the *Essays*, it is pleasing to observe the approach that was made towards the discovery of this great principle of common sense by Mr. Hutcheson.† "Mr. Hutcheson thought that he had made a discovery of a new faculty of the human mind, which he was entitled to call by a new name, and thereby gave offence to the friends of demonstration; but in reality this great philosopher had only got a view, and but a partial view, of common sense." P. 158.

Behold, however, at length, the great *desideratum* completely discovered; and, after this state of deplorable darkness and obscure guessings, full day-light is diffused by Dr. Reid. "Dr. Reid has put an effectual stop to the arti-

* See the Note on the extract from *Edwards*, p. 96.

† Dr. Francis Hutcheson, Professor at Glasgow, who died in 1746, aged 52. Dr. Leechman published, in 1755, his *System of Moral Philosophy*. See an Account of Dr. H. in the "Life of Lord Kames," I. pp. 223, 224 and 397—399.

fices of sceptics, by pointing out three powers of the mind, evidently distinct, and easily distinguished," Vol. II. p. 329, meaning perception, memory and imagination; the operations of two of which imply the belief of the real existence of their respective objects. "We have found then," says our author, "a source of ideas that has been too long overlooked, and in it have found the much-contested source of moral obligation. Theology and ethics are now to be considered as a real science, founded on principles of indubitable certainty; principles which, if they are not as much regarded, are, however, entitled to equal regard with the axioms of the schools—the principles of *common sense*." P. 268.

"Of late there has appeared *An Inquiry into the Human Mind, on the Principles of Common Sense*, by Dr. Reid, in which he gives such an account of the operations of our powers, as shews it to be impossible for a rational being to doubt the reality of the objects of sense, and gives us ground to expect, from a farther pursuit of his inquiry, such a display of the powers of the human mind, as will render it impossible for any one to doubt of the obvious truths of religion and virtue, without being convicted of folly or madness; so that the triumph of truth over error, and of true science over false philosophy, may not be very distant." P. 168.

"Upon the whole, we are arrived at a period, in which, if it is not our own fault, we may dismiss frivolous controversies, and settle in the belief of primary truth upon the most solid foundation." P. 169.

It is my *misfortune*, or, as Dr. Oswald says above, my *fault*, that I cannot as yet dismiss all controversy, and settle upon this solid foundation.

SECTION II.

Of the NATURE, LIMITS, and general USE of the Principle of Common Sense.

HAVING seen the history of this great discovery deduced, with a solemnity worthy of its importance, my reader, if I had not in some measure gratified his curiosity already, in my account of Dr. Reid's and Dr. Beattie's performances, would have been impatient to be informed more particularly what this common sense is. I can promise him, however, that though he has seen much, there is more to be seen;

and that he will get new light and information from this and the following sections.

In the first place, I shall present him with Dr. Oswald's idea of the *nature*, *limits* and *general uses* of the faculty of common sense.

According to our author, this new-discovered faculty is the "leading and supreme power of the rational mind," as he describes it in the following passage, in which he also most pathetically laments that it has been hitherto much overlooked and neglected.

"The powers of compounding, dividing and abstracting our ideas have been unfolded with the greatest accuracy and judgment; but its leading power, that which is supreme in the rational mind, and is its chief prerogative and characteristic, has been much neglected. Its objects are not enumerated, its extent is not known, and its authority is little regarded. For which reason a standard of theologic, ethic and political truth is to this hour a *desideratum* with the learned. On all these subjects we are become expert reasoners, but hardly know when or where to stop, or how to form a firm and steady judgment." P. 86.

The great importance of this principle may farther appear from the following censure of Mr. Locke. "There is a necessity of declaring, in plain terms, that Mr. Locke, in his account of the origin of our ideas, is guilty of an oversight of very bad consequence. If, as our author represents, we can have no ideas besides those arising immediately from impressions made on our organs of sense, or our own reflections upon those, then the authority of common sense must go for nothing, and a free scope is given to scepticism with respect to all truths that are not the immediate objects of sense." P. 70.

If we ask why this new faculty is to be called *sense* or *common sense*, (for as to a regular *definition*, that he absolutely declines giving us, leaving us to make it out as we can,) he answers as follows: "This characteristic power of the rational mind, on account of its quickness, clearness and indubitable certainty, is called sense, and on account of its being possessed in one degree or other by all of the rational kind, is called common sense." Vol. II. p. 4. *Advertisement*. In this I would observe, that our author differs from Dr. Beattie, who only says that this common sense is given to a *great majority of mankind*.

The great use of this common sense is that, instead of having *perceptions* or *emotions* for its object, like the other

senses, it is employed about the more important business of *truth*, which it suggests without the help of any proper evidence; and yet it is the means of making the greatest and most important discoveries.

“ Mr. Locke unhappily overlooked the chief inlet to truth.” Vol. II. p. 42. “ That discoveries may be made in the arts and sciences by reasoning will not be denied; but that discoveries more numerous, more useful and more certain may be made in both by a judicious attention to the operations of nature, cannot be doubted.” P. 34.

But the most important use of this new principle is derived from its relation to *morals*. It is “ the faculty of distinguishing between fit and unfit, right and wrong in conduct.” P. 119.

This principle of common sense our author also considers as “ the *characteristic of rationality*.” P. 102. “ We are not distinguished,” he says, “ from idiots and the lower animals by perceptions, feelings and instinctive emotions.” P. 114. “ We have perceptions specifically different from these, which the lower animals have not,” p. 116, “ viz. the perception of obvious truth and palpable absurdity.” P. 117. “ Mr. Locke was guilty of a capital oversight, in making abstraction the characteristic of rationality. There is another faculty which makes a yet more perfect distinction between men and brutes, the faculty, to wit, of perceiving and pronouncing upon the connexion which subsists between qualities and powers, and the subjects to which they belong; of which faculty if the brutes were possessed, there seems no ground to doubt of their power of abstracting, occasionally, those qualities and powers, in the same manner we do.” P. 179.

So plain is it, that it is this common sense that makes the difference between men and the lower animals, that, according to our author, none but those who are themselves idiots can doubt of it. “ That we are distinguished by a set of ideas, and a system of knowledge specifically different from theirs, (the brutes’) might without more ado be appealed to the breast of every man who is above the rank of an idiot, were it not that the learned lay us under a necessity of giving them in detail.” P. 189.

It is the possession of this faculty of common sense that distinguishes men from *idiots* no less than from the lower animals. “ The characteristic of idiotism consists in an incapacity to distinguish between chance and design.” Vol. II. p. 55.

We shall now consider how this new faculty is to be distinguished from the old ones, and first from *intuition*; with respect to which we shall find there has been some little fluctuation in our author's judgment, which appears to be rather unusual with him.

"The man who, from the looks, gestures and speech of his adversary, sees rage and resentment, which are not, strictly speaking, objects of intuition, has the same information of those passions as he has of any other reality, which he perceives intuitively by his external and internal senses." P. 238. "If I be asked whether primary truths are discovered by intuition, the answer will be in the negative; because intuition has been confined to our perceptions of the obvious relations and qualities of being." But he affirms, at the same time, that our knowledge of primary truths is equally certain and indubitable as that of intuition. P. 238.

Afterwards our author owns that the knowledge we acquire by common sense is properly intuitive. "I was," says he, "too scrupulous on that occasion. Our knowledge of primary truth has an equal title with our knowledge of all other self-evident truths to be resolved into intuition." P. 357.

Our author distinguishes the informations of common sense from those of *experience*, as being more certain. "I do not found our belief of primary truths on experience alone; for experience alone doth not produce certainty. The unthinking part of mankind, are often governed solely by experience, in much the same manner as children and idiots; but men of understanding search for a more firm foundation of their faith.—The vulgar are not accurate reasoners, and yet you will find that they do not choose to rest in experience alone." Pp. 361 and 363.

It has been seen above that our author complains of the author of the *Essays* for confuting Mr. Hume upon principles too near a-kin to his own. However, I must own that, for my part, I can see no material difference between the sentiments of the author of the *Essays*, as explained by our author, and those of Dr. Oswald himself. "He has recourse," says our author, "to our being so constituted that we must perceive, feel and believe certain truths, without laying open the human constitution, or once attempting to point out that in our frame which produces a way of thinking, which he justly says is unavoidable." P. 112. Now it appears to me that all the more satisfactory account that Dr. Oswald himself can give of this part of our con-

stitution, and all that he and Dr. Reid have done towards *laying it open*, is merely verbal, viz. giving a name to this unknown something, calling it *common sense*. But what addition is this to our knowledge of the subject?

Our author appears to be a little embarrassed about the boundary between the province of *reason* and that of common sense, in the business of inferring the laws of nature from the phenomena. This has hitherto been ascribed to reason, but our author, desirous to find sufficient employment for his new principle, is unwilling to admit of this, except in a qualified sense. "It is common to say, that we infer the laws of nature from the phenomena; but that way of speaking is not philosophically, nor strictly true. In every just inference there is a reference to some well-known truth, by the help of which the inference is made, and on the truth of which its justness depends. But there is no truth in nature by which we can infer those realities which are not the objects of sense from those that are. From the appearance of smoke we infer fire. Why? Because we know the connexion between the one and the other. Thus some general truth is always understood, on the knowledge of which the inference depends." P. 235.

But he afterwards says, "If any choose to say that they infer the primary truths from the phenomena, we allow the phraseology, upon condition they keep in mind, that the inference results immediately and unavoidably from due attention to the object, and without the help of any middle term. Or if they choose to call such obvious and necessary deductions reasoning, we will not dispute about a word, provided they allow that such reasoning is not subject to the danger of those errors and mistakes we are liable to in every other exercise of the discursive faculty." Vol. II. p. 36.

Some of the dictates of this general principle of common sense, our author informs us, are the mathematical axioms; and the difference between these and other primary truths he explains as follows. "The difference between the evidence for mathematical axioms and that which we have for other primary truths is merely circumstantial." P. 139. "In judging of mathematical axioms you see the ground on which you proceed, which you do not see in judging of many other truths, on which we pronounce with equal certainty." Vol. II. p. 324. So that whether we see the ground on which we walk or not, we may proceed with equal confidence, being equally secure from falling.

SECTION III.

Of the SUFFICIENCY and UNIVERSALITY of the Principle of Common Sense.

CONSIDERING the very important nature, high rank, and authority of common sense, my reader will be pleased to be informed of the *sufficiency* and *universality* of it, and of the confidence with which its dictates may, and ought to be delivered, whenever sceptical reasoners call them in question.

“The principles of good sense are so plain,” says our author, “that to illustrate and inculcate them is to tire the patience and affront the judgment of the reader.” P. 17. “The human mind has a power of pronouncing, at first sight, on obvious truth with a quickness, clearness and indubitable certainty, similar, if not equal, to the information conveyed by the external organs of sense. Its exercise begins in children with the first dawn of rationality, and not till then; and is ever after enjoyed, in some degree, by learned and unlearned, and by every individual of the human kind, who is not an idiot, and somehow disordered in his intellectuals.” P. 8. “No man can be at a loss to know the propositions that are the objects of common sense from those that are not, and to determine with himself whether he has, or has not, a right to suspend his judgment.” P. 249.

Considering that the dictates of this common sense are so *clear*, and likewise *universal*, our author must not be censured when he treats those who do not listen to them, with a severity suited to their desperate folly and madness; even though upon some particular occasions he should so far transgress the Scripture rule, as to call his brother a *fool*.

“If your adversary have the boldness to question the truth of first principles, or to substitute chimeras, instead of principles, you must necessarily appeal to common sense; and if you do so, you must shew him how far he deviates from the standard appealed to, i. e. in other words, you must convict him of *nonsense*. The harsh expression may, and ought to be avoided, but the idea conveyed by it must be kept in view. Without that you do nothing. Your appeal will be found frivolous and unjust.” P. 12.

“It is impossible to observe inferior animals move hither and thither by the direction of their appetites and incli-

nations without conceiving the idea of that self-determining power by which they act, &c. If any one has attended to such operations without arriving at the knowledge and belief of such principles of action, we do not blame the dullness or slowness of his apprehension, but without scruple pronounce him a *fool*." P. 134.

So abundantly sufficient are the dictates of this common sense, that in many cases they even supersede all other helps to truth. With respect to religion more especially we are much better without them. They only embarrass and perplex us.

"I should not be very glad," says our author, "to see a demonstration of the being and perfections of God that would stand the severest trial: for a demonstration equal to any in Euclid could add nothing to the belief that every rational being has of it." P. 353. "You may rest assured that the best proof or demonstration of these truths is that you cannot admit the supposition of the contrary, without your being conscious of your playing the *fool* or the *madman*." P. 354. He recommends, "asserting in a high tone, that no demonstration is of equal force with common sense, and no confutation can serve the interest of truth so effectually, as a plain conviction of nonsense. And therefore," says he, "it was the business of divines and philosophers to have recourse to the simple decision of common sense, on subjects so plain and important." P. 92. "Too much can hardly be said to persuade men to put less confidence in the faculty of reasoning, and more in the faculty of judgment than they commonly do." P. 171.

Such firm hold have the principles of common sense on the bulk of mankind, that no person who has any regard to his reputation will ever dare to call them in question; so that we may be perfectly easy in resting the cause of religion upon this solid foundation. "If one incline to set aside the authority of reason, (as distinguished from *reasoning*,) and deliver himself over to fancy, he may use what freedoms he will with primary truths, but not with safety to his character. One must either admit all obvious truths, or fall under the imputation of folly and nonsense. This is learned nonsense, and so are all the surmises that can be offered against indubitable truths." Vol. II. pp. 327, 328.

Considering how amply the dictates of common sense are guarded by their own evidence, and the sanction of all mankind, in so much that every man must be conscious that he is *playing the fool or the madman* who shall presume

to gainsay them, that he cannot do it *with safety to his character*, that every man who hears him has a right to tell him to his face that he *talks nonsense*, and even need not scruple to call him a *fool*, it is rather wonderful that our author should want any other guard for his primary truths; and yet he, as well as Dr. Beattie, gives hints that the *aid of the magistrate*, and a little wholesome severity, might not be improper; provided that, contrary to his expectation, the above-mentioned guards should prove not to be quite sufficient for so great and good a purpose. But, in fact, no people have been so ready to have recourse to persecution, as those who have pretended to infallibility. This was the case both with the infallible Church of Rome, and the no less infallible Calvin. Countenanced by these great examples, the patrons of common sense, which is as infallible as either of them can pretend to be, need not be ashamed to do as they did.

“All possible encouragement,” says our author, “ought to be given to rational and just, and all manner of discouragement to foolish and nonsensical way of talking. No pleasantry, no vivacity, no appearance of wit and humour, ought to atone for nonsense on any subject, especially in those of the greatest weight and importance. It were even to be wished that the civil magistrate were authorized to put a stigma on palpable absurdity, in subjects where the honour of God and the interest of mankind are deeply concerned. But as this might be dangerous, it is also unnecessary.” Vol. II. p. 335.

SECTION IV.

Of the natural IMPERFECTIONS and necessary CULTURE of Common Sense.

LEST the idea which my reader will naturally conceive of the power and influence of common sense, from the contents of the last section, should lead him to expect from it more than he will find, it is necessary, before we proceed any farther, to apprise him, that here, as in many other cases (examples of which he will find in abundance in the prosecution of his studies) *fact* and *experience* do not exactly tally with the preconceived *theory*.

He would too naturally imagine that the principle which distinguishes *every individual of the human race* being the very *characteristic of rationality*, which pronounces with

quickness, clearness, and indubitable certainty, on all primary truths, and which was intended by our Maker to be an almost *infallible direction in the whole conduct of life,* and especially in matters of *religion,* would be a sovereign and effectual antidote, or rather preventive, of all error, imposition and vice; and that upon this foundation the empire of truth and virtue would be securely and for ever established.

But, alas! our author, having, no doubt for good reasons, given this exercise to our *imagination*s, thinks proper to give us a lesson of humility, patience and industry, by acquainting us, that, in fact, the dictates of common sense are very little known or regarded in the world; for that, what through the lesser encroachment of *vulgar prejudice* on one side, and the greater and bolder encroachments of *philosophy* on the other, her authority is almost annihilated; so that almost all received opinions and established maxims are fundamentally wrong.

All this, however, is easily explained and accounted for, by a little variation in the idea he had first given us of this wonderful power; and which, in fact, only serves to raise our admiration of it higher than ever. Before he compared it to a *sense* in general, now it resembles the most perfect of all the senses, the *eye*, which we have a power of rendering quite useless to us by covering it with the eye-lid, which nature has, to be sure, provided for that purpose, lest by the too free use both of the external and internal eye, we should injure them, and thereby entirely deprive ourselves of them. And though no man ever voluntarily shut up his external eyes, except to relieve them, and make them more serviceable to him afterwards; yet men are almost universally disposed to do this with respect to the eye of the mind, taking particular pleasure in the diversion which, in the country, is called *blind-man's-buff*.

“As the eye,” says our author, “has a power of letting in more or less light, so the mind has a power of admitting these truths in a greater or less degree, at pleasure.” P. 361.

Again, whereas the other senses are improved by exercise to a certain degree, this internal sense is capable of indefinite improvement, even *ad infinitum*; so that though the eye and ear admit of no sensible improvement from ten to fourscore years, this *eye of the mind* is improved, as our author has found by computation, in an exact arithmetical

ratio with the application of it. For with the eye of the mind you see every thing just a thousand times better for having looked at them a thousand times. A man, therefore, who has but just begun to make use of his common sense is no more fit to hold an argument with a man who has grown expert in the use of it, than a man with his naked eyes only can dispute about the spots of the sun, with one who has got a telescope. The latter sees a thousand things in objects that the former cannot possibly see at all. How this can be reconciled with the fact, of mankind not improving in knowledge, but sometimes going backwards, I leave to our author's *third* publication on the subject.

“It may seem a paradox,” says our author, “but it is a certain truth, that common sense, as it is indeed more worthy, so it is not less capable of culture than any other of our faculties.” Vol. II. p. 349. “We do not pretend to determine the degree of certainty at which he will arrive, for that will be proportioned to the degree of rationality of which he is possessed; but he may promise himself satisfaction suited to the exercise he gives his good sense and probity on this important occasion. This prescription is no less proper for the unthinking part of mankind, than for professed sceptics. Many take primary truths for granted, without attending to their evidence; who, if they took the trouble of comparing them with the opposite absurdities, would believe them more cordially, and feel their influence upon the temper and manner more sensibly than they do.” P. 255.

“He who has distinguished fifty times between obvious truth and arbitrary conceit, pronounces with a clearness of persuasion fifty times greater than that with which another pronounces, who has discerned the difference but once only; and he who has distinguished a hundred times, pronounces with a quickness and firmness a hundred times greater,” &c. Vol. II. p. 346.

To improve upon this hint, suppose our author were to draw up a list of primary truths, get it printed, and, in order to employ the civil magistrate in *preventing* rather than *punishing* error, let him compel every child, from the very first dawn of rationality, to repeat them fifty or a hundred times every morning. We knew before that such an exercise would strengthen the *voice*, and now we have reason to think it would contribute no less to strengthen the *judgment*. The danger would be lest, by this exercise,

mankind should be too knowing for their rank in the creation.

This doctrine of Dr. Oswald's, concerning the improveableness of the faculty of common sense by culture, it may be proper to observe, is the very reverse of Dr. Beattie's sentiments on the same subject. In his comparison of reason and common sense, he says, that the former is *more in our power* than the latter. He adds, "There are few faculties, either of our mind or body, more improveable by culture than that of reasoning; whereas common sense, like other instincts, arrives at maturity with almost no care of ours." P. 47. This, and other points of difference, I hope these learned doctors will settle between themselves, before they join their forces for their common defence.

This opening of the intellectual eye must, however, be a very disagreeable and painful operation; or, since the advantages of keeping it open are so very great, one would think that men would have hit upon some contrivance to keep it always open. Whereas, on the contrary, they seem to have got some extraordinary and most effectual method of keeping their eye-lids down.

"It is," says our author, speaking of common sense, "the gift of heaven, but needs to be stirred up; and has been so long and universally neglected, that to give it full exercise, requires more attention, and application of thought, than most people are willing to bestow. The principles of good sense are diametrically opposite to received opinions and established maxims." P. 17.

But, notwithstanding this, common sense has more hold of the vulgar, than it has of the learned. "There are those, not indeed of the unlearned, but among the learned, who distrust the authority of common sense, and seem to doubt its existence; and some there are who positively affirm that there neither is, nor can be, any such thing. In truth, the unlearned are the only people who retain a clear idea of common sense, and appeal to it as an oracle, and the learned only are sceptical. You shall not find a man of sense among the unlearned who hesitates, and scarce will you find one among the learned who doth not. Such are the blessed effects of modern learning." P. 274.

If the too sagacious reader should discover any thing like inconsistency between this quotation and the preceding, he should consider that, though I have brought them together, one of them is taken from p. 17, and the other

from p. 274, which are sufficiently distant from one another. In the following paragraphs our author explains the reason of this departure from common sense both in the vulgar and in the learned.

“As the vulgar, through the grossness of their conceptions, have lame and confused ideas of primary truths, so the learned have puzzled themselves and others about them by the arts of reasoning, to which they have been so long and so violently attached. So that, in fact, the common people deprive themselves of the blessings of common sense by thinking too little, and the learned by thinking too much.”

Besides the general defects, and neglects, relating to this power of common sense, it seems to be more especially defective in its information concerning the *self-determining power*, which our author is resolved to preserve, though all mankind, at least both the learned and unlearned, which I suppose includes them all, think differently from him on the subject. “Notwithstanding our aversion to frivolous disputes, about obvious truths, something must be done to give satisfaction concerning a self-determining power. Otherwise all that has been said, or can be said, in favour of virtue, must go for nothing; because all men, learned and unlearned, bigots or free-thinkers, are not merely sceptical, but infidels with regard to the reality of this power.” Vol. II. p. 208. It is, indeed, very strange, but not the less true, that all mankind should be possessed of this most important power, on which all virtue depends, and yet that they should be so far from knowing, or suspecting it, and that they cannot be persuaded to believe they have any such thing. This something resembles Moliere's *Médecin malgré lui*.

SECTION V.

Of the Extensive Application of the Principle of Common Sense to MORALS and RELIGION.

THIS life is nothing but a scene of joys and sorrows, hopes and fears; and we are continually passing from the one to the other. All this will be frequently exemplified by my reader. And as I first gave him a general view of the bright side of my picture, and then desired him to contemplate the shade, I shall now exhibit the bright side again, and desire him to take a more particular survey of it.

We shall here find that this great oracle of the human breast has pronounced most distinctly concerning all the

fundamental doctrines and duties of morality, comprehending the whole of natural religion, the evidences of Christianity, and even the more essential articles of Christian faith. To this, however, we must subjoin our author's just, pathetic and eloquent complaints of the shameful neglect of this principle; and the great folly of philosophers and divines in having recourse to the deceitful principle of *reason*; which, according to our author, may almost be considered as the source of all evil and mischief; when every thing they ought to have wished for might have been obtained without any trouble at all, by only applying to common sense.

Speaking of the great outlines of morality in general, our author says, "The obligations arising from obvious relations are the objects of common sense." Vol. II. p. 195. Again, "Besides those instinctive emotions and feelings, which we have in common with the lower animals, every individual of the human kind has a perception, which idiots and the inferior animals have not, of what he owes to himself, to his offspring, to his friends and benefactors, to his country, and to his God.—Those sacred obligations, which have been the subject of dispute with the learned, are objects of simple perception and judgment to men of sense." P. 24.

"That magistrates ought to be obeyed, that the workman is worthy of his wages, that every one ought to take care of his own, and his family's interest, and that men ought to do kind and friendly offices to each other; these, and the like propositions, appear obviously true, as the propositions opposite to them appear obviously false, to every man of common sense." P. 247.

Such are the dictates of our infallible instructor and guide as to the great duties of morality, respecting this life. If we want to be informed concerning the peculiar *sanctions* of natural religion, our author assures us, that this great principle "affords men an almost infallible direction in the whole conduct of their lives, and that it was intended by the Author of our being for giving us entire satisfaction concerning all primary truths, those of religion in particular; and that our not having recourse to this power is the true cause of those idle disputes, which have been maintained of late about the truth of religion." P. 8.

That the *being* of God ought not to be attempted to be proved by reason we have in some measure seen already, and we shall hear more on that subject hereafter; we shall, therefore, proceed to other articles of religion. "To ac-

knowledge the being, and dispute the *attributes* of God betrays," says our author, "great stupidity, or gross prevarication." Vol. II. p. 80. Now for the Divine *unity*. "A work of design, indicates one and but one author to a sound understanding." Vol. II. p. 75. With respect to the obligation to *worship* and *obey* God, he acknowledges, indeed, that "it would be unreasonable to expect the same instinctive emotions and inclinations that we have to the other offices of life. But," he says, "we have a clear perception of those obligations, accompanied with emotions and inclinations which nearly resemble those we call instinctive." P. 216.

Speaking of trusting in God, with respect to things that are above our comprehension, our author says, with peculiar emphasis and eloquence, "This is religion, this is philosophy, this is common sense." Vol. II. p. 140. "It is *nonsense*," says he, "to talk of difficulties and embarrassments arising from a constitution of things to which the Supreme Being gave existence of his free choice." Vol. II. p. 97. Other divines are content with saying that this conduct is highly *unreasonable*.

The great difficulty in the theory of natural religion is the proof of a *future life*; but, happily, that difficulty is now entirely removed. Let us only silence the impertinence of reason, and common sense will speak plain enough, and to the purpose, on this subject. "We do not pretend," says Dr. Oswald, "to demonstrate, from any thing that we know of the present state, that there will be a future state of existence." Vol. II. p. 296. This has been said by many Christian divines, but then they have recourse to revelation for a sure foundation of their faith in this great doctrine; but our author can do without this resource.

"We must," says he, "enter a complaint against the learned of both sides, for their injurious manner of treating this interesting and important subject. In place of setting full in the view of mankind, a truth which none pretend to doubt of, and about which no man can be unconcerned, viz. that we are *accountable* to God for our conduct, the friends of religion and virtue have ransacked all nature for arguments to prove that we shall *actually be called to account*, and have thereby turned the attention of mankind from their proper business to an endless and fruitless dispute, about what is possible and impossible in nature, and may or may not come to pass. Was this well advised? If a man is desirous of certain information concerning this great event, let him consult the revelation which God has made of his mind. Or if

he is not satisfied about that, let him consult the sentiments of his own heart, about his being *liable to account*.—But if he will do neither, your reasoning is vain; for the man is a fool, and his folly is voluntary, and therefore incurable, or not to be cured by the art of reasoning.” Vol. II. p. 306.

If my reader will not peruse this paragraph over again, he will perhaps overlook the most excellent *distinction without a difference*, with which the whole compass of his reading will ever furnish him. That we are *accountable to God* for our conduct, is a truth that no man can pretend to doubt of, or be unconcerned about; and yet all the powers of reason cannot persuade the same man to believe that he shall be *actually called to account*. And all the mischief that has been done by philosophers and divines has arisen from their not having attended to the distinction between those two very different things.

Since this distinction is of such unspeakable consequence, and has hitherto been entirely overlooked by all divines and philosophers, it would certainly very much oblige and benefit the world if Dr. Oswald would give us a discourse upon the subject; insisting largely and strongly on the consideration of our being *accountable to God*, and being *liable to be called to account*, but, at the same time, carefully avoiding every thing that could give us an idea of our ever being *actually brought to account*. I the less wonder at the conduct of divines in this case, because I think it must require no small ingenuity and skill to do it. But what may not be expected from the eloquence of Dr. Oswald!

Speaking more particularly of Socrates's arguments for a future state, he says, “But in that variety of arguments, advanced by this great and good man, none give such satisfaction to a plain understanding, as his observation to Crito, that the carcass he shewed so great concern about was not Socrates; that Socrates was he who then discoursed, reasoned, and gave arrangements to his thoughts, and who, he said, would soon give them the slip. This is common sense.” Vol. II. p. 288.

Deriving so much information from common sense, and finding such effectual sanctions of virtue in it, one would have thought that *revelation* might have been spared; and many good Christians would be exceedingly offended at our author for ascribing so much to *nature* in this respect. But then he makes atonement, by establishing the evidences of revelation upon the foundation of the same common sense; which, of course, supersedes all *reasoning* about the matter,

and thereby saves those good Christians a great deal of trouble, in inquiring for themselves, or replying to the impertinent cavils of others.

“Of a revelation from God;” meaning, no doubt, the Jewish and Christian, he says, that “few have any serious doubt, and that no man can disbelieve it in any consistency with common sense.” P. 56. But for the farther illustration of this important subject, another whole volume is promised us.

As the truth of the scripture history is founded on common sense, so we may take it for granted that its contents are agreeable to it. “The Scriptures,” says our author, “are the true, if not the only source of sound philosophy and good sense on these subjects, viz. moral obligation.” Vol. II. p. 203. By the way, after making good sense the source of so much knowledge in morals, I do not see with what propriety our author can call the Scriptures the source of this good sense.

The manner in which Dr. Oswald speaks of “two important truths,” which, he says, the Christian revelation superadds to our natural notions of religion, which it has revived, viz. “an œconomy of grace in this life, and an exact retribution in the next,” is particularly curious. “One cannot conceive,” says he, “what prejudice a man of sense can have to this plain doctrine. And as it was received by persons nowise prejudiced in its favour, upon an attestation in which they could not be deceived, one must reckon all scepticism concerning it as mere affectation.” P. 254. When a man speaks of indubitable truths, he ought at least to use intelligible language; but what our author means by *an œconomy of grace*, I really do not understand.

I now come to present my reader with a few specimens of our author's pathetic and eloquent complaints on the subject of neglecting this common sense, in the defence of religion, natural and revealed, and on divines having imprudently condescended to reason about it, which was a piece of complaisance as mischievous as it was unnecessary. Infidels are a set of people with whom it is exceedingly improper for a Christian philosopher, and much beneath his dignity, to hold any parley.

“Is there not,” says Dr. Oswald, “just cause of complaint against the learned for overlooking distinctions which seldom escape the observation of the vulgar, and thereby exposing religion to objections which would be rejected

with disdain on any other subject? Not only the Christian revelation," p. 55, "but the moral perfections and government of God, yea, and the very being of virtue, have been made the subject of dispute. Freethinkers are not ashamed to publish their doubts concerning these realities, divines and philosophers have not disdained to establish them by a multitude of arguments." P. 364.

"The power of custom, in reconciling the mind to measures, however absurd, which are become familiar, is almost incredible. Should an Indian of good sense be told, that, for some time past, men of the greatest eminence in the learned world had been employed in disputing with one another about the reality of virtue and vice; whether, for instance, the obligations of justice, temperance, gratitude, were nominal, fictitious and fanciful; or whether we were, indeed, bound to the practice of these and such like virtues; that volumes have been written on both sides, and deep attention given to the controversy, and that each hypothesis had its votaries; would the foreigner give credit to this report?

"Yet this conduct, so unaccountable to a foreigner, has been continued among us without much notice. The subject, it is true, merits the strictest attention; the researches on both sides were curious enough, acquisitions of some value were made in the abstract sciences; the audacity of one side seemed to require a check, and the zeal of the other was at least pardonable. But, in good earnest, might not that zeal, that acuteness, penetration and compass of thought, have been employed with greater propriety, and to more advantage? Was there any occasion at all for such disquisitions? Must metaphysicians and subtle disputants be called in to evince our obligations to do the right and shun the wrong? Can we, without renouncing common sense, be ignorant, doubtful, or even insensible to such obligations? There is need, great need, to awaken, revive and enforce them; but without the influence of false learning there could be no room to doubt what every man of common understanding does, and must perceive at first sight." Vol. II. p. 152.

How fatal would a strict regard to *truth* be to a turn for *eloquence*. All this truly fine piece of declamation would have been lost to the world, if our author had recollected, that *moral obligation itself* never was a subject of dispute, but only the *foundation* of this obligation. Let our author

endeavour to recollect the names of the writers who ever disputed whether men were indeed bound to the practice of justice, temperance, &c.

These complaints respect *writers* chiefly, but his complaints against the *preachers of the gospel*, on the same score, are still stronger. "What is more to be regretted," says Dr. Oswald, "the preachers of the gospel, forgetting the dignity of their character, and the design of their office, have condescended to plead the cause of religion in much the same manner as lawyers maintain a disputed right of property. Instead of awakening the natural sentiments of the human heart, and giving them a true direction, they have entered into reasonings about piety, justice and benevolence, too profound to be fathomed by the multitude, and too subtle to produce any considerable effect. Instead of setting forth the displays of the Divine perfections in the dispensation of the gospel, so admirably fitted to touch, to penetrate, and to subdue the human mind, they have entertained their audiences with long and laboured proofs of a revelation from God, of which few have any serious doubt, and which no man can disbelieve in any consistency with common sense. May not this be called, with propriety, a throwing cold water on religion; and ought it not to be considered as one of the chief causes of that insensibility to all its concerns of which we so frequently complain? The multitude has been astonished, wise men have been ashamed, and good men grieved at this treatment of religion, so much beneath its dignity." P. 56.

Our author intimates, however, that, bad as the case is, it is not yet quite desperate. Access to the tree of life is yet open; and common sense, this remedy for all our ills, though hitherto so shamefully neglected, will not refuse her succour upon proper application.

"Till divines and philosophers have abated their ardour for frivolous inquiries, and learned the art of turning the attention of mankind to obvious and interesting truth, they have no title to complain of the unthinking part of mankind. For one may be bold to affirm, that multitudes would act a better part than they do, if they were under better treatment." Vol. II. p. 221. Now, as Dr. Oswald's parish is undoubtedly under this very treatment, I should be glad to be informed of the state of it. Though his books have, in some measure, put all the world under the same treatment, it is too large a field of inquiry; and though I have read his performance with some degree of attention,

there may be something in my particular constitution that *turns medicine into poison*. See p. 372.

“It is apparent,” says our author, “that if common sense had been consulted, a controversy of the most pernicious kind might have been wholly prevented, or soon stopped. And, if men will yet pay the regard that is due to common sense, they shall find themselves relieved from embarrassments they have always complained of, and see the whole of religion rise to their view in that obvious, plain and pleasant light, in which the face of nature appears when freed from those mists and clouds by which it was obscured.” Vol. II. p. 204.

Lastly, our author proceeds to give more particular directions concerning what is necessary to be done by divines towards the reformation of the world, without addressing the reason of their hearers; which is a thing that they ought, if possible, to have nothing to do with. This is to put them under the direction of God, in the dictates of common sense, if I understand him rightly, when I put all the passages together. For there is something of the air of *mysticism* in what he says upon this subject; and things of that nature do not find the readiest admission to my understanding.

“Till divines and philosophers are better skilled in touching the springs of the human heart than they are, or affect to appear, they cannot reach the end they propose; and were they possessed of all the eloquence of Greece or Rome, they could not accomplish what they ought to have in view, I mean, to save those from ruin who will not take the trouble of saving themselves; and in order thereto, to correct and cure the inveterate folly of the human heart. There is something here that demands a deeper attention than has been given to it; something, too, that points at a method of forming mankind to virtue, which has been too much neglected.” Vol. II. p. 227.

“The great secret in forming men to religion and virtue, if it is fit to call that a secret which is so palpable to common sense, and ought to have been published to all the world, is to persuade them to resign themselves to God, as docile and dutiful pupils to a faithful and capable tutor. To put mankind under a divine direction and influence, ought to be the chief aim of all our instructors in religion and virtue. For without doing so, all their other prescriptions will be found ineffectual, and indeed a mere project. All partial proceedings ought to be dismissed, and justice done to primary truths.” Vol. II. pp. 229, 230, 232.

SECTION VI.

Of the Incroachments of Common Sense on the Province of REASON.

LEST Dr. Oswald should blame me for exhibiting his sentiments without any proper refutation, which I have not always done, because I really thought it to be needless, especially after what I have said in answer to his superiors, Dr. Reid and Dr. Beattie; and also because I thought it would be doing for my reader what he would very easily do for himself, and might rather choose to do for himself; I promise to be a little more serious in this and the following sections; in the first of which I shall endeavour to shew that, as great an enemy as Dr. Oswald is to reasoning on the subject of morals and religion, he himself makes more use of it than he is willing to acknowledge. For, to make the more of his principle of common sense, he has manifestly encroached upon what has hitherto been universally deemed the province of reason.

To prevent all mistake of my meaning, I shall here observe, that a proposition may be said to be proved by reason when a *third term* is necessary to shew the connexion between the *subject* and *predicate* of it; and that a general proposition is proved by an induction of a sufficient number of the particulars which are comprised in it.

Thus, when I want to prove that the three internal angles of a right-lined triangle are equal to two right angles, I make another set of angles, to which I know that the three angles in question are equal, and which I can also easily shew to be equal to two right angles. If I want to prove that any particular person is generous, I point out a number of generous things that he has done, which indicate that character.

If our author will say that this is not reasoning, I answer, that then there is no such thing as reasoning. This, I will venture to say, has hitherto been universally deemed reasoning; and if Dr. Oswald chooses to call it by any other name, he imposes upon himself and the world, by changing the established signification of words. But, in fact, it will appear, from a passage that I shall presently quote, that Dr. Oswald has the same ideas of the nature of reasoning, though he seems very often to have lost sight of them.

That Dr. Oswald, in many cases, merely cavils at the terms *reason*, *proof* and *demonstration*, and that he misapplies

them, in order to ridicule and explode them, is very evident to me; and I think it cannot but appear so to all my readers, who are not quite adepts in this new science of common sense, and consequently accustomed to the phrases and sense of terms peculiar to it.

Speaking of the being and attributes of God, he says, "To what purpose demonstrate a truth, to the indubitable certainty of which all nature bears testimony?" P. 151. Now excepting Dr. Clarke's arguments *a priori*,* which have long ceased to be so much as mentioned by divines, all that, in fact, has ever been meant by *demonstrating* the being and attributes of God, is to exhibit and explain the testimony of nature; by pointing out such marks of design, power and benevolence in the constitution of the world, as prove not only that it had a cause, but that this cause must be a being possessed of great power, wisdom and goodness.

Again he says, "You cannot form an idea of God, by gazing upon his works, without observing their tendency; and entering as far as your faculties will carry you into his great, wise and gracious plan." P. 197.

After our author has evinced the *being* of a God, without the help of reason, he proceeds to assert, in the title of the first chapter of book third, that "to acknowledge the being and dispute the attributes of God, betrays great stupidity, or gross prevarication." But the manner in which he supports this with respect to the particular attributes, is so like reasoning, that I own I can see no difference between it and reasoning. Let the reader judge.

"We acknowledge that it is impossible to avoid the idea of God when we look on the phenomena of nature; but if we do not content ourselves with words without meaning, we must, at the same time, acknowledge, that it is impossible for us to form any conception of the immense system of nature, without an idea of the immensity of his power who made and upholds it; that it is impossible to trace the endless connexion and combination of causes conspiring to one great design, without having an idea of the unfathomable depth of the Divine wisdom; that it is impossible to survey the multitude of living creatures he has brought into being, which he upholds in being, and protects from danger, and for whom he makes continual and bountiful supplies, without acknowledging his immense benevolence and parental care. And when we recollect the various sufferings of body

* See Biog. Brit. III. p. 597, Note I, and Dr. Kippis's Additions, p. 607.

and mind, which he has connected with, and made consequent upon almost every deviation from moral rectitude, even in this life, and the natural dread which every guilty person has of a more exact retribution in another state; it is impossible for us to avoid an idea of his tremendous justice." Vol. II. p. 81.

That any person should be able to write this, and call it by any other name than *reasoning* I own surprises me not a little; and I can only compare our author to the poor man who had spoken *prose* all his life without knowing it.

Also when Dr. Oswald says, "It is *nonsense* to expect that lead should swim in water," p. 138, it is impossible that his meaning should really differ from that of the generality of philosophers to whom his language must, I am persuaded, sound very strange. They would shew, by observation and experiment, that nothing of this kind has ever happened, and would say they had then proved that the expectation of its happening was very *unreasonable*; but would think it a strange abuse of words to call it *nonsensical*. To nonsense, as the term has generally been used hitherto, no ideas at all can be annexed, except such as are inconsistent with one another; and we can form as clear an idea of lead *not* sinking in water, as of its sinking. What is really nonsense can never become sense; but by miraculous power the laws of nature can be suspended or reversed.

To enlarge the province of this new principle of common sense, Dr. Oswald manifestly encroaches upon the province of reason in other instances. He expresses the greatest possible surprise and indignation that divines should have endeavoured "to discover a medium to demonstrate that we ought to worship God, to do justice to men, and to keep our passions and appetites within just and proper bounds." P. 91. Upon this occasion he says, as was quoted above, "No demonstration is of equal force with common sense; and no confutation can serve the interest of truth so effectually as a plain conviction of nonsense; and therefore it was the business of divines and philosophers to have recourse to the simple decision of common sense on a subject so plain and important."

I cannot help thinking, however, that it would answer a very good purpose both to define strictly what we mean by *worshipping God, doing justice to men and bringing our passions within proper bounds*; and also that, when these propositions have been defined, intermediate and plainer propositions may be found, which will serve to shew the

truth of the former. And such proofs of these moral duties I think have been given by many writers, and I hope have not been impertinently alleged in my *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*. *

I am the more surprised at Dr. Oswald's objections to the common language of logicians, as he himself distinguishes very well between such propositions as are self-evident, and such as are not. "No man," says he, "can be at a loss to know propositions that are the objects of common sense from those that are not, and to determine with himself where he has, or has not a right to suspend his judgment. If the evidence of the proposition under consideration flows from its relation to or connexion with some other truth, he has no doubt a right to suspend his judgment till he has inquired into that connexion and relation." P. 248.

Now surely the proposition that *magistrates ought to be obeyed* depends upon this other proposition, that *the good of the society ought to be provided for*. Or if our author be an advocate for a natural and divine right, still he must give some reason for it. If he reflect at all upon the subject, he will hardly maintain that such a right is *self-evident*. This latter proposition then, viz. that *the good of the state ought to be consulted*, may properly be urged in support of the former, that magistrates ought to be obeyed. It is so much of an *argument*, that I dare say neither our author, nor any other person, could possibly avoid it in discoursing on the subject.

Our author, indeed, admits of *a kind of demonstration* of primary truths, which arises from *comparing them with their opposite absurdities*; in consequence of which he says, "we shall believe them more cordially, and feel their influence more sensibly than we do. A real believer," he says, "will not despise the well-meant labours of those who have endeavoured to demonstrate the primary truths by reducing their opposites to absurdity; but knows that, without their help, he can, by a single thought, reduce these chimeras to the grossest of all absurdities, namely, to nonsense." P. 255. Though, therefore, it is *pardonable* to demonstrate the being and perfections of God, the necessity of obeying magistrates, &c., he advises us to spare ourselves that trouble, and with more magnanimity appeal at once to the great tribunal of common sense. An admirably short and decisive method truly! something similar to De Foe's *Short method with the*

* Pt. 1, Ch. 2. See Vol. II. pp. 25—57.

Dissenters ;* with this difference, that De Foe was in jest, but Dr. Oswald is in most serious earnest.

Such is the force of common sense, in my use of the word, that our author not only allows of reasoning in others, but falls into downright reasoning himself upon several subjects, which he had expressly exempted from the province of reasoning, and in the very chapter in the title of which he disclaims reasoning.

“ Lord Bolingbroke,” he says, “ who contends so zealously for the being and providence of God, is no less zealous in decrying our natural notions of his moral perfections, and moral government, together with the expectation we have of an exact retribution of our good and evil actions. But never was a great genius more absurdly, or indeed more idly employed. For, in spite of all the arts of logic, of rhetoric, of bullying, and of canting, practised by his Lordship, every one who believes there is a God will believe that he loves the right and hates the wrong ; and expect, of course, that he will reward the one and punish the other.” Vol. II. p. 276. Now is not Dr. Oswald’s suggesting that God *loves the right and hates the wrong* a proper *argument*, to prove that he will reward the one and punish the other ? Indeed, why did he use the word *therefore*, if he was not *arguing* and proving one thing by means of another ? If this be not reasoning, and in the necessary forms, I know not what is.

But, possibly, our author might think himself sufficiently guarded against this objection by the manner in which he has expressed the title of this chapter, which is ingenious enough. “ To maintain a curious debate about a future judgment, when we ought to be preparing for so awful an event, is unpardonable folly.” *Ib.* The three next chapters have the title of “ *The same subject continued.*”

The objection then is not to *arguments* but to *curious arguments*. But how shall we distinguish curious debates from those that are not curious ; and what does our author mean by *curious* ? A word of so very vague a meaning is

* “ The shortest Way with the Dissenters : or Proposals for the Establishment of the Church ;” 1702, an *irony* recommending “ one severe law” to be “ made, and punctually executed, that whoever was found at a conventicle, should be banished the nation, and the preacher be hanged.” The real design of the author was mistaken by some of his own party, one of whom wrote against him “ Reflexions upon a late scandalous and malicious Pamphlet.” *De Foe’s* intention was better understood and felt by a *Tory* House of Commons, who, in February 1703, ordered his pamphlet “ to be burnt by the hands of the Common Hangman,” and the author to be fined and set on the pillory, which “ he endured with great fortitude” and soon after published *A Hymn to the Pillory*. See “ a second volume of the writings of the Author of *The True-born Englishman*,” 1705, p. 102, and *Biog. Brit.* V. pp. 55, 56.

certainly very improperly used upon such an occasion as this. If I should be asked to point to a specimen of *curious reasoning*, I should name this very treatise of Dr. Oswald's.

But the propriety of the title of this same chapter is guarded in another curious manner. "It is unpardonable folly," he says, "to maintain a curious debate about a future judgment, when we ought to be preparing for it." But who ever denied that there was a time to *prepare* for a future event, as well as for *proving* that it will happen, and that these two ought not to interfere with one another? If he meant that we ought never to debate, but to be always preparing, it was unpardonable folly in him to write his treatise; in which he not only debates, but is the occasion of more debating, as the book I am now writing evidences.

I have descanted a little upon the title of this one chapter, or rather of four chapters (which, by the way, is very awkward and confused in point of method), in order to exhibit a specimen of our author's unfair and equivocal manner of writing, throughout. By an artful choice of words he makes, upon all occasions, a specious harangue, when his pompous assertions are all the while either nugatory, or false.

As the greatest part of Dr. Oswald's two volumes consists of such writing as this, I shall, for the more complete information of my reader concerning the nature of it, produce another example of his artfully adopting a mode of expression which cuts off all reply, except that of its being absolutely trifling; while he is using all the pomp and parade of the most important observations.

"To state the primary truths in their native light and strength, and in comparison with their opposite falsities, and to shew, in the clearest, plainest manner, which ought to preponderate, was in justice due to the public. But to trace every conceit, of every bold projector, through all the windings of abstruse and sophistical reasoning, or to offer laborious and minute defences of truths which neither require nor admit of any, was ill advised." P. 315.

I challenge our author to specify the writers on whom this censure falls, viz. those who have *traced every conceit of every bold projector through all the windings of abstruse and sophistical reasoning*, or who have *offered laborious and minute defences of truths which neither required nor admitted of any*. One would imagine, from reading Dr. Oswald, that this egregious and laborious trifling had been universal with the infatuated friends of religion. But let our author name the

men, and prove his charge; or be considered as having given himself ridiculous airs, by clothing mere calumny in rant.

Indeed, the exceptions which our author himself makes to his violent accusations will almost amount to a full confutation of his declamatory abuse.

“It was no doubt proper,” he says, “to detect the scandalous shuffling of Collins, to expose the rambling conceits of Lord Shaftesbury, the dangerous paradoxes of Mr. Hume, and the presumptuous boldness of Lord Bolingbroke. It might also be fit to take some notice of the quibbles of inferior writers. But to engage the attention of a whole nation to a formal dispute between grave divines, and writers of this stamp, about the truth of religion, as if this was a point yet unsettled, was a manner of proceeding much below the dignity of the subject, and from which little good could be expected. From the common effect produced on the minds of the multitude, by attending the pleading of lawyers in a contentious law-suit, one might foretel the consequences of this ill-judged measure.” P. 316.

Now I really do not know to what kind of reasoning any of the defenders of Christianity have had recourse, except such as was adopted in the controversies above referred to, and which our author allows to have been proper. And exclusive of such controversies as he himself expressly approves, I challenge him to say when the *attention of any whole nation was ever engaged to a formal dispute between grave divines about the truth of religion, as if it was a point yet unsettled*. This assertion, I will venture to say, was made absolutely at random, and has no foundation in truth. It is a mere rhetorical flourish, in support of a piece of miserable sophistry.

Our author farther allows that “the disciples of Manes were entitled to satisfaction, because,” as he curiously enough expresses it, “they *founded on realities*.” He adds, “but it is below the dignity of divines or philosophers to fight with chimeras. These ancient heretics had not the boldness of modern theorists, who scruple not to resolve natural and moral evil into the Divine will; but from the same aversion which all guilty persons have of bringing the charge home to themselves, they fancied themselves under the necessity of having recourse to two gods, the authors of all that is good or evil in the world.” Vol. II. p. 78.

Not to remark upon our author's taking it for granted that all Necessarians are unbelievers (though the very best of all

the defences of Christianity has been written by a Necessarian)* I shall only ask, whether all who object to religion and Christianity do not pretend to found their objections on *realities*, as well as Manes †‡

The remainder of the paragraph quoted above is not less curious, and of a piece with the rest of the treatise. "This gross error," viz. that of Manes "is, however, long since extinct, and the friends of religion can be under no obligation to prove the unity of God, till at least some one appear who can say, with a good conscience, that he suspects that there are more than one, to whom we owe that worship and obedience which is due, in return for his being and preservation; and till he assign some plausible reason for his suspicion." P. 79.

But can there be no propriety or advantage in reviewing the errors of past ages, and in the confutation of them? May we not hope, by that means to prevent a relapse into them? Can we be too well established in truths of great importance? Besides, with respect to this very question, of the *unity of God*, has not the church of Rome, the church of England, and even *the church of Scotland*, more objects of supreme worship than one? †‡

I would also ask, what the word *plausible* has to do in this business? If an error be *actually* embraced, and spreads, must I defer the combating of it till some *grand jury*, appointed for the purpose, shall vote that it is a plausible one? Had these preliminaries been requisite, it is not certain that I should have been permitted to answer Dr. Oswald.

I shall produce but one instance more of our author's complaints of the conduct of Christian divines, who have judged and acted differently from himself; because, *for once*, he names his man. "Had Dr. Clarke employed his natural good sense, which was not inferior to his learning, in setting in a true and full light all the shameful absurdities of those who believe there is a God, and behave as if there was none, he would have done more service to the interests of truth, than can be done by a thousand demonstrations." P. 151.

But why may it not be of service to set in a strong light the absurdity of not believing or affecting not to believe that

* Probably *Hartley*, whose Chapter *Of the Truth of the Christian Religion* is strongly recommended in the preface to the *Institutes*. See Vol. II. p. xxi.

† Or *Mani*, a *Heretic*, who flourished in the third Century. See Lardner, W. III. p. 415.

‡ "In the unity of the Godhead there be Three persons, of one substance, power and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost." *The Confession of Faith*, &c. Glasgow, 1753, Ch. ii. Sect. 3, p. 34.

there is a God, as well as of not acting in a manner agreeable to that belief? The latter is certainly as obvious, and therefore is as little necessary to be insisted upon as the former. But so great is our author's aversion to *reasoning*, that a man must not touch upon the former, however necessary, because something like *argument*, *proof* and *demonstration* may be wanted; whereas, on the latter of these topics a man may declaim as long as he pleases, writing as Dr. Oswald does, without any reasoning at all.

Lastly, our author very much misrepresents the conduct of the *sacred writers*, in order to favour his system, and to decry reasoning. "The inspired writers do not offer any proof of the being and perfections of God. They tell us that the invisible things of him are clearly seen from the things which he has made, &c.—but never enter into trains of reasoning, to establish a truth that is too obvious to admit of any proof." Vol II. pp. 51, 52.

But how do any divines pretend to prove the invisible power of God otherwise than by the visible effects of it? At least I never had recourse to any other argument, and yet I imagine that I have reasoned on the subject.*

Perhaps our author may think to escape my animadversions, by saying that, though the sacred writers do reason, they do not enter into *trains of reasoning* on the subject: But whether a man uses trains of reasoning or not, or whether the trains be longer or shorter is not the question; but whether they reason at all. In my opinion our author may find both excellent reasoning and even long trains of reasoning on the being, perfections, and providence of God, in various parts of the books of scripture, as in the book of Job, the Psalms, and the Prophets. In my opinion Paul reasoned very closely on this subject in his discourse before the Athenian Areopagites. See Acts xvii. But the sacred writers had no occasion to prove the being or perfections of God to those who admitted them, which was generally the case with those to whom, or for whom they wrote.

SECTION VII.

Of DR. OSWALD'S *Refutation of the Argument in Proof of the BEING OF A GOD.*

THERE is no subject on which Dr. Oswald declaims so frequently, or with so much vehemence, and seeming satisfaction to himself, as on the want of judgment in divines, in

* See my Institutes, Vol. I. (P.) See Vol. II. pp. 7—17.

reasoning concerning the *being of a God*; which he always speaks of as "too obvious and sacred a truth to be subjected to the reasonings of men, and that too much encouragement has been given to the cavils of sceptics by entering into reasoning about it." These propositions are the titles of two separate chapters in his second volume, pp. 50 and 57.

In the latter of these chapters he even openly assumes the character of an atheist, and undertakes a complete refutation of the standing argument for the being of a God, in order to shew that it is incapable of any proper *proof*; but that the proposition, being nevertheless true, must be admitted on the sole authority of common sense; not considering that if this new principle of common sense should ever be exploded, he has no resource left, but must in good earnest profess himself an atheist. And thus, like the dog in the fable, by catching at a shadow, he will have lost the substance. Now, as I should be very sorry for such a catastrophe, I shall go over the several steps of this demonstration along with Dr. Oswald, in order to convince him, that, notwithstanding his confident objections, it is a very good one, and will bear the strictest examination.

"No process of reasoning," says Dr. Oswald, "can be employed in favour of this capital truth, that will not be found either false or frivolous; or if the premises are admitted to proof, there can be no just conclusion. The premises are these, a work that indicates design must be ascribed to an intelligent author. The world is a work that indicates design," &c. Vol. II. p. 57.

From these premises, each of which Dr. Oswald allows to be just, though not demonstrable, I think it may be clearly proved that *the world must be ascribed to an intelligent author*, which is what we mean by the term *God*. If the conclusion be allowed to be fairly drawn from the premises, which Dr. Oswald does not deny, the argument is certainly complete, whether we proceed any farther, viz. to prove the truth of the premises, or not. To this, however, our author gives no attention; but only says it is impossible to prove the premises. Let us consider then, in what manner he pretends that neither of these premises can be proved, so that an unbeliever may be justified in withholding his assent to them, and consequently to the conclusion that is drawn from them.

"A work that indicates design must be ascribed to an intelligent author." This is an abstract proposition, to which, if the terms of it be defined, I will venture to say

that no man can possibly withhold his assent, being really identical and self-evident. To invalidate this, or rather to evade it, our author absolutely *changes* it, and substitutes another in its place. For, from an abstract and *universal*, he makes it a *particular* proposition; asserting as the reverse of it, that this particular work, viz. *this world, bears no marks of design*; in support of which he alleges the trite atheistical supposition of the possibility of its having been produced by the *concourse of atoms*. "By repeated throws of dice," he says, "one may cast up any number called for, within a given time; and therefore any possible state of nature may result from unlimited revolutions of matter." Vol. II. p. 59.

Not to say that this does not amount to a shadow of an objection to the truth of a proposition which only asserts that a work which *actually does* indicate design is to be ascribed to an intelligent author; which, by supposition, excludes all idea of chance, it may certainly be said, on the behalf of the being of a God, that let atoms revolve *ad infinitum*, and move without a mover, nothing can result from it but new *combinations*, and *positions*. For *powers*, such as those of attraction, repulsion, magnetism, electricity, &c. could never be gained by it; there being no conceivable or possible connexion between such a revolution, and the acquisition of any such powers. It is possible that the ingenuity of Dr. Oswald may suggest something to an atheist in answer to this, but I own I cannot. And yet, as if the believer could make no reply to this objection, which is both misplaced and frivolous, he concludes that he had sufficiently invalidated the force of this *major* proposition, and proceeds with great confidence to attack the minor, viz. that

"The world is a work that indicates design." Here, after acknowledging, "that it is easy to shew them (atheists) a connexion of parts and unity of design, which they cannot gainsay;" yet he maintains that, "because they can point out some strange and uncouth appearances, which we cannot explain, they have a right to withhold their assent, if the case is to be determined by reason, and not by the authority of common sense. But surely, after admitting design in *many things*, they cannot possibly withhold their assent to *those things* having an intelligent author, whatever they may do with respect to the rest." P. 61.

If, for instance, it be undeniable, that the formation of the eye, and of the light, which so admirably correspond to

one another, and to the purpose of giving us notices of distant objects, is an excellent *contrivance*; it is plain that there must have been a *contriver*, or an intelligent author of *that part* of our constitution, though there should be other parts of the same system, the spleen, for instance, the uses of which we could not explain. So that it appears to me, that the proposition is completely proved, according to the strictest forms of logic.

But our author says, " You may unriddle many difficulties, and give satisfaction to several objections. You may do more. By careful inspection, you can shew, to the satisfaction of the sceptic, that what appeared irregularity is regularity in the highest degree; that seeming discord is harmony not understood, and that a seeming blemish is a beauty in the works of God; but you will not silence him. You have something farther to explain, and something farther still, and cannot give a full answer to his objections until you explain the whole, and that you cannot do. Good sense requires that he should be contented with less satisfaction, but he demands *proof*, and as you have undertaken it, you must give it without reserve or limitation."

The proposition, however, proposes no such thing. It only asserts that this world must have had an intelligent author. So that if I prove that *any thing* in the world necessarily requires such an author, which Dr. Oswald himself, in the character of a sceptic, allows, I have fully proved all that I proposed. I will venture to say, that no person, who ever proposed the strictest demonstration of the being of God, ever thought of any thing else; and I even challenge Dr. Oswald to name any atheist who expected more.

If a man should be so foolish as to give out that he could explain all the phenomena of nature, which he certainly could not do, and should acknowledge that he had not demonstrated the being of a God till he had done it, I do not see how *good sense* should help a man to see that he had fulfilled his promise, when it was evident to *reason* that he had not done it. If, therefore, a man advances no more than he can prove, which is sufficient for the demonstration of the being of a God, an appeal may as safely be made to *reason*, as to any thing bearing the name of *common sense*, or any other name that admits of *evidence without proof*. As on the other hand, if he advances more than he can prove, I do not think that there is any power in human nature that can oblige us to say that he had done what he himself acknowledges he could not do.

As the conclusion, however, of all this miserable quibbling and sophistry, our author sums up this chapter with the airs of an acknowledged conqueror. "Whether the sceptic is actuated by impertinent curiosity, a spirit of contradiction, or a yet worse principle, it must be owned that, as a disputant, he has a right to insist on his demand; and, on being refused, to withhold his assent; which he can do with the more ease, and with a much better grace, in the course of a dispute, than he could have done, if you had submitted the truth to his judgment, by a simple appeal." That is, if I *beg the question*, he may, as a *favour*, condescend to grant it.

"It is surprising," continues our author, "that this inconvenience attending the method of argumentation should have been so long overlooked by so many friends of religion, distinguished by their good sense, as well as by their learning. Yet any one may recollect similar instances of men of good understanding, disappointing themselves in common life, by too great eagerness to prove truths too obvious to admit of proof or demonstration."

But what had escaped not only the *learning*, but, what is much more, the *good sense* of all preceding ages, has been luckily discovered by our author.—To conclude this section with seriousness. I know no parallel to such wretched sophistry and conceit. And that any *friend of religion* should thus lend weapons to the common adversaries, and in their name challenge all the powers of reason, certainly would not have gained credit before the publication of this work of Dr. Oswald's. Such are the happy fruits of discarding reason, and substituting this new common sense in its place. And yet this is the man, who, upon all occasions, and from the beginning of his two volumes to the end of them, ridicules and insults the greatest masters of argumentation.

"Can you tell me," says he "whence it comes to pass, that our celebrated divines and philosophers blunder so grossly in an art to which they are so much devoted?" P. 375. But before a man had affected this contempt of reasoning, he should certainly have known *what it was*; which appears not to have been the case with Dr. Oswald. I have studied, and I have taught logic, but in no scholar's exercise did I ever see such marks of a total ignorance of the plainest rules of it, as in Dr. Oswald's critical examination of the argument for the being of God; and it is evident that in him common sense has not supplied the place of logic, though he boasts of its doing infinitely more.

SECTION VIII.

Of the Application of Common Sense to various Disquisitions in MORALS and THEOLOGY.

WHEN the idea of this new sense was first started, it had the appearance of something new and whimsical, indeed, but it threatened nothing; seeming to be only a new method of explaining the manner in which we give our assent to self-evident propositions; and, provided the propositions were really self-evident, it signified nothing in practice by what means we evince them to be so.

Going thus backwards, into the obscure regions of *Metaphysics* could do no great harm, and might prove an innocent amusement to many persons who had nothing better to do, or to those who chose to relax from more important studies. But when this new power, after thus securing its retreat backwards, begins to advance forwards, into the regions of *science, philosophy* and *life*, superseding reasoning wherever it comes, we begin to mark its progress with more attention: for we must not suffer her invasion of the right of another. Accordingly I have endeavoured to repress the inroads which this new power has made on the *frontiers* of morals and theology: and now I must shew what attempts she has made to penetrate into the *interior parts* of the country.

To drop this allusion, which I am not able to carry much farther, I propose, in this last section, to exhibit to my reader the summary process by which our author treats several intricate and important questions; as, *the spring of action in the Deity, the distinction between the faculties of men and brutes*, and the doctrines, or pretended doctrines, of the *divinity of Christ, atonement, the new birth, and predestination*, with other smaller matters. None of these subjects, which have been thought to be very difficult, and which have exercised the genius of the ablest men in all nations, occasion the least difficulty to Dr. Oswald. His common sense knows no difference of questions, but decides with equal *quickness, clearness, and indubitable certainty*, on every thing that you shall bring before it. Hear then in what manner our author decides the long and well-debated question concerning the *spring of action in the Deity*.

“The learned of our day will have us to think that happiness, mere happiness, is the ultimate end and object of

the Divine government.—They confidently affirm, that a Being completely happy in himself could have no other end in bringing creatures into existence, than to make them happy. But this is unpardonable rashness. For if the sole end of bringing creatures into being was to make them happy, then they could not be in pain or misery for a single moment; because the Supreme Ruler could not be disappointed of his end in one single instance, or for one moment of time. Plans formed by beings of limited capacity may fail in the execution, but no defect can be imputed to him whose understanding is infinite, and whose power is without controul. This hypothesis, therefore, must be fundamentally wrong. It is plain, God does not all that is possible to be done to make his creatures happy.” Vol. II. pp. 156, 157.

Having thus, contrary to his custom, condescended to overturn by reason a scheme that was founded on reason, he establishes another, and, as far as I know, a scheme entirely his own, which cannot fail to recommend it to my reader, on the foundation of common sense.

“Common sense will hardly authorize weak mortals to fix the ultimate end and object of the Divine government, but the greatest possible increase of moral worth seems best to correspond to appearances, and to the dignity of the Supreme Ruler; and, probably, was meant in the last age by the glory of God, and is now exchanged for the happiness of the creature, by those who favour a more lax theology, the tendency of which error is to bring down virtue to the rank of a mean or subordinate end; the place it always held with hypocrites and villains of all kinds, who regard it no farther than it serves their purpose.” Vol. II. p. 157.

Here we see our author not depending entirely upon the force of his principle of common sense, but willing to take a little *indirect advantage*, by representing his opponents as persons who favour a lax theology, and who regard virtue no farther than it serves their purposes. But not to digress.

“It is impossible that the Deity should have any other object of his government besides the exercise and enjoyment of his own adorable perfections.—He makes the good happy, and the bad wretched, not from any such political reasons as influence human government, but from the essential perfections of his nature.” Vol. II. p. 111.

One would think that the scheme which our author adopts, viz. the greatest possible increase of moral worth, (which differs materially from the scheme of *rectitude* proposed by

Mr. Balguy, or that of *wisdom* by Mr. Grove,*) was liable to the very same objection which he thought unanswerable with respect to the scheme of benevolence. For it is as evident that God has not made all his intelligent creatures completely *virtuous*, as that he has not made them completely *happy*; especially as our author will not deny that the Divine Being might, if he had thought proper, have influenced the minds of his creatures, or have originally formed them so, that nothing could have overpowered their inclination to virtue. But common sense, it seems, declares that, though this objection was sufficient to overturn the scheme of benevolence, it is impertinence to urge it against this new scheme of our author's. So easily does this principle decide where there seems to be nothing to determine the judgment; in which it bears a wonderful resemblance to the *self-determining power* in man. But hear the oracle.

“Whether God might not have ordered things so that men would have been laid under the same necessity of regulating themselves by the laws of nature, is an impertinent question, because we know he will not.” Vol. II. p. 342.

However, to give us some little help to our conceptions, besides this authoritative determination of common sense, our author transports us into the invisible world of spirits, and gives us a prospect that cannot fail to demonstrate the unspeakable preference of his scheme above that of benevolence.

After describing a good man having *broke loose from this cumbersome flesh*, and *escaped the vanities of life*, and being *brought into the presence of God*, with what he feels then, and what he finds he has to do afterwards, he says, “This is a prospect we must allow to be grand; and whether this, or a succession of pleasurable sensations, is the most worthy of the ultimate end and object of the Supreme Ruler, may be submitted to every one who is endued with the judgment and spirit of man.” Vol. II. p. 177.

Let us now appeal to this new oracle on the subject of a much controverted point of divinity, about which profane reason might have busied itself to no purpose, and which has much embarrassed many Christian divines, especially

* Tutor of a Dissenting Academy at Taunton, where he died in 1738, aged 55. He published, in 1734, “*Wisdom the First Spring of Action in the Deity*,” on which Mr. Balguy animadverted, who had himself published, in 1730, “*Divine Rectitude, or a brief Inquiry concerning the Moral Perfections of the Deity*.” Mr. B. distinguished himself on the side of *Hoadley* in the *Bangorian* controversy. He died in 1748, aged 62.

those who have received certain emoluments from religious establishments, on the condition of maintaining the same faith with the *all-wise* founders of those happy establishments. I now mean the knotty question of the *equality of the Son of God with his Father*. Now, by the help of this omnipotent common sense, we are able to keep clear of all difficulties, and even to steer evenly between the two opposite rocks of the *creation* and *no-creation* of the Son of God.

“The Son of God derives life from the Father in a manner totally different from creation, and which we neither understand, nor have any occasion to inquire into, any farther than is necessary to assure us, that he is of a rank as much superior to created beings, as he has obtained a more excellent name than they.” Vol. II. p. 128.

Now, by the way, I rather suspect that our author's philosophy and systematical theology do not perfectly tally. The Assembly's Catechism, which I presume our author has subscribed, and by which he holds his church preferment, says, that the three persons in the Godhead are of *the same substance, equal in power and glory*,* which I should think to be hardly consistent with the notion of the Son deriving life from the Father; however it may be *softened*, or rather *obscured*, by saying, that this derivation is something essentially different from *creation*. But we may take it for granted that so *pious* a man as Dr. Oswald could not possibly *prevaricate* in a matter of this nature, especially after his own solemn declaration on the subject.

“We appeal to common sense, and defy them to offer a shadow of reason, why the man who prevaricates in religion should not be as much the object of contempt and abhorrence, as he who prevaricates on any other subject of importance.” Vol. II. p. 115. I should be glad, however, if our author would condescend to clear up the consistency of his conduct in this case, for the satisfaction of some whose common sense is not so nice and distinguishing as his, and who cannot split so fine a hair.

With respect to the doctrine of *atonement*, our author's common sense decides clearly in favour of orthodoxy, which is a great happiness, as it saves him the trouble of considering and answering a great number of shrewd objections to that supposed doctrine of Scripture.

Speaking of the dispensation of the gospel, he says, “Messengers were dispatched to the different nations,

* See *Larger and Shorter Catechism, Confession, &c.* pp. 166 & 360.

calling upon them to forsake their vices and impieties, and to return to God, who was willing to receive them to favour, through the mediation of that divine person, who, having expiated their guilt by his death, has ascended into heaven." P. 50. He calls Christ "a person of the highest dignity, who, by a course of unparalleled obedience, has *merited*, in the strictest sense of the word, favours of various kinds for his adherents, which in no consistency with wisdom, equity, or justice, could otherwise be conferred upon them." Vol. II. p. 98. "Can we suppose," says he, "that a good God would suffer a person of such an amiable character, and one so near and dear to him, to undergo such exquisite sufferings, if justice did not make it necessary?" Vol. II. p. 161.

The doctrines of *divine influence*, and the *new birth* have given much exercise to some inquisitive minds, but as they give no trouble to our author, he wonders that any body else should have found the least difficulty in them. Common sense can solve these difficulties, and much greater.

"One cannot help smiling," says our author, "at the pitiful shifts which the pretenders to learning go into, to extricate themselves from the embarrassment they are under with respect to the operation of the Holy Ghost, and the new birth, which to a man of true judgment, creates no difficulty at all." Vol. II. p. 137. Then, comparing this supernatural influence to the *light of the sun*, he says, "Why then, may not he, with equal ease, and with equal safety to the order of nature, and without the least infringement of any of its laws, produce a total change of sentiments and inclinations, with new habits of thinking and acting, in those who resign themselves to his influence, and conform themselves to his direction? If this subject were explained by the same rules of good sense, and true philosophy, which are employed on subjects of far less consequence, the *new birth* would be equally intelligible with any other of the productions of nature we seem to be best acquainted with."

Hitherto our author's common sense has always happened to steer him pretty nearly into the safe and comfortable harbour of orthodoxy, but with respect to the doctrine concerning the *power of man to do the will of God*, I am afraid it will appear to have driven him quite wide of it. For if I have any knowledge of scholastic divinity, Dr. Oswald's doctrine on this subject is the very reverse of

what the Scotch ministers are obliged to subscribe, as well as to that of the Church of England.*

“Take one of the vulgar aside and point out to him *some* duties he neglects, and some vices he indulges.—He will acknowledge the fact, but will conclude that till God work it in him he can do nothing. This,” says he, “they are taught to say.” Vol. II. p. 208. And so, if I be not greatly mistaken, Dr. Oswald himself is under an obligation, equivalent to the most solemn of all oaths, to teach them.

“To allege the necessity of an interposition which we have no reason to expect, and which one in a hundred is not favoured with, is a heinous impiety: for it amounts to nothing less than a declaration, that the Supreme Being looks on, and sees ninety-nine of a hundred perish for want of an interposition, which is necessary to determine them to do the right and shun the wrong.” P. 212.

This is certainly very sound Arminian doctrine, but very unsound Calvinism. If our author holds his Scotch living, I hope he will explain, in his next, how he can do this, and keep clear of a dangerous refinement, and *prevarication in matters of religion*. Let him take care that this *common sense* do not a little interfere with *common honesty*, and Christian sincerity.

The difference between the *intellectual faculties of men and brutes* has occasioned a good deal of difficulty both to philosophers and divines; but on this subject our author is equally clear and decisive as on all the others on which he has favoured us with his opinion. In short, it is common sense that is *the characteristic of rationality*. *Every individual of the human race* has it, idiots excepted.

“If,” says our author, “we know any thing at all of the specific difference between our understanding and that of inferior animals, it must consist in our having perceptions of truth which are imperceptible to them. Inferior animals fly things of hurtful appearance, and pursue objects of pleasure and convenience, with a sagacity and earnestness, as if they really knew those powers in nature by which they may be profited or hurt. But that they do not know them in the manner we do; and, indeed, that they can have no idea of them at all, appears from hence, that they never make the least attempt to employ those powers in their favour. There are numberless occasions on which

* See, especially, *Article X. Of Free-Will*.

inferior animals could relieve themselves from danger and from death, if they had the least notion of many powers in nature which they could easily lay hold of. It is worthy of notice," he says, "that brutes never thrust one another over precipices, into ponds, or rivers, or into fire. They may do it by accident, but never through mirth, or malice, as children do; because they have not those ideas of the laws of nature which children have. Who doubts that many of the inferior animals, under deep provocation, would burn houses, and do other dreadful acts of mischief, if they had the least idea of power in fire to consume combustibles?" Pp. 183, 185, 186.

Our author does not give himself the trouble to answer many objections, taking the easy method of treating them with contempt, as things that are, in their own nature, altogether impertinent, or I could mention several. Dogs may not have a fancy for pushing one another into ponds, or into the fire, thinking perhaps there may be no great diversion in it, but they mouthe and tumble one another about in a very pretty and ingenious manner, just as if they knew as much of the laws of nature as relate to biting and tumbling; and some animals of the monkey tribe both divert themselves and plague others, seemingly, with as perfect a knowledge of the natural powers of various instruments which they make use of for that purpose, as any unlucky young boy in the world. As far as I see, brutes both judge and reason as properly as we do, as far as their ideas extend.* But I mean not to discuss any of these deep subjects, but only make such observations as may tend to illustrate the sentiments of my author.

The last article I shall mention (and I do not know whether Dr. Oswald, my reader, or myself, is most pleased that I have got to the last article) is a very small one indeed, but nothing can properly be called inconsiderable that relates to this most wonderful, new-discovered faculty of the human mind. So the most trifling custom of a new-discovered people engages more attention than the most solemn and important ones of our old neighbours. And though our author does not, in this case, mention any obligation he was under to his principle of common sense,

* See p. 56, and the quotation from *Baxter*, in the *Note*.

“ ——— they also know,
And reason not contemptibly,”

Says *Milton*, P. L. B. viii. l. 373, 4.

it might possibly have been of some indirect use to him in the discovery.

Most persons who have any respect for religion, ask a blessing on their meat, especially when they sit down to dine in a social manner; and perhaps they may think they know the reason of this custom; but I am now authorized to inform them that they are much mistaken, and that they are not quite so wise as they fancy themselves to be. In proof of this hear our author.

“ There may be something in man's constitution which destroys the nutritive quality of bread, and may turn it into poison, which is a good philosophical account of the common practice of asking a blessing on our food.” P. 372.

Having now dined very plentifully at the expense of our author, I thank him, for myself and my readers, for the entertainment he has given us. And that he may make his own epilogue, I shall conclude with what he says of the greatness of his scheme, and his hopes of success in it. And to shew my readiness to adopt my author's sentiments, as far as I possibly can, I beg my reader would fancy to himself that as soon as Dr. Oswald has repeated the following sentences, I also stand up, and, *mutatis mutandis*, repeat them audibly after him.

“ I hope the public will take in good part this effort I have made to check a folly which has retarded the progress of knowledge in all ages, and threatened the present age with a perversion of judgment similar to what prevailed in that period, when, as Mr. Pope says,

Faith, Gospel, all seem'd made to be disputed,
And none had sense enough to be confuted. P. 390.

“ It is not possible,” says he to his friend, “ to give at once a new and opposite turn to men's way of thinking; but as I hope to satisfy your scruples in a little time, so I believe that in due time the bulk of mankind may be brought to a just way of thinking on this subject.” P. 349.



THE
APPENDIX.



NUMBER I.



Of the Resemblance between the Doctrine of COMMON SENSE and the Principles of DR. PRICE'S REVIEW of the Questions and Difficulties in Morals.

I HAVE mentioned my surprise that none of the authors on whom I have been animadverting should seem to have heard of Dr. Hartley's *Observations on Man*, except Dr. Beattie, who appears not to have understood him, and who pays him the trifling compliment of an *ingenious but fanciful author*.* I must also express my surprise, though not in the same degree, that none of them should have mentioned Dr. Price's *Review of the principal Questions and Difficulties in Morals*,† which was published in 1758; and which, both with respect to the theory of the mind, and the practical application of it, contains all that is original, and that has the appearance of being just and useful in any of them.

This writer, whose superiority to Dr. Reid, Dr. Beattie, or Dr. Oswald, is exceedingly manifest, maintains that the *understanding* is the source of many of our most important simple ideas; as that of *the necessary connexion of events in nature, the visî nertîæ of matter, substance, duration, space, infinity, necessity, equality, identity, contingency, possibility,*

* See the Author's Strictures on Dr. B. p. 92.

† "Particularly those respecting the Origin of our Ideas of Virtue, its Nature, Relation to the Deity, Obligation, Subject-matter, and Sanctions. The Third Edition corrected and enlarged by an Appendix, containing additional Notes, and a Dissertation on the Being and Attributes of the Deity." 1787.

power and causation, &c., and more especially to this source he refers our *ideas of moral right and wrong*, and of *moral obligation*. It is, he observes, of the essence of these ideas to imply something *true or false* of an object, and that they by no means denote the manner in which we are *affected* by it; so that they cannot with any propriety be referred to that part of our constitution which has hitherto been distinguished by the appellation of *sense*.

This scheme has all the flattering advantages of the new doctrine of common sense, without the capital inconveniencies attending it. Like this scheme, it cuts off, if it be admitted, (and without this no scheme can have any operation or effect) all objections to primary moral truths, resting them on a simple appeal to the faculty of *intuition*; and refusing to reason upon a subject which is maintained to be as evident as the truth of the geometrical postulatam, that *if equal things be taken from equal things the remainders will be equal*. But this philosopher had more good sense than to load his scheme with the belief of the real existence of the external world; and he is more especially careful to keep entirely clear of every thing that can represent our ideas of virtue as *arbitrary* and *precarious*, which is the necessary consequence of this new scheme.

If the ideas of moral right and wrong, &c. be perceived by a *sense*, it depends upon our arbitrary constitution that we conceive of them as we do, or whether we perceive them at all; and we have no method whatever of investigating whether they have any foundation in the absolute *nature of things*. Whereas by making moral ideas the object of the *understanding* or intellect, *as such*, the principles of morality become part of the system of *necessary, eternal and unalterable truth*, perceived by the Divine Being as by ourselves, but altogether independent of his will, as well as of all other beings, and things whatsoever; as much so as the truth of the *postulatam* above-mentioned, or of the proposition that *two and two make four*.

To exhibit as distinctly as possible this original scheme of Dr. Price's, with as much of the evidence of it as I can find expressed, in a short compass, by the author himself, I shall present my reader with the following extracts from his very elaborate work.

“ I cannot help wondering, that, in inquiring into the original of our ideas, the *understanding*, which, though not first in time, is the most important source of our ideas, should have been overlooked. It has, indeed, been always

considered as the source of *knowledge*; but it should have been more attended to, that, as the source of knowledge, it is likewise the source of *new ideas*, and that it cannot be one of these without being the other. The various kinds of *agreement* and *disagreement* between our ideas, which, Mr. Locke says it is its office to discover and trace, are so many new simple ideas, *of which it must itself have been the original.** Thus when it considers the two angles made by a right line, standing in any direction on another, and perceives the *agreement* between them and two right angles, what is this *agreement* besides their *equality*? And is not the idea of this equality a new simple idea, derived from the understanding, wholly different from that of the two angles compared, and representing self-evident truth?"

"In much the same manner in other cases, knowledge and intuition suppose somewhat perceived or discovered in their objects, denoting simple ideas, to which themselves gave rise. This is true of our ideas of *proportion*, of our ideas of *identity* and *diversity*, *existence*, *connexion*, *cause* and *effect*, *power*, *possibility* and *impossibility*, and of our ideas of *moral right and wrong*. The first concerns *quantity*, the last *actions*, the rest *all things*. They comprehend the most considerable part of what we can desire to *know* of things, and are the objects of almost all reasonings and disquisitions.

"It is therefore essential to the understanding to be the fountain of new ideas. As bodily sight discovers to us the qualities of outward visible objects, so does the understanding, which is the eye of the mind, and infinitely more subtle and penetrating, discover to us the qualities of intelligible objects; and thus, in a like sense with the former, becomes the inlet of new ideas."† P. 48, &c.

The whole of what Dr. Beattie and Dr. Oswald have written about the necessity of acquiescing in primary truths, and on the inutility and insufficiency of reasoning, in many cases, is so fully expressed by Dr. Price, that one can hardly help thinking that they must have read him, and have commented upon him. But he is so clear and full, though concise, that any commentary was certainly unnecessary.

"The second ground of belief is *intuition*, by which I mean the mind's survey of its own ideas, and the relations

* Altered to *Obtained by its discernment*. 3d Ed. p. 49.

† This paragraph was thus altered, "In short, as bodily sight discovers to us *visible* objects, so does the understanding (the eye of the mind, and infinitely more penetrating) discover to us *intelligible* objects; and thus, in a like sense with bodily vision, becomes the inlet of new ideas." 3d Ed. pp. 51, 52.

between them, and the notice it takes, *by its own innate light and intellective power*,* of what *absolutely and necessarily* is, or is not, true and false, consistent and inconsistent, possible and impossible, in the nature of things. It is to this that we owe our belief of all self-evident truths, our ideas of the general abstract affections and relations of things, our moral ideas, and whatever else we discover without making use of any process of reasoning. It is on this power of intuition, essential in some degree or other, to all rational minds, that the whole possibility of all reasoning is founded. To it the last appeal is ever made. Many of its perceptions are capable, by attention, of being rendered more clear, and many of the truths discovered by it may be illustrated by an advantageous representation of them, or by being viewed in particular lights, but seldom will admit of proper proof. Some truths there must be which can appear only by their own light, and which are incapable of proof. Otherwise nothing could be proved or known; in the same manner as if there were no letters, there could be no words; or if there were no simple or undefinable ideas, there could be no complex ideas.—I might mention many instances of truths discernible no other way than *intuitively*, which learned men have strangely confounded, and obscured, by treating them as subjects of *reasoning and deduction*. One of the most important instances the subject of this treatise (*viz.* morals) affords us, and another we have in our notions of the necessity of a *cause* of whatever begins to exist, or our general ideas of *power and connexion*. And sometimes reason has been ridiculously employed to prove even our own existence.” Pp. 163, 164.

The writers on whom I have been animadverting seem even to have borrowed their *language*, as well as their ideas from Dr. Price, who also uses the term *common sense*, but with much more propriety than they do. Of this I shall give two instances.

“The necessity of a cause of whatever events arise is an essential principle, a primary perception of the understanding; nothing being more palpably absurd than the notion of a change which has been derived from nothing, and of which there is no reason to be given; of an existence which has begun, but never was produced; of a body, for instance, that has ceased to move, but has not been stopped, or that

* Omitted in the third edition, p. 159.

has begun to move, without being moved. Nothing can be done to convince a person who professes to deny this, besides referring him to *common sense*. If he cannot find there the perception I have mentioned, he is not farther to be argued with ; for the subject will not admit of argument ; there being nothing clearer than the point itself disputed, to be brought to confirm it." P. 31.

" Were the question, what that perception is which we have of *number, diversity, causation* or *proportion* ; and whether our ideas of them signify *truth* and reality, perceived by the understanding, or particular impressions, made by the objects to which we ascribe them on our minds ; were, I say, this the question, would it not be sufficient to appeal to *common sense* ?" * P. 62. This is not using the word *sense* according to the technical, philosophical meaning of it, and making it, *as such*, the test of truth ; but only appealing to it as another term for a *plain understanding*. But it is no uncommon thing for commentators to mistake the meaning of their author.

I thought it right to point out what seemed to me to be the probable source of what has the appearance of *truth* and *reason*, as also, perhaps, of the *mistakes* of the writers on whom I have been animadverting ; though I must acknowledge that I have been led to entertain a very different opinion from that of Dr. Price concerning the nature and origin of the ideas above-mentioned. For, instead of being properly *simple ideas*, as he considers them, several of them appear to me to be exceedingly *complex*, or substitutes for *descriptions* and *definitions* ; and that at first view they seem to be simple for the same reason that *white* is imagined to be a simple colour, before we have learned how to analyze it. As to the ideas of *moral right* and *wrong*, and *moral obligation*, instead of bearing the proper marks of simple and original ideas, necessarily resulting from the view of any object, they appear to me exactly to resemble ideas compounded of many parts, some of which are obtained earlier and others later, and which require time perfectly to coalesce into one. The minds of children are long destitute of them ; they are acquired very gradually ; they are at first extremely imperfect, but grow more perfect and accurate by degrees, as their growth is more or less favoured by the circumstances to which the mind is exposed : they are subject to great variations in the course of our lives ; and in some minds,

* *Every Man's Consciousness*. 3rd Ed. p. 63.

those ideas are never perfectly formed, some incoherent rudiments of them only being observable.

I am rather surprised that Dr. Price should see any occasion for supposing the faculty by which we judge of the truth of propositions, as distinct from simple perception, to be the source of ideas ; since every perception may be resolved into a *proposition*, and therefore necessarily suggests a *truth*. If I only open my eyes, and get the idea of a *white horse*, I as evidently perceive a *truth*, viz. that *the horse is white*, as I perceive a truth when I have the sentiment of *approving a generous action* ; and the latter is just as much involved, and requires to be unfolded, before it can take the form of a proposition, as the former. I do not therefore see why this very accurate reasoner should consider *feeling* and *intuition* as two different grounds of belief, especially as he ascribes to feeling the *knowledge of our own existence*, and of *the several operations passions, and sensations of our minds*, p. 162. It appears to me to be a distinction without a difference to make the faculty by which we judge of these things, to be different from that by which we judge of *all self-evident truths*, and get our *ideas of general abstract affections and relations of things*, our *moral ideas*, and *whatever else we discover without making use of any process of reasoning* ; which, however, we have seen that he ascribes to *intuition*, as distinct from *feeling*. It equally requires an attention to what passes within our minds, or *reflection*, to discover the *operations and passions of our minds*, as to get ideas of *general abstract affections and relations of things*. We may live and act under the influence of these ideas without knowing any thing about them ; but the same *reflex attention* to what passes within ourselves will equally discover them all. I do not mean to discuss this subject with Dr. Price, it being foreign to my present purpose. Some observations, however, the reader will find relating to it in the *Preliminary Essay*, and more in the *Dissertations* prefixed to my edition of *Hartley's Observations on Man*.* But for every thing of this nature I would more especially refer my reader to Dr. Hartley himself, to whom I am indebted for almost all my knowledge of this subject.

* See, in this Volume, p. 17, &c. and the next article, *Essays* II. and III.

NUMBER II.

Of MR. HARRIS'S HYPOTHESIS concerning Mind and Ideas.

I THINK it not altogether improper, in this Appendix, to take some slight notice of the hypothesis of Mr. Harris (the ingenious author of *Hermes**) relating to *mind* and *ideas*, which is so like that of Dr. Reid, that it might have been expected that he would have acknowledged some obligation to him for it; or, at least, that (as Dr. Price has done †) Dr. Reid would have *quoted* him, as expressing sentiments so very similar to his own. The hypothesis is singular enough; but, I believe, something a-kin to that of Malebranche; though, not having studied the writings of this French philosopher, I am not able to pronounce with certainty.

If I understand Mr. Harris aright, *all our ideas are innate*; having been originally impressed upon our minds by the Deity, and being only awakened, or called forth, by the presence of external objects. But unless he could have advanced some more *direct evidence* for this system than he has done, I think he is hardly to be justified for treating with so much ridicule and contempt the hypothesis of Mr. Locke and others, that ideas are properly *produced by the action of external objects*; there being the same necessary connexion between them, as between any other causes and effects in nature.

“Mark the order of things,” says he, “according to their account of them. First comes that huge body the sensible world, then this and its attributes beget *sensible ideas*. Then, out of sensible ideas, by a kind of lopping or pruning, are made *ideas intelligible*, whether specific or general. Thus should they admit that mind was coeval with body, yet till body gave it ideas, and awakened its dormant powers, it could at best have been nothing more than a sort of dead capacity; for innate ideas it could not possibly have any.” P. 392.

There is a good deal of humour and fine description in our author's representation of the various hypotheses of the

* The principles of which were ably controverted by Mr. Tooke, in his *Diversions of Purley*. Mr. H. died in 1780, aged 71.

† See *Hermes*, quoted in the *Review*, 3d Ed. p. 51, Note.

use of the nerves in conveying ideas. "At another time we hear of bodies so exceedingly fine that their very *exility* makes them susceptible of sensation and knowledge; as if they shrunk into intellect by their exquisite subtilty, which rendered them too delicate to be bodies any longer. It is to this notion we owe many curious inventions, such as *subtle ether, animal spirits, nervous ducts, vibrations, &c.* terms which modern philosophy, upon parting with *occult qualities*, has found expedient to provide itself to supply their place." P. 392.

This, however, appears to me to be an evidence rather of a fine imagination in our author, than of his fairness, or acquaintance with the subject. He could not seriously imagine that any person ever supposed that *matter* was capable, by its *subtilty* only, of approaching to the nature of *immateriality*. All that has ever been supposed (and what facts will sufficiently authorize) is, that ideas, and their affections, are the result of certain impressions made upon the system of the nerves and brain. To prove that this is an unphilosophical hypothesis, Mr. Harris must shew, not that we cannot *explain* the connexion between thought and this material system, but that there *is no such connexion*, and that the faculty of thinking in man can subsist without that system; which I think he will not attempt to do.

Let us now consider the arguments on which his own hypothesis is founded; which, as far as I have been able to collect them out of what he has written upon the subject, are the following.

First, ideas are *of the essence of mind*; and therefore, having no relation to corporeal things, cannot be produced by them. "The nature of ideas is not difficult to explain, if we once allow a possibility of their existence. That they are exquisitely beautiful, various and orderly, is evident from the exquisite beauty, variety and order seen in natural substances, which are but their copies or pictures. That they are *mental*, is plain, as they are *of the essence of mind*; and consequently no objects to any of the senses, nor therefore circumscribed either by time or place." P. 380.—"But the intellectual scheme, which never forgets Deity, postpones every thing corporeal to the primary mental cause. It is here it looks for the origin of intelligible ideas, even of those which exist in human capacities. For though those sensible objects may be the destined medium to awaken the dormant energies of man's understanding, yet are those energies themselves no more contained in sense, than the explosion of a cannon in the spark that gave it fire." P. 394.

But this goes upon the supposition that mind is of such a nature, as that it can have no possible connexion with matter, or be properly affected by it; which is contrary to all appearance, if the subject of perception and thought in man be *mind*. For, judging by the most obvious facts, and universal experience, nothing is more evident, than that the principle which we call *mind*, whether it be material or immaterial, is of such a nature, that it *can* be affected by external objects, and that its perceptions correspond to the state of the corporeal system, especially that of the brain. And there is the same reason to conclude that this affection is *natural* and *necessary*, as that the sound of a musical chord is the natural and necessary effect of the stroke of a *plectrum*. If my eye be open, and a house be before me, I as necessarily perceive the idea of a house; or if fire be applied to any part of my body, I as necessarily perceive the sensation of burning, as sound follows the stroke above-mentioned. If a due attention to these facts obliges us to alter our notions of *mind* and *materialism*, the received rules of philosophizing compel us to do it; and these are certainly a better authority than the mere speculations of metaphysicians, founded on no observations at all.

I readily admit our author's comparison of ideas to the *explosion of a cannon*, and of an external object to a *spark* that occasions it; but I wonder that he should make use of this comparison, which, in effect, overthrows his whole hypothesis. For is not the explosion of the cannon the *mechanical effect* of the production of an elastic vapour, and of the increase of the expansion of the air, by heat? If ideas result from external objects, in a manner at all analogous to the explosion of gunpowder from the application of fire, I see no occasion for having recourse to any immaterial principle in man, or for supposing that ideas, *as such*, are so far *of the essence of mind*, that they can have no relation to time or place.

Mr. Harris, moreover, admits that sensible objects may be a *medium to awaken the dormant energies of man's understanding*, by which I suppose he means *ideas*, in the first instance, and *mental operations* afterwards. But if sensible objects have a natural power of *awakening* ideas, why may they not have a natural power of originally *exciting* them, in the same mind? Let Mr. Harris explain the difference. In both the cases some *mutual action* or *affection* must be supposed.

The manner in which our author thinks that he can reduce

us to the necessity of admitting the derivation of ideas from *mind*, rather than from *body*, is so curious, that I shall transcribe the whole passage. "Either all minds have their ideas derived, or all have them original; or some have them original, and some derived. If all minds have them derived, they must be derived from something which is itself not mind, and thus we fall insensibly into a kind of atheism. If all have them original, then are all minds divine, an hypothesis far more plausible than the former. But if this be not admitted, then must one mind, at least, have original ideas, and the rest have them derived. Now, supposing this last, whence are those minds, whose ideas are derived, most like to derive them; from *mind*, or from *body*; from mind, a thing homogeneous, or from body, a thing heterogeneous; from mind, such as, from the hypothesis, has originally ideas, or from body, which we cannot discover to have any ideas at all?" P. 400.

But it is no more necessary that bodies should themselves have ideas, in order to excite them in us, than it is necessary that a *plectrum* should have *sound* in itself, in order to excite it in a musical chord; or that a spark of fire should contain an explosion, in order to produce it, by its application to gunpowder; and yet nothing but *matter* and *motion* are concerned in these cases.

Secondly, Mr. Harris seems to think his hypothesis necessary to account for the *identity of the ideas* of different minds. "Now, is it not marvellous that there should be so exact an identity of our ideas, if they were only generated from sensible objects, infinite in number, ever changing, distant in time, distant in place, and no one particular the same with any other?" P. 399.

But is there not equal identity or diversity in *external objects*, as there is in our *ideas* of them? It appears to me that the correspondence is so strict, that it amounts to a sufficient proof of our ideas having this very origin, and no other. Men in the same situations, that is, exposed to the same influences, we have reason to believe, will have the same ideas; in similar situations they will have similar ideas, and in different situations they will have different ideas, and different in proportion to the difference in their situations.

Thirdly, our author supposes the mental origin of our ideas necessary to account for the correspondence there is between the ideas of the Divine mind and those of ours, and consequently to the communication between him and

us. "In short, all minds that are, are similar and congenial, and so too are their ideas, or intelligible forms. Were it otherwise, there could be no intercourse between man and man, or (what is more important) between man and God." P. 395. "Let ideas, then, be original; let them be connate and essential to the Divine mind. If this be true, is it not a fortunate event, that ideas of *corporeal* rise, and others of *mental* (things derived from subjects so totally distinct) should so happily coincide in the same wonderful identity?" *Ib.*

Now, for my part, I see no great difficulty in admitting that the Divine Being should cause material objects to excite the very same ideas in our minds, that might come into his some other way. Besides, with respect to the Divine mind, I think it is sufficient, in this case, to plead our utter ignorance of the nature or affections of it. This, however, I would observe, and I think it well deserves the serious attention of Mr. Harris and Dr. Reid; that if things *material* and *immaterial* be so very remote in their nature, the one having a relation to time and place, and the other being incapable of any relation to either, insomuch that they cannot possibly affect one another (and upon this notion only can our author deny the possibility of external objects impressing our minds); and if, as he asserts, all minds be *similar*, *homogeneous* and *congenial*, matter can no more affect, or be affected by, the *Divine mind*, than it can affect or be affected by *ours*. Consequently no such thing can exist; or, if it do exist, it cannot have been created by God. If I be capable of drawing any consequence, this appears to be a just one. Let Mr. Harris or Dr. Reid invalidate it, if they can.

As to the origin and nature of *ideas* in the Divine mind, I must be allowed to profess the same ignorance, as of the origin or nature of his *being*.*

* See, in this Volume, the *Disquisitions*, Sect. xii. *ad init.*



NUMBER III.

*The Correspondence of the Author with DR. OSWALD and
DR. BEATTIE, relating to this Controversy.*

HAVING thought proper to acquaint Dr. Reid, Dr. Beattie and Dr. Oswald with my intention of animadverting upon their writings, I sent the same notice to each of them, at the same time; together with a printed copy of the Preface to my third volume of the *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*;* and having received answers from Dr. Oswald and Dr. Beattie, I have here inserted them, with my replies, for reasons that will sufficiently appear in the perusal of them.

As Dr. Oswald seems to lay peculiar stress on his *seventh letter*, to which he refers me, and I am willing to give him all possible advantage, I have subjoined the whole of it. But if any body can think it to be of the least use to his purpose, or that it exhibits any thing more than another specimen of just such futile declamation as I have already quoted again and again, I own he sees more in it than I can see. I think it altogether unnecessary to make any particular remarks upon it. His fifth letter, also, I think as little satisfactory.

To Dr. OSWALD.

London, April 28, 1774.

REVEREND SIR,

THINKING it right that every person should be apprised of any publication in which his writings are criticised, I take the liberty to send you a copy of a *sheet* that will soon be published, in which I announce my intention to animadvert upon the principles of your *Appeal to Common Sense*.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant,

J. PRIESTLEY.

* See the *Introduction*, Vol. II. p. 249—258.

“ REVEREND SIR,

“ *Methuen*,* *May* 12, 1774.

“ I HAVE received your letter, announcing remarks you are to publish on my *Appeal to Common Sense*, with one inclosed sheet, containing these remarks for my perusal. This, I own, is gentlemanly ; but I am in no disposition for accepting the challenge. I shall, however, point out a few things which may deserve your notice.

“ Though numbers of high rank for literature in this and the preceding age have aimed at nothing beyond high probability ; and though the evidence offered by Dr. Reid, Dr. Beattie, and myself, for primary truths, doth not give you satisfaction, you ought not to be positive that no other than probable evidence belongs to the subject ; but ought to allow that higher evidence, too much neglected hitherto, and of which you have no clear conception, may possibly belong to the primary truths of religion.

“ Your allusion to a lottery ticket † is indecent. The utmost assurance arising from the chance of a thousand to one, is burdened with a just and rational dread of disappointment ; but the evidence peculiar to the primary truths of religion leaves no room for a dread of disappointment, that can be called just or rational.

“ When you consult your heart, you will, I hope, find your belief of the Copernican system different from your belief of the primary truths of religion, and founded on evidence of an inferior kind. The possibility, at least, of error attends the most complete demonstration ; but no such charge lies against the primary truths of religion ; and this circumstance is of too great importance to be slightly passed over.

“ I shall not promise that the fifth letter annexed to the first volume of my *Appeal*, on the difference between possibility, probability and certainty, or that the last book of the same volume, on the difference between reasoning and judging, will give you satisfaction ; but these are subjects you ought to be acquainted with, before you pronounce on the evidence which belongs to primary truths.

“ I should be shy of recommending a second reading of my *Appeal* to one who is positive that it contains just no-

* This benefice Dr. Oswald resigned in 1783, and died at Scotstown in 1793. “ He was Moderator of the General Assembly in 1765.” See Sir John Sinclair’s “ Statistical Account of Scotland,” X. p. 618, and “ The Scots’ Magazine for 1793,” I.V. p. 414.

† See Vol. II. p. 252.

thing ; but if you will take the trouble of reading the seventh letter, annexed to the first volume, you may find that an appeal to common sense in behalf of obvious truth may amount to more than people's calling one another reciprocally fools and blockheads.

“ I thought, and still think, that divines of eminence ought to have offered something more than the highest probability for the primary truths of religion, and that I had a right to complain of their not doing so, without derogating from their merit, or being liable to the imputation of arrogance from those who are in the daily exercise of uttering complaints of the misconduct of their superiors.

“ If you know no other evidence for the primary truths of religion than the highest degree of probability, you cannot be justly blamed for offering that, and that alone, to those under your care ; nor have you the least occasion for quarrelling with others, who are possessed, or believe themselves possessed, of higher evidence ; and I am of opinion you may employ yourself with more advantage to the public by pursuing other branches of science, than by deciding rashly on a subject which I see you have not studied.

“ When you have thought better of the matter, you will not, I presume, choose to publish the sheet you sent me in the present form ; but if you do, I shall expect you will do me the justice of publishing this letter along with it. I have declined entering into a controversy, but this I insist on.

“ I am, Reverend Sir,

“ Your most humble Servant,

“ JAMES OSWALD.”

—

Calne, May 23, 1774.

REVEREND SIR,

THE sheet I inclosed was published exactly as it was sent to you, about a fortnight afterwards. But if it had not, I should not have thought proper to have printed your letter along with it, as I do not see a shadow of a foundation *in justice* for your insisting upon it. Dr. Reid, Dr. Beattie and others have just the same right, and I do not profess to be publisher for all the world. The press is as open to you, as it is to me ; and if you do not think proper to have recourse to it upon this occasion, the fault is not mine. It is possible, however, that, in my intended publication, I may insert this letter of yours ; but if you saw it

in the same light in which I do, you would request that I would not.

You say you *see I have not studied the subject*; and this letter alone proves to me that you have not thought sufficiently upon it. But neither am I a judge of you, nor you of me. The question is before the public.

Your friends, I doubt not, think very well of your writings; and, on the other hand, mine (among whom I have the honour to reckon a considerable number of the ablest scholars and divines of this kingdom) think exactly as I do with respect to them; and think it very proper that principles which appear to them so false and dangerous should receive some check; that, at least, it may appear that *all* Christians are not so ready to abandon the only rational defence of religion.

I am,

Reverend Sir, &c.

I might farther observe, with respect to some parts of Dr. Oswald's letter, that he places our belief of the *being of God*, and of the other primary truths of religion, on the same foundation with that of the *external world*, the evidence of which I think I have shewn to be not strictly speaking *demonstrative*, though it admits of no *rational doubt*. In like manner, what philosopher will say that the truth of the Copernican system admits of any rational doubt, though there is a *possibility* that it may not be true? The being of a God I consider as strictly *demonstrable*, which abundantly satisfies me with respect to it; though Dr. Oswald says, what I have no conception of, that *the possibility of error attends the most complete demonstration*. And when I suppose the other primary truths of religion to be as little liable to rational doubt as the truth of the Copernican system, I think no person can be of opinion that I do them any injustice.

The reception of the primary truths of religion, and especially of Christianity, is represented in the Scriptures as depending, in some measure, upon men's previous dispositions and moral characters. As our Saviour says, John vii. 17, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." But this could not be the case if these truths were properly *self-evident*, so that no person who had common sense could reject them. No doubt the Scribes and Pharisees, who rejected Christ, had common sense, as well as the twelve apostles; but their

pride, ambition, and other vices, laid a strong and undue bias upon their minds, and prejudiced them against him. To use Dr. Oswald's own style, *I appeal to men of understanding*, whether it be not a more rational account of the matter, to say that, in all ages, men reject the primary truths of religion, natural and revealed, because they are defective in *moral dispositions*, rather than in *common sense*.

As to the *indecency* of my allusion to the doctrine of chances, I can only say that I am not sensible of it.

Had Dr. Oswald's book been written in the same strain with this letter, (in which he says that, if I know no other evidence for the primary truths of religion than the highest degree of probability, I cannot be justly blamed for offering that and that alone,) I should not have quarrelled with him, as he terms it, for advancing what he calls his *higher evidence*. But I appeal to the extracts that I have given, and to the whole strain of his publication, if his violent and unjust censures of others, for not advancing more than they thought the nature of the case admitted, does not abundantly justify the manner in which I have vindicated their conduct, and animadverted upon his.

Dr. Oswald is pleased to pay me a compliment in saying that "I might employ myself to more advantage to the public, by pursuing other branches of science, than by deciding rashly on a subject which, he sees, I have not studied." In return to this compliment, I shall not affront him by telling him how very little of my time this business has hitherto taken up. If he alludes to my *experiments*, I can assure him that I have lost no time at all; for having been intent upon such as require the use of a burning lens, I believe I have not lost one hour of sunshine on this account. And the public may perhaps be informed, some time or other, of what I have been doing in the *sun*, as well as in the *shade*.*

Dr. OSWALD's *Seventh Letter*.

"You seem to think that a sceptic will make light of the charge of folly that I bring against him; but will he make light of being convicted of folly to himself, for that is what I aim at? By appealing to common sense, I do not trust the cause of religion to a majority of mankind, or to a certain

* The Author was now preparing for publication his "Experiments and Observations on different kinds of Air and other branches of Natural Philosophy." See his *Memoirs*.

number of select judges, but to every man of sense, and to the sceptic himself; who, if he possesses that quality in any tolerable degree, will at length pronounce in favour of religion. Indeed, if a man is destitute of common sense, or if by disease, or otherwise, that characteristical power of the rational mind is so impaired, as to render him incapable of distinguishing between obvious truth and palpable absurdity, I do not sustain him a judge. But that, I presume, is not a common case; for, as in the practice of our duty, we often find ourselves urged by opposite affections, and may yield to the direction of either, as we choose; so in judging on plain subjects, true and false sentiments often present themselves to our mind, in such a way as leaves us at liberty to adopt the one or the other, as we choose. Have you not known persons far gone in folly, who still retained so much discernment, that, upon some occasions, they have caught themselves speaking nonsense, have blushed, and turned silent? I can recollect instances of persons, in the beginning of a fever, who have told those about them that they were going to rave, and have actually stopped themselves; and nothing is more common than for those who are getting drunk to perceive the growing disorder, by the nonsense which they utter. If, indeed, they go on to drink, they will perceive it no longer, but turn downright fools, without the possibility of being made sensible of the disorder.

“ I always avoid charging those faults on the will, which can be fairly placed to the account of the understanding; but cannot help thinking that sceptics and infidels might prevent a great deal of that absurdity they run into on the subject of religion: for, certain diseased cases excepted, the progress of folly is gradual, and the person affected may perceive it if he will, or may, in its first approaches, be made sensible of it, by the assistance of a friend. And I know no greater friendship that can be done to these people, than to set the difference between sense and nonsense full in their view; and am persuaded that, if this good office had been done to mankind by the friends of religion, when the controversy first broke out, we had not only got rid of scepticism long ago, but also would have made a greater proficiency in useful knowledge than we have done: and I would fain hope that the evil may yet be redressed, by restoring the authority of common sense.

“ Do not you think that something ought to be done for the honour of literature, and of the age in which we live? For what a shameful thing is it, that we should be found

wrangling about first principles, when discoveries of truths unknown to those who came before us might, in all reason, be expected from a people who enjoy our advantages. We laugh at those subtle disputes of the schoolmen, which never could be brought to an issue; but are not aware of a conduct no less ridiculous, in writing volumes of controversy about truths which no man of sense can gainsay.

“ I know your zeal for freedom of inquiry, and heartily agree with you; but cannot be reconciled to that silly vanity of maintaining either side of a question by plausible arguments; which you know was first introduced by the ancient sophists, and brought again into reputation by the Popish schoolmen, and is now become the chief faculty of modern sceptics, and not discountenanced in the manner it ought by men of sense and learning.

“ How often have you and I been disgusted with idle conceits, chimerical suppositions, and monstrous paradoxes, in favourite authors, which they would not have had the boldness to offer to the public, if men of learning and judgment had acted with the spirit which became them? Do you think there would be any harm in obliging men of genius to put their opinions to the trial of common sense, *before* they obtruded them on the *unthinking multitude*? And if any should, through petulance and presumption, neglect this necessary precaution, would it be any prejudice to the interest of truth, or of freedom of thought, that their gross absurdities, or crude conceptions, were received by the public with that cold contempt, which they are sure to meet with in every circle of men of sense and spirit? I know no right any set of men can have to insult the common sense of mankind; nor do I see any reason why the public should bear with freedoms from writers of any kind, which one man of spirit would not bear with from another.

“ After all, I am as diffident of my success as you can be, both from a sense of my incapacity to do justice to the subject, and a suspicion that mankind choose either to be entertained with subtle debates, or to give up inquiry altogether; but I hope the public will take in good part this effort I have made,” &c.

See the remainder of this paragraph at the close of my remarks on this writer.

Aberdeen, May 27, 1774.

REVEREND SIR,

I RECEIVED yours of the 28th of April, enclosing a printed sheet of a *preface* not then published, in which you express your disapprobation of *The Essay on Truth*, and intimate your design of animadverting further upon it. I thank you for this early notice of your intentions, and for the justice you do me in that part of your preface where you declare that you believe me to be a sincere friend to revelation.

The *Essay on Truth* is so well intended, and its principles so well founded, that its author can have nothing to fear from the animadversions of a man of science and candour. If I had not thought those principles true, I should never have given them to the world. If I did not still think them true, I should publish my recantation to-morrow; or, if I could, to-day.

All that you have said in your preface against *me* I shall answer in few words.

If your meaning, page 5, line 19, [Vol. II. p. 250,] is that *I* “represent common sense as superseding almost all reasoning about religion, natural and revealed,” you charge me with a doctrine which I do not, and never did believe, and which is no where either asserted or implied in any thing I ever wrote.

If you mean, page 6, line 20, that *I* have ever, in word or writing, taught, or insinuated, that “*religion in general*, (I suppose you mean natural religion,) or Christianity in particular, does not admit of a rational and satisfactory proof,” you are, Sir, egregiously mistaken in regard to my principles.—My doctrine is only this, that all reasoning terminates in first principles, and that first principles admit not of proof, because reasoning cannot extend *in infinitum*; and that it is absurd for a man to say, that he disbelieves a first principle, which his conduct shews that he does not disbelieve.

If you charge me with supposing, page 7, line 4—14, that “the being, unity, attributes, and providence of God, and a future state of retribution, are either *intuitively* certain, or certainties of the same sort with the axioms of geometry,” you charge me with that which I never believed, or supposed, and which you will find nothing in my writings to justify.

You are pleased, Sir, to call common sense a *pretended new principle*. What you may mean by the word *common*

sense I know not; but that which I call common sense, is a *real* part of the human constitution, and as *old*, and as *extensive* as human nature. I am one of those, Sir, who do not like a doctrine one whit the better for its being new, nor do I think myself sagacious enough to discover in the human mind any thing which was never discovered there before.

You honour me with the epithet *Reverend*, to which I have no title. I have told the world in my book that I am not a clergyman; but I humbly trust I am a Christian: and permit me to say, Sir, that I have better ground to believe that my writings have hurt the cause of infidelity, than you can have to insinuate the contrary, which in page 6, line 17, in your preface, [Vol. II. p. 251.] you seem to do.

I would have answered you sooner, but have been prevented by business and bad health.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your very humble Servant,
JAMES BEATTIE.

Calne, June 29, 1774.

SIR,

I TAKE the liberty to trouble you once more, to express the pleasure I have received from the great frankness and generosity that are apparent in the letter you have done me the honour to write to me. I wanted no assurance of the goodness of your *intentions* or *disposition*. The strain of your writings left me no room to entertain a doubt on that head. Whether the principles of your *Essay on Truth be well-founded*, is the only point of difference between us; and as the affair will soon be before the public, I shall not trouble you at present with any thing relating to it. As soon as my remarks shall be printed, and a complete copy of the book can be made up, it shall certainly be forwarded to you.

I also engage to shew the same frankness and openness to conviction that you profess, and a perfect readiness to retract any thing that shall appear to be ill-founded, or too severe, in my censure of your performance.

I may be mistaken, and see things in a wrong and unfavourable light, but I am far from meaning to *cavil*, and should think myself disgraced by taking any such advantage as unguarded expressions may furnish; though some controversial writers seem to think them justifiable. And, considering that your work is in possession of a very high degree of the public esteem, that my opinions on some of the sub-

jects of our controversy are exceedingly unpopular, and not likely to be ever otherwise, and that I consider you as a friend to the cause that I have myself most at heart; I hope you will have the candour to conclude, that nothing would have induced me to have entered the lists with you on this occasion, but a sincere and pretty strong, though perhaps a mistaken regard to truth; the support of which, how much soever appearances may be to the contrary, is the only method of promoting, *effectually and lastingly*, every cause that is truly valuable, and worth contending for.

Considering the very different lights in which we are apt to view the same things, in this imperfect state, it were to be wished that we might all improve this circumstance into a lesson of mutual moderation; and, that it might teach us to think as well as we possibly can of each other, and especially of the *moral influence* of our respective opinions. To me you appear to have been exceedingly to blame in this respect.

Perhaps no two persons professing Christianity ever thought more differently than you and I do; which may appear odd in men of liberal education, and who equally think themselves free from prejudice, and to have been earnest and impartial in their search after truth. But I infer from your *writings*, and the obligation that I imagine your professorship lays you under to subscribe the *Scotch Confession of faith*, that so the case is. Indeed, you seem never to have had the least acquaintance with such persons as myself, and my friends in this country are. But, notwithstanding this, I hope that a little reflection, aided by the candour you seem to be possessed of, will shew you the impropriety of the style you have adopted with respect to some of the points of difference between us.

I propose to take the liberty, in my intended publication, to insert the letter you have sent me, as I am persuaded it will do you honour; and likewise shew, that, whatever countenance your writings may *seem* to have given to my charge, you really disclaim the principles I have ascribed to you. Your testimony will add great weight to my observations on that subject, especially in what I shall say to Dr. Oswald.

I am truly sorry to hear of your indisposition, and wishing the speedy and perfect re-establishment of your health, I am, with real esteem, Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

J. PRIESTLEY.

INTRODUCTORY ESSAYS

TO

HARTLEY'S

Theory of the Human Mind,

ON THE PRINCIPLE OF

THE ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS.



Æquum est ut ab hominibus impetremus, ut qui de hisce nostris aliquid statuere aut existimare velit, ne id in transitu, aut velut aliud agendo, facere se posse speret; sed, ut rem pernoscat, pravos, atque alte hærentes mentis habitus, tempestiva mora corrigat, atque tum demum judicio suo utatur.

LORD BACON.



[*First published in 1775. Reprinted from the Second Edition, 1790.*]

THE

P R E F A C E.



IT has long been the opinion of all the admirers of Dr. Hartley among my acquaintance, as well as my own, that his *Observations on Man* could not have failed to have been more generally read, and his *Theory of the Human Mind* to have prevailed, if it had been made more intelligible; and if the work had not been clogged with a whole system of moral and religious knowledge; which, however excellent, is in a great measure foreign to it.

Both these obstacles it is my object in this publication to remove, by exhibiting his Theory of the Human Mind, as far as it relates to the doctrine of *association of ideas* only, omitting even what relates to the doctrine of *vibrations*, and the *anatomical disquisitions* which are connected with it. And it is on these two accounts only that the objection to his theory, as *difficult* and *intricate*, is founded.

As, however, I am far from being willing to suppress the doctrine of vibrations, thinking that Dr. Hartley has produced sufficient evidence for it, or as much as the nature of the thing will admit of at present, (that is, till we know more of the structure of the body in other respects,) I have not thought it necessary scrupulously to strike out the word *vibrations*, or *vibratiuncles*, wherever they occurred. As the words themselves are sufficiently intelligible, they can occasion no difficulty or embarrassment to the reader. Besides, he may, if he pleases, substitute for them the name of any other species of motion, or impression, to which he may think the phenomena to be explained by them more exactly correspond; and which he may think to agree better with the general doctrine of *association*, which is, properly speaking, the only *postulatum*, or thing *taken for granted* in this work.

The mention of vibrations occurs the most frequently in the sections which I have selected from the account of the several *senses*, the greatest part of which, as relating more immediately to the structure of the *body*, I have omitted. I was unwilling to leave out the whole of that part, because several of the sections (as I hope the reader will agree with me) are peculiarly curious and valuable, and relate more especially to the theory of the *mind*, though intermixed with observations of a different nature.

In the first part of this work, however, for the use of novices in these inquiries, I have generally substituted other expressions for *vibrations*, &c. where I could do it conveniently. But not to injure my author, or mislead my reader, I have in all those passages given the very words of Dr. Hartley at the bottom of the page.

Willing also, by this publication, to introduce my reader to the study of Hartley himself, I have printed the whole of his *table of contents for the first volume* of the work, that the original *extent* of it may be seen; distinguishing by a different character, the sections which I have selected here. All that I have taken from the *second volume* have been the sections relating to the *mechanism of the mind*, which I have subjoined to the *conclusion* of the first volume, as they all relate to the same subject.*

* What follows in this Preface formed the *Conclusion* of the First Edition, the Preface of which closed with this paragraph:

“It is not impossible but that, if this volume be well received, I may proceed to publish other parts of *Hartley’s Observations on Man*, with *dissertations* or *notes*, illustrating them. For many excellent articles (I may say *all* the articles) in this great work, have been, in a great measure, lost to the world, in consequence of being published as parts of so very extensive a system. In the preface to the second volume of my *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*, I have expressed a wish that Dr. Hartley’s account of *The Evidences of Christianity* might be published separately, for the use of the more philosophical and thinking part of mankind. If, therefore, I do any thing more in this way, I shall probably next undertake that part of the work.”

It has been mentioned, more than once, that the last object was fully attained, and there was now (1790) preparing a new Edition of the *Observations*, to which my Author’s publication of *Hartley* had attracted considerable attention. The notes of *Pistorius*, a learned German, were added in a third volume. That the reader may have an opportunity of studying *Hartley* according to the plan of Dr. Priestley’s Selections, I subjoin their Contents. The figures refer to the pages in the Second Edition of the *Observations*, 1791.

Definitions—Distribution of the first part. Vol. I. pp. 1—4.

The doctrines of vibrations and associations proposed. P. 5.

General evidences for the dependence of sensation and motion, and of ideas, on the brain—Instances shewing that sensations remain in the mind for a short time after the sensible objects are removed. Pp. 7—11.

Of the generation of the ideas of sensation, pp. 56—58. Of the power of raising ideas by association in the simplest case, pp. 65—67. Of the formation of complex ideas by association, pp. 73—79. The complex vibrations may be so exalted in

I would take this opportunity of observing that by this attempt to make *Hartley's Theory of the Mind* more intelli-

some cases as to be no longer miniatures, but equal in strength to sensory vibrations. Pp. 80—84.

It is probable that muscular motion is performed by the same general means as sensation, and the perception of ideas, pp. 85—88. The general method of explaining the voluntary and semi-voluntary motions—Of the manner in which the endeavour to obtain pleasure, and remove pain, is generated. Pp. 103—114.

Of the manner in which we are enabled to judge of the seat of impressions made on the external surface of our bodies—Of the manner and degree in which we are enabled to judge of the seat of internal pains, and in which the pleasures and pains of feeling contribute, according to the doctrine of association, to the formation of our intellectual pleasures and pains—Of the ideas generated by tangible impressions. Pp. 138—147.

An inquiry how far the changes generally made in the taste, in passing from infancy to old age, are agreeable to the doctrines of vibrations and association, pp. 162—164. Of the manner and degree in which the pleasures and pains of taste contribute, according to the doctrine of association, to the formation of our intellectual pleasures and pains—Of the ideas generated by the several tastes. Pp. 166—168.

Of the manner and degree in which pleasant and unpleasant odours contribute, according to the doctrine of association, to the formation of our intellectual pleasures and pains—Of the ideas generated by the several odours. Pp. 185—187.

An inquiry how far the judgments made by sight, concerning magnitude, distance, motion, figure and position, and how far the phenomena of single and double vision, are agreeable to the doctrine of association—Of the manner and degree in which agreeable and disagreeable impressions made on the eye, contribute, according to the doctrine of association, to the formation of our intellectual pleasures and pains—Of the ideas generated by visible impressions. Pp. 200—215.

An inquiry how far the judgments which we make concerning the distance and position of the sounding body are agreeable to the doctrine of association, and how far the power of distinguishing articulate sounds depends upon association, pp. 227—231. Of the manner and degree in which agreeable and disagreeable sounds contribute, according to the doctrine of association, to the formation of our intellectual pleasures and pains—Of the ideas generated by audible impressions. Pp. 233—237.

An inquiry how far the desires of the sexes towards each other are of a factitious nature and agreeable to the theory of these papers. Pp. 239—242.

An inquiry how far the actions of walking, handling, and speaking, are agreeable to the foregoing theory. Pp. 256—263.

The art of physic affords many proper tests of the doctrines of vibrations and association; and may receive considerable improvement from them, if they be true. Pp. 264—267.

Words and phrases must excite ideas in us by association; and they excite ideas in us by no other means. Of the manner in which ideas are associated with words. Consequences of this association of ideas with words. Of the nature of characters intended to represent objects and ideas immediately, and without the intervention of words. Of the use of the foregoing theory for explaining the nature of figurative words and phrases, and of analogy; and for explaining the languages and method of writing of the first ages of the world. Of the general nature of a philosophical language; with short hints concerning the methods in which one might be constructed. An illustration and confirmation of the general doctrine of association, taken from the particular associations which take place in respect of language. Illustration from musical sounds, colours and tastes. Pp. 268—323.

Of the nature of assent and dissent, and the causes from which they arise. Rules for the ascertainment of truth, and advancement of knowledge, drawn from the mathematical methods of considering quantity. A general application to the several branches of science. Pp. 324—367.

Of the origin and nature of the passions in general. Pp. 368—373.

An inquiry how far the phenomena of memory and of imagination, reveries and dreams,—deviations from sound reason, and alienations of the mind,—the inferiority of brutes to mankind, in intellectual capacities,—the pleasures and pains of imagina-

gible, and the study of it more inviting, I did not expect to make this treatise so very plain, as that any person altogether unacquainted with this kind of knowledge, should be able to read it with understanding, and without difficulty. For this is absolutely impossible. I suppose my reader to be well acquainted with *Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding*, and with the rudiments of logic and metaphysics, as delivered in elementary treatises. I must also suppose him to know so much of *anatomy* as not to be at a loss for the meaning of the terms *brain, nerves, muscles, &c.* and also that he is not destitute of the rudiments of *mathematical knowledge*. But I have done all that the generality of persons who have had a tolerably liberal education, will want to facilitate the reading of my author. I have left out all those very difficult speculations, dispersed through the first volume, which had not much connexion with what is essential to the system; so that all that is most valuable in the work may be read without interruption from unnecessary difficulties. If any trace of a reference to what is omitted be still retained, it is however so very immaterial, that the reader may very well neglect it, as not being necessary to the understanding of what is here selected.

After all that I have done, it must be supposed that the study of a work of this kind will require a considerable degree of attention, in some proportion to the great addition to the stock of valuable knowledge which it contains.

Treatises on subjects so novel and so important as these, cannot be expected to be made so easy, that the mind shall be entirely passive in the perusal of them, as in the ordinary reading of history and romances. A vigorous exertion of the mental powers is necessary to make a man master of so capital a work as this; but then he will be amply rewarded for that exertion. Knowledge of this kind, tends in a very eminent degree, to enlarge the comprehension of the mind, to give a man a kind of superiority to the world and to himself, so as to advance him in the scale of being, and con-

tion,—of ambition,—of self-interest,—of sympathy,—of Theopathy,—and of the moral sense are agreeable to the foregoing theory,—*Conclusion*, containing some remarks on the mechanism of the human mind. Pp. 368—512.

Religion pre-supposes free-will in the popular and practical sense, i. e. it pre-supposes a voluntary power over our affections and actions. Religion does not pre-suppose free-will in the philosophical sense, i. e. it does not pre-suppose a power of doing different things, the previous circumstances remaining the same. The natural attributes of God, or his infinite power and knowledge, exclude the possibility of free-will in the philosophical sense. Vol. II. pp. 58—70. On the practical application of the doctrine of necessity. Pp. 267—269.

sequently to lay a foundation for equable and permanent happiness.

Speculations of this kind have a more direct tendency to this great end of all science, than those branches of knowledge for the advancement of which we are so much indebted to Bacon, to Newton, and to Boyle; and are inferior in their operation to nothing but the study of morals and theology. It is impossible to avoid reflecting here, how abject their minds must be, who are destitute of all these kinds of knowledge; who are wholly addicted to sensual enjoyments, or are lost in the tumult of a vain or bustling world. Even *philology*, or the *Belles Lettres*, rank far below any of the studies above-mentioned, and are comparatively no more than the amusements of childhood.

I shall also take this opportunity of acquainting the reader that a *Dissertation on the Nature of Judgment and Reasoning*, &c. which was originally intended for this work, will be found prefixed to my *Examination of the Doctrine of Instinctive Principles*, maintained by Dr. Reid, Dr. Beattie, and Dr. Oswald,* with some additions to adapt it to the purpose for which it was there introduced.

* See p. 15. The following reference to the foregoing controversy forms the last passage in the *Conclusion* to my Author's first edition of Hartley's Theory, in 1775:

"I wish I could inform the reader of my having any certain intelligence that the subjects of this controversy were in the way of a free discussion by any of the writers on whom I have animadverted. I had indeed heard that Dr. Beattie (whose letter induced me to think that he would not decline this discussion) had written something with that view; but other reports say that his intentions have been overruled by the persuasion of some of his friends, of whom better things might have been expected. But all who are enemies of *free inquiry* are enemies of *truth*; and I hope that when Dr. Beattie shall have considered the nature and tendency of the advice that has been given him, his ingenuous temper will not suffer him to listen to it; but that he will either frankly acknowledge the oversights with which I have charged him, or with the same spirit with which he wrote his book, stand forth in its defence. I will also frankly own, that I wish to have an opportunity of explaining the origin of the metaphysical system which I have opposed more fully than my acquaintance with the history of it, at the time of my former publication, could admit; and particularly to explain the doctrine of *instincts*, as it was first proposed by Father Buffier the Jesuit, who wrote so early as the year 1724, in whose treatise *Des Premieres Verités* the whole system of *Common Sense*, as this writer himself terms it, is as fully and as speciously displayed, as by any of the three Scotch writers."

Claude Buffier was a native of Poland, who resided chiefly at Paris, where he died in 1737, aged 76. He published on a variety of subjects, and was one of the opponents of *Bayle*. See *Nouv. Dict. Hist. Paris*, 1772, l. p. 531.

As to the effect of the *Examination* on the Writers examined, Dr. Oswald appears to have remained silent. Dr. Reid, as will be seen, p. 182, amused himself with a passage in the *Introductory Essays*, and, according to the *Gen. Biog.* when more than 78 years of age, read short essays before a philosophical society, one of which was *An Examination of Priestley's Opinions concerning Matter and Mind*." Dr. Beattie had consulted the celebrated Mrs. Montague on his letter, p. 164, and as to the *Examination*, contented himself with describing Hartley's Theory as *Priestley's Hobby-horse*. See Sir W. Forbes's *Life of Dr. Beattie*, 4to. 1806, l. p. 355, &c.

INTRODUCTORY ESSAYS.



ESSAY I.

A general View of the Doctrine of VIBRATIONS.

SINCE all sensations and ideas are conveyed to the mind by means of the external senses, or more properly by the nerves belonging to them, sensations, as they exist in the brain, must be such things as are capable of being transmitted by the nerves; and since the nerves and the brain are of the same substance, the affection of a nerve during the transmission of a sensation, and the affection of the brain during the perceived presence of it, are probably the same. What sensations, or ideas, are, as they exist in the *mind*, or *sentient principle*, we have no more knowledge of, than we have of the mind or sentient principle itself. And in this ignorance of ourselves, the business of philosophy will be abundantly satisfied, if we be able to point out such a probable affection of the brain, as will correspond to all the variety of sensations and ideas, and the affections of them, of which we are conscious. Ideas themselves, as they exist in the mind, may be as different from what they are in the brain, as that peculiar difference of texture (or rather, as that difference in the rays of light), which occasions difference of colour, is from the colours themselves, as we conceive of them.

Till the time of Sir Isaac Newton, who first, I believe, suggested the doctrine of vibrations, it was generally supposed that an impression at the extremity of a nerve was transmitted to the brain by means of a *fluid* with which the nerve was filled; the nerves, for that purpose, being supposed to be tubular. But in what manner this impression was conveyed, whether in succession, by a vibratory motion of the parts of this nervous fluid, or instantaneously, there was no distinct hypothesis formed. The former supposition, however, is more consonant to the prevailing notion

of this nervous fluid, as exceedingly subtle and elastic. Still less had any tolerable hypothesis been advanced concerning the manner in which the brain is affected by this motion of the nervous fluid.

To assist the imagination, indeed, but by no means in any consistency with the notion of a nervous fluid, it had been conceived that ideas resembled characters drawn upon a *tablet*; and the language in which we generally speak of ideas, and their affections, is borrowed from this hypothesis. But neither can any such *tablet* be found in the brain, nor any *style*, by which to make the characters upon it; and though some of the more simple phenomena of ideas, as their being more or less deeply *impressed*, their being *retained* a longer or a shorter time, being capable of being *revived* at pleasure, &c. may be pretty well explained by the hypothesis of such a tablet, and characters upon it, it is wholly inadequate to the explanation of other and very remarkable phenomena of ideas, especially their mutual *association*. Besides, this hypothesis suggests nothing to explain any of the *mental operations* respecting ideas.

This hypothesis, therefore, if it may be said to have been one, being rejected, I do not know that any other remains to be considered but that of *vibrations*, suggested by Sir Isaac Newton, though but barely proposed by him, at the end of his *Principia*,* and in the *Queries* at the end of his *Optics*. The former is quoted by Hartley himself, and therefore I shall not insert it here, but the latter I shall subjoin.

“ Qu. 12. Do not the rays of light, in falling upon the bottom of the eye, excite vibrations in the *tunica retina*? Which vibrations, being propagated along the solid fibres of the optic nerves into the brain, cause the sense of seeing. For because dense bodies conserve their heat a long time, and the densest bodies conserve their heat the longest, the vibrations of their parts are of a lasting nature; and therefore may be propagated along solid fibres of uniform dense matter, to a great distance, for conveying into the brain the

* It forms the concluding paragraph. I here copy it *verbatim* from the justly admired Edition of *Newton's Works* by *Horsley*. “ Adjicere jam liceret nonnulla de spiritu quodam subtilissimo corpora crassa pervadente, et in iisdem latente; cuius vi et actionibus particulae corporum ad minimas distantias se mutuò attrahunt, et contiguæ factæ coherent; et corpora electrica agunt ad distantias majores, tam repellendo quàm attrahendo corpuscula vicina; et lux emittitur, reflectitur, refringitur, infectitur et corpora calefacit; et sensatio omnibus excitatur; et membra animalium ad voluntatem moventur, vibrationibus scilicet hujus spiritus, per solida nervorum capillamenta, ab externis sensuum organis ad cerebrum, et à cerebro in musculos, propagatis. Sed hæc paucis exponi non possunt; neque adest sufficiens copia experimentorum, quibus leges actionum hujus spiritus accuratè determinari et monstrari debent.”—*Principia*, ad fin. *Newtoni Opera*, 4to. 1782, III. p. 174.

impressions made upon all the organs of sense. For that motion which can continue long in one and the same part of a body, can be propagated a long way from one part to another, supposing the body homogeneous, so that the motion may not be reflected, refracted, interrupted or disordered by any unevenness of the body."

"Qu. 13. Do not several sorts of rays make vibrations of several bignesses, which, according to their bignesses, excite sensations of several colours, much after the manner that the vibrations of the air, according to their several bignesses, excite sensations of several sounds? And, particularly, do not the most refrangible rays excite the shortest vibrations for making a sensation of deep violet, the least refrangible the largest, for making a sensation of deep red, and the several intermediate sorts of rays, vibrations of several intermediate bignesses, to make sensations of the several intermediate colours?"*

Upon these hints Dr. Hartley acknowledges † that he built his whole system of vibrations, which appears to me to correspond to all that we know concerning ideas and their affections, and to have been demonstrated by him as satisfactorily as can be expected, in a subject so very obscure as this necessarily is; the evidence for it being sufficiently clear in many cases, and being capable of being transferred by analogy to other cases, from which separate and independent evidence could not be derived.

This hypothesis does not require that the nerves be *tubes*, or consist of bundles of tubes, for the purpose of containing any *fluid*, though it is no way inconsistent with the supposition of their being of that structure. It only requires that they be of such a texture, that if their extreme parts be put into a vibratory motion, that motion may be freely propagated to the brain, and be continued there.

Now that the nerves *may* be of a constitution that will admit of this, cannot be denied, though the structure which this purpose requires be ever so exquisite; especially when it is considered that all bodies whatever do actually possess this very property, in a greater or less degree, in consequence of their constituent particles not being in actual contact with each other, but kept at a certain distance from one another by a repulsive power.

That sensations are transmitted to the brain in the form of vibrations, is rendered very probable from the well-known phenomena of the more perfect senses, as those of seeing

* Newton's *Optics*, 1721, 3d Ed. pp. 319, 320. † See *Observations*, Part I. Ch. i.

and hearing. That the *retina* is affected with a tremulous motion, in consequence of the action of the rays of light, is evident from the impression continuing some time, and dying away gradually after the cause of the impression has been removed. It appears to me that no person can keep his eye fixed on a luminous object, and afterwards shut it, and observe how the impression goes off, and imagine that the *retina* was affected in any other manner than with a tremulous or a vibratory motion. And is it not most probable, not to say certain, that, since the impression is actually transmitted to the brain, it must be by means of the same kind of motion by which the extremity of the nerve was affected, that is, a vibratory one? And since the *brain* itself is a continuation of the same substance with the nerves, is it not equally evident that the affection of the brain corresponding to a sensation, and consequently to an idea, is a vibratory motion of its parts?

Now, since the texture of all the nerves is, at least, nearly the same, it will follow by analogy, that if any one of them transmit sensations by a vibratory motion of its parts, all the rest do so too. That this is the case with the *auditory* nerve is probable, independently of any argument of analogy from the optic nerve. For what is more natural than to imagine that the tremulous motion of the particles of the air, in which sound consists, must, since it acts by successive pulses, communicate a tremulous motion to the particles of the auditory nerve, and that the same tremulous motion is propagated to the brain, and diffused into it? It is not necessary to suppose that the vibrations of the particles of the air, and those of the particles of the nerves, are *isochronous*, since even the vibration of a musical string will affect another, an octave above or an octave below it.

That vibrations corresponding to all the varieties of sensations and ideas that ever take place in any human mind may take place in the same brain at the same time, can create no difficulty to any person who considers the capacity of the *air* itself to transmit different vibrations, without limits, at the same instant of time. In a concert, in which ever so many instruments are employed, a person skilled in music, I am told, is able to attend to which of them all he pleases. At the same time ever so many persons may be speaking, and sounds of other kinds may be made, each of which is transmitted without the least interruption from the rest.*

* See p. 51, and the references in the Notes.

How infinitely complex must be the vibration of the air a little above the streets of such a city as London ; and yet there can be no doubt but that each sound has its proper effect, and might be attended to separately, by an ear sufficiently exquisite. That vibrations which are nearly *isochronous* affect and modify one another, so as to become perfectly so, sufficiently corresponds to the phenomena of ideas, and therefore makes no objection to this doctrine.

The differences, of which vibrations affecting the brain are capable, are sufficient to correspond to all the differences which we observe in our original ideas or sensations. The difference in the *degree* of vibration, corresponding to the same sound, made weaker or stronger, is considerable. The difference in *kind*, corresponding to the difference of tone, is still more considerable. And farther, one vibration in the brain may be distinguished from another by its *place*, in consequence of its principally affecting a particular region of the brain, and also in its *line of direction*, as entering by a particular nerve.

If these original differences in vibrations are sufficient to correspond to all the varieties of our original or *simple ideas*, the combinations of which they are capable must be equal in both cases ; so that the number of *complex ideas* creates no peculiar difficulty. In fact, however, some mechanical affection of the nerves and brain must necessarily correspond to all our sensations and ideas ; and I think it is pretty evident that no other hypothesis can account for half the variety in this respect that may be explained by the doctrine of vibrations ; so that, on this account, and from the most general view of the subject, Hartley's, or rather Newton's, theory must have the preference of any other, at least of any that has yet been proposed.

Besides the four differences of vibrations above-mentioned, which alone are insisted upon by Dr. Hartley, there may be a farther difference in the *constitution of the nerves* belonging to the different senses, or there may be so many circumstances that affect or modify their vibrations, that they may be as distinguishable from one another, as different human voices sounding the same note ; and probably no two individuals of the human race can sound the same note so much alike, as that they could not be distinguished from one another.

There will be no great difficulty in conceiving that, in a substance not *fluid*, like the air, but *solid*, though soft, like the brain, a vibration affecting any part of it will leave that

part disposed to vibrate in that particular manner rather than in any other; so that a *second impression* of the same kind may be distinguished from a *first*; which may, in some measure, explain the difference between a new sensation and the repetition of an old one. But these are chiefly distinguishable from one another by the difference of their *associations*, both with other ideas, and with a different state of the mind, or brain, in a variety of respects.

Also, one vibration having been sufficiently impressed, it may be conceived that the region of the brain affected by it will retain a disposition to the same vibrations in preference to others; so that these vibrations may take place from other causes than the original one. But these vibrations will necessarily differ considerably in strength, and other circumstances, from original vibrations; which provides for the difference between the ideas of present objects, and the same idea excited without the presence of the object. Thus circles of colours may be excited by pressing the eye with the finger, and by other causes, which, however, are easily distinguished from a similar affection of the *retina* by the impression of rays of light.

If it be said that these vibrations in the brain, differing chiefly in degree, might be liable to be mistaken for one another; I answer that, in fact, mankind are subject to fallacies and mistakes from this source; very vivid ideas actually imposing upon the mind, so that they are mistaken for realities, as in dreams and reveries, especially in cases of madness.

This supposition of the particles of the brain retaining a disposition to vibrate as they have formerly vibrated, will be rendered more probable, from considering that all solid substances seem to retain a disposition to continue in any state before impressed. For this reason a bow of any kind, that has been bent, does not restore itself to the same form that it had before, but leans a little to the other, in consequence of the spheres of attraction and repulsion belonging to the several particles having been altered by the change of their situation. Something similar to this may take place with respect to the brain.

The phenomena of vibrations correspond happily enough to the difference between *pleasurable* and *painful* sensations; because they seem to differ only in degree, and to pass insensibly into one another. Thus a moderate degree of warmth is pleasant, and the pleasure increases with the heat to a certain degree, at which it begins to be painful; and

beyond this the pain increases with a degree of heat, just as the pleasure had done before. Dr. Hartley conjectures, and I think probably enough, that the limit of pleasure and pain is the *solution of continuity* in the particles of the nerves and brain, occasioned by the vigorous vibrations which accompany the sense of pain.*

If it be admitted, as I think it must be, that, for any thing that yet appears, vibrations in the brain may accompany and be the cause of all our ideas, there remains only one property of ideas, or rather of the *mind* relating to them, to which, if the doctrine of vibrations can be supposed to correspond, the whole theory will be established, and that is the *association of ideas*. For it will be seen that this single property comprehends all the other affections of our ideas, and thereby accounts for all the phenomena of the human mind, and what we usually call its different *operations*, with respect to sensations and ideas of every kind.

Now, if two different vibrations take place in the brain at the same time, it cannot be but they will a little alter or modify one another, so that the particles of the medullary substance will not vibrate precisely as they would have done if they had taken place separately; but each of them will vibrate as acted upon by two impulses at the same time; and all the particles being acted upon in the same manner, it necessarily follows that, if, from any cause whatever, one of these vibrations shall be excited, the other will be excited also, so that the whole state of the brain will exactly resemble what it was before; and this seems to correspond sufficiently to the recollection of one idea by means of another.

I do not expect that this general view of the doctrine of vibrations will satisfy those who are accustomed to consider all matter in the most gross and general manner, as if it was subject to no laws but those of the five mechanical powers, which was a turn of thinking that prevailed very much about half a century ago; so that even physicians attempted to explain the nature of diseases, and the operation of medicines, by the mere forms and weight of the particles of the different solids and fluids, and the common laws of hydrostatics.

But as this system has been abandoned, in consequence of our becoming acquainted with the more subtle and important laws of matter exhibited in chemical operations; so now that we see that the laws and affections of mere matter

* See *Observations*, Part I. Ch. i. Prop. vi.

are infinitely more complex than we had imagined, we may, by this time, I should think, be prepared to admit the *possibility* of a mass of matter, like the brain, having been formed by the Almighty Creator with such exquisite powers, with respect to vibrations, as should be sufficient for all the purposes above-mentioned; though the particulars of its constitution, and mode of affection, may far exceed our comprehension. And it is only the bare *possibility* of the thing that I now contend for. Much light, however, has been thrown upon the *manner* of operation, in a variety of particular cases, by Dr. Hartley. And when the attention of philosophers shall have been sufficiently turned to the subject, in consequence of the *general scheme* appearing to deserve it, more light, I doubt not, will be thrown upon it, especially by those who are conversant in medical and anatomical inquiries.

It will stagger some persons, that so much of the business of thinking should be made to depend upon mere *matter*, as the doctrine of vibrations supposes. For, in fact, it leaves nothing to the province of any other principle, except the simple power of *perception*; so that, if it were possible that matter could be endued with this property, *immateriality*, as far as it has been supposed to belong to man, would be excluded altogether. But I do not know that this supposition need give any concern, except to those who maintain that a future life depends upon the immateriality of the human soul. It will not at all alarm those who found all their hopes of a future existence on the Christian doctrine of *a resurrection from the dead*.

It has been the opinion of many philosophers, and among others of Mr. Locke, that, for any thing that we know to the contrary, a capacity of thinking might be given to matter.* Dr. Hartley, however, notwithstanding his hypothesis would be much helped by it, seems to think otherwise. He also supposes that there is an intermediate *elementary body* between the mind and the gross body; which may exist, and be the instrument of giving pleasure or pain to the sentient principle, after death. But I own I see no reason why his scheme should be burdened with such an incumbrance as this.†

I am rather inclined to think that, though the subject is beyond our comprehension at present, man does not consist

* See *Locke*, as quoted p. 37, Note *.

† See *Judge Cooper*, on "Dr. Priestley's Metaphysical Writings," *Mem.* 1806, I. p. 311.

of two principles so essentially different from one another as *matter* and *spirit*, which are always described as having not one common property, by means of which they can affect or act upon each other; the one occupying space, and the other not only not occupying the least imaginable portion of space, but incapable of bearing relation to it; insomuch that, properly speaking, my mind is no more *in my body* than it is in the moon. I rather think that the whole man is of some *uniform composition*, and that the property of *perception*, as well as the other powers that are termed *mental*, is the result (whether necessary or not) of such an organical structure as that of the brain. Consequently, that the whole man becomes extinct at death, and that we have no hope of surviving the grave but what is derived from the scheme of revelation.*

Our having recourse to an *immaterial principle* to account for perception and thought, is only saying, in other words, that we do not know in what they consist; for no one will say that he has any conception how the principle of thought can have any more relation to immateriality than to materiality.

This hypothesis is rather favourable to the notion of such organical systems as plants having some degree of sensation.† But at this a benevolent mind will rather rejoice than repine. It also makes the lower animals to differ from us in *degree* only, and not in *kind*, which is sufficiently agreeable to appearances; but does not necessarily draw after it the belief of their surviving death, as well as ourselves; this privilege being derived to us by a *positive constitution*, and depending upon the promise of God, communicated by express revelation to man.‡

* Dr. Reid diverts himself with this passage, in a letter to Lord Kames. He asks, "If two or three such beings should be formed out of my brain, whether they will all be *me*, and consequently all be one and the same intelligent being." *Life of Lord Kames*, III. p. 220. Here the learned Professor appears to have invented the absurdity which he ridicules, and to have forgotten, for a moment, the unerring skill of Man's Almighty Restorer. Dr. R. wrote this letter in 1775, and was probably still smarting after the late unmerciful *examination*. My Author, in his *Memoirs* and the Preface to the *Disquisitions*, has described the odium which this passage generally excited, and which only led him to pursue his inquiries.

† Such, according to Archdeacon Blackburne, was the opinion of the late Bishop of Llandaff, as given in his "masterly tract," the *Essay on the Subjects of Chemistry*, pp. 18, 19. "Wherever," says the learned Professor *Watson*, "there is a vascular system, containing a moving nutritive succus, there is life; and wherever there is life there may be, for ought we can prove to the contrary, a more or less acute perception, a greater or less capacity for the reception of happiness; the quantity indeed of which, after we have descended below a certain degree of sensibility, will (according to our method of estimating things, which is ever partial and relative to ourselves) be small in each individual." *Historical View*, 1772, Ed. 2, p. 62, Note.

‡ See pp. 21, 56 and 144, Vol. II. p. 50, and the Note. The author of the *Essay*

ESSAY II.

A general View of the Doctrine of ASSOCIATION OF IDEAS.

PREVIOUS to the reading of the following treatise, the object of which is to deduce all the phenomena of thinking from the single principle of *Association*, it may not be unuseful to have a general view of the system, in which the principal outlines may be brought nearer together, and the whole seen at one view. This, therefore, I shall endeavour to do, and as succinctly as I can.

The mechanical association of ideas that have been frequently presented to the mind at the same time was, I believe, first noticed by Mr. Locke; but he had recourse to it only to explain those sympathies and antipathies which he calls *unnatural*, in opposition to those which, he says, are born with us; and he refers them to "trains of motion in the animal spirits, which once set a going continue in the same steps they have been used to, which, by often treading, are worn into a smooth path, and the motion in it becomes easy, and as it were natural. As far as we can comprehend thinking, thus ideas seem to be produced in our minds; or if they are not, this may serve to explain their following one another in an habitual train, when once they are put into that track, as well as it does to explain such motions of the body."* This quotation is sufficient to shew how exceedingly imperfect were Mr. Locke's notions concerning the nature, cause and effects of this principle.

Afterwards Mr. Gay, a clergyman in the West of England, endeavoured to shew the possibility of deducing all our passions and affections from association, in a dissertation prefixed to Bishop Law's translation of King's Origin of

there mentioned, endeavours to prove from "the Scriptures—that brute animals will have a being in future, and partake in some degree of those benefits which shall be conferred after the universal change." Whatever may be thought of his arguments, his inference is most benevolent, as he inculcates upon *man* to regard *brutes* as "creatures under his government to be protected and not as put into his power to be plagued and tormented."—*Essay*, pp. 1 and 107. See on the same subject the *Adventurer*, No. 37. The Glasgow Professor is merry also upon this paragraph. Unlike the Professor of Cambridge, he appears to ridicule the notion of a possible *sensation* in *plants*, and "as to the lower animals," he suggests that "the king's advocate be ordered to prosecute criminal *brutes*," and that each brute "be allowed a *jury of his peers*."—*Life of Lord Kames*, III. p. 221. Perhaps, however, Dr. Reid only designed for the momentary amusement of a private correspondence, what the *discretion* of a biographer has brought before the public.

* Vol. I. p. 367. (P.) *Essay*, B. II. Ch. xxxiii. Sect. 6.

Evil.* But he supposed the *love of happiness* to be an original and implanted principle, and that the passions and affections were deducible from only supposing sensible and rational creatures dependent upon each other for their happiness. "Our approbation of morality, and all affections whatsoever," says he, "are finally resolved into reason, pointing out private happiness, and are conversant only about things apprehended to be means tending to this end: and whenever this end is not perceived, they are to be accounted for from the association of ideas, and may properly enough be called habits. If this be clearly made out, the necessity of supposing a moral sense, or public affections, to be implanted in us (since it ariseth only from the insufficiency of all other schemes to account for human actions) will immediately vanish." †

His observations, however, on this subject amount to little more than conjectures, and he saw so little into the doctrine of association, as not to be aware that the doctrine of *necessity* followed from it.

It was upon hearing of Mr. Gay's opinion, that Dr. Hartley turned his thoughts to the subject; and at length, after giving the closest attention to it, in a course of several years, it appeared to him very probable, not only that all our *intellectual pleasures and pains*, but that all the phenomena of *memory, imagination, volition, reasoning*, and every other mental affection and operation, are only different modes, or cases, of the association of ideas: so that nothing is requisite to make any man whatever he is, but a sentient principle, with this single property (which however admits of great variety), and the influence of such circumstances as he has actually been exposed to.

The admirable simplicity of this hypothesis ought certainly to recommend it to the attention of all philosophers, as, independent of other considerations, it wears the face of that *simplicity in causes*, and *variety in effects*, which we discover in every other part of nature.

In human works, tho' laboured on with pain,
A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;
In God's, one single can its end produce;
Yet serves to second too some other use. ‡

To the mere novice in philosophical investigations, it will

* Which the bishop says, "was composed, chiefly, by the late Rev. Mr. Gay." Mr. Gay was living in 1730, but died before 1748. See Law's Translation, 1781, Ed. 5, p. xv. and Hartley's Pref. p. i. † See Law Prelim. Diss. p. xxvi.

‡ Pope's Essay on Man, Ep. i. l. 53—56. (P.)

appear impossible to reduce all the variety of *thinking* to so simple and uniform a process; but to the same person it would also appear impossible, *a priori*, that all the varieties of *language*, as spoken by all the nations in the world, should be expressed by means of a short alphabet. Also those phenomena in nature which depend upon gravity, electricity, &c. are no less various and complex; and the more we know of nature, the more particular facts, and particular laws, we are able to reduce to simple and general laws: insomuch that now it does not appear impossible, but that, ultimately, one great comprehensive law shall be found to govern both the material and intellectual world.

To shew the possibility of Dr. Hartley's theory of the mind, and at the same time to give such an idea of it as may be useful to those who are about to enter upon the study of it, I would observe, that all the phenomena of the mind may be reduced to the faculties of *memory*, *judgment*, the *passions* and the *will*, to which may be added the power of *muscular motion*.

Supposing the human mind to have acquired a stock of ideas, by means of the external senses, and that these ideas have been variously associated together; so that when one of them is present, it will introduce such others as it has the nearest connexion with, and relation to, nothing more seems to be necessary to explain the phenomena of *memory*. For we have no power of calling up any idea at pleasure, but only recollect such as have a connexion, by means of former associations, with those that are at any time present to the mind. Thus the sight, or the idea, of any particular person, generally suggests the idea of his *name*, because they have been frequently associated together. If that fail to introduce the name, we are at a loss, and cannot recollect it at all, till some other associated circumstance help us. In naming a number of words in a sentence, or lines in a poem, the end of each preceding word being connected with the beginning of the succeeding one, we can easily repeat them in that order; but we are not able to repeat them backwards, till they have been frequently named in that contrary order. By this means, however, we acquire a facility of doing it, as may be found by the names of number from one to twenty.

In the wildest flights of *fancy*, it is probable that no single idea occurs to us but such as had a connexion with some other impression or idea, previously existing in the mind; and what we call *new thoughts* are only new combinations, of old simple ideas, or decompositions of complex ones.

Judgment is nothing more than the perception of the universal concurrence, or the perfect coincidence of two ideas, or the want of that concurrence and coincidence, as *that milk is white*, that *twice two is four*, or transferring the idea of *truth*, by association, from one proposition to another that resembles it.

When we say that *Alexander conquered Darius*, we mean that the person whom we distinguish by the name of Alexander, is the same with him that conquered Darius; and when we say that *God is good*, we mean that the person whom we distinguish by the name of *God*, appears by his works and conduct, to be possessed of the same disposition that we call *good*, or *benevolent*, in men. And having attained to the knowledge of *general truths*, the idea, or feeling, which accompanies the perception of truth, is transferred, by association, to all the particulars which are comprised under it, and to other propositions that are analogous to it; having found by experience, that when we have formed such conclusions we have not been deceived.

When we say that any idea or circumstance excites a particular *passion*, it is explained by observing that certain feelings and emotions have been formerly connected with that particular idea or circumstance, which it has the power of recalling by association. Thus with respect to the passion of *fear* it is evident to observation, that a child is unacquainted with any such thing, till it has received some hurt; upon which the painful idea left in the mind by the remembrance of the hurt becomes associated with the idea of the circumstances in which he received the hurt, and by degrees with that circumstance only which is *essential* to it, and which he therefore considers as the proper *cause* of his hurt. If a variety of painful emotions, and disagreeable feelings, have been associated with the idea of the same circumstance, they will all be excited by it, in one general *complex emotion*, the component parts of which will not be easily distinguishable; and by their mutual associations they will, at length, entirely coalesce, so as never to be separately perceived.

A child has no fear of fire till he has been burnt by it, or of a dog till he has been bit by one, or without having had reason to think that a dog would bite him, and having some notion, from things of a similar nature, what the bite of a dog is. In like manner the passion of *love* is generated by the association of agreeable circumstances with the idea of the object that excites it. And all our other passions are only modifications of these general ones of *fear* or *love*, vary-

ing with the situation of the object of fear or love, with respect to us, as whether it be near or distant, expected or unexpected, &c.

According to this hypothesis all our passions are at first *interested*, respecting our own pleasures or pains; and this sufficiently agrees with our observation: and they become *disinterested* when these complex emotions are transferred by association to other persons or things. Thus the child loves his nurse or parent by connecting with the idea of them the various pleasures which he has received from them, or in their company: but having received the most happiness from them, or with them, when they themselves were cheerful and happy, he begins to desire their happiness, and in time it becomes as much an object with him as his own proper happiness.

The natural *progress* of a passion may be most distinctly seen in that of the *love of money*, which is acquired so late in life, that every step in the progress may be easily traced. No person is born with the love of money, as such. A child is, indeed, pleased with a piece of coin, as he is with other things, the form or the splendour of which strikes his eye; but this is very different from that emotion which a man who has been accustomed to the use of money, and has known the want of it, feels upon being presented with a guinea, or a shilling. This emotion is a very complex one, the component parts of which are indistinguishable; but which have all been separately connected with the idea of money, and the uses of it. For after a child has received the first species of pleasure from a piece of money, as a mere *plaything*, he receives additional pleasure from the possession of it, by connecting with the idea of it, the idea of the various pleasures and advantages which it is able to procure him. And, in time, that complex idea of pleasure, which was originally formed from the various pleasures which it was the means of procuring, is so intimately connected with the idea of money, that it becomes an object of a proper passion; so that men are capable of pursuing it without ever reflecting on any *use* that it may possibly be of to them.

A *volition* is a modification of the passion of *desire*, exclusive of any *tumultuous emotion* which the idea of a favourite object not possessed may excite; and it is generally followed by those actions with which that state of mind has been associated; in consequence of those actions having been found, by experience, to be instrumental in bringing the favourite object into our possession.

At first a child stretches out his hand, and performs the motion of *grasping*, without any particular intention, whenever the palm of his hand is irritated, or by any general stimulus, which puts the whole muscular system into motion. But playthings, &c., being put into his hand, and it closing upon them, he learns, by degrees, to stretch forth his hand, as well as to grasp at any thing. At length the action becomes familiar, and is intimately associated with a sight of a favourite object; so that the moment it is perceived, the actions of reaching and grasping immediately and mechanically succeed. Any person who has been accustomed to observe the actions of children must have frequently seen all the steps of this process; and in a similar manner it may be conceived that we learn to procure the gratification of all our desires.

There is nothing that has more the appearance of *instinct* than the motions of particular muscles in certain circumstances; and yet I will venture to say that there is hardly one of them that Dr. Hartley has not, in a manner, demonstrated to have been originally *automatic*; the muscles being first forced to contract involuntarily, and becoming afterwards associated with the idea of the circumstance, so that the one immediately and mechanically follows the other.

What can be more instantaneous, and have more the appearance of instinct, than the endeavour of all animals to recover the *equilibrium* of their bodies, when they are in danger of falling; and yet I am confident, from my own observations, that children have it not, but acquire it gradually, and slowly: the same is the case of the action of *sucking*, and the *motion of the eye-lids* when any thing approaches the eye. This association, however, grows so firm in a course of time, that it is hardly possible to counteract it by the most determined resolution when we are grown up; though you may bring any thing ever so near, and ever so suddenly to the eye of a young child, when it is most perfectly awake, without exciting any motion in the eye-lids.

Who can help admiring the admirable simplicity of nature, and the wisdom of the great Author of it, in this provision for the *growth of all our passions*, and propensities, just as they are wanted, and in the degree in which they are wanted through life? All is performed by the general disposition of the mind to conform to its circumstances, and to be modified by them, without that seemingly operose and inelegant contrivance, of different original, independent

instincts, adapted to a thousand different occasions, and either implanted in us at different times, or contrived to lie dormant till they are wanted. Certainly there is nothing in the general view of this system that can recommend it to a philosopher, who has been used to the contemplation of a very different kind of system in other parts of nature, which have the same author.

ESSAY III.

Of complex and abstract Ideas.

BESIDES the simple *ideas of sensation*, as Mr. Locke calls those impressions which are made upon the mind by external objects affecting the senses, as those of *colour, sound, taste, &c.*, there are others which he calls *ideas of reflection*, as those belonging to the words *mind, thought, judgment, power, duration, spuce, &c.* These he supposes we get by reflecting on the operations of our own minds; and that though sensible ideas may give occasion to them, they do not properly *constitute* them. On the other hand, Dr. Hartley supposes that our external senses furnish the materials of all the ideas of which we are ever possessed, and that those which Mr. Locke calls ideas of reflection, are only ideas of so very complex a nature, and borrowed from so many ideas of sense, that their origin cannot be easily traced. And, indeed, on the first view of them, it is not very easy to conceive how they can be composed of sensible ideas.

To lessen this difficulty a little, let it be considered how exceedingly different, to the *eye of the mind*, as we may say, are our ideas of sensible things from any thing that could have been conjectured concerning their effect upon us; as the ideas of *sound*, from the tremulous motion of the particles of the air, and much more the ideas of the different *colours* from the impulse of rays of light of different degrees of refrangibility; and what comes rather nearer to the case before us, how very different an effect has the *mixture* of several colours from what we could have supposed *a priori*! What resemblance is there between *white*, and the mixture of the seven primary colours, of which it consists, all of which are so different from it, and from one another? What power of intellect could analyze that impression into its constituent parts, by attending to the *idea* only, without making those *experiments* which led Sir Isaac Newton to

that capital discovery? * Nay, a person not acquainted with optics can hardly be made to believe but that *black* is as much a positive colour as *red* or *white*. In like manner, from the combination of ideas, and especially very dissimilar ones, there may result ideas, which, to appearance, shall be so different from the parts of which they really consist, that they shall no more be capable of being analyzed by *mental reflection* than the idea of *white*.

So exquisite is the structure of our minds, that a whole group of ideas shall so perfectly coalesce into one, as to appear but a simple idea; and single words may be so connected with such groups, as to excite them with the same certainty and distinctness, as if they had been originally simple sensations.

How complex, for instance, are the ideas expressed by the terms which denote the different *employments, offices, and professions* among men, as those of *king, merchant, player, lawyer, preacher, &c.*; or those which denote various *games*, as *cricket, whist, piquet, &c.*! The ideas annexed to these terms must be an epitome of the *definitions* of them; and if they be acquired without definitions, by means of a series of *observations*, the ideas will be still more complex.

Let a child be introduced to the theatre, and see a company of persons from time to time in a great variety of characters, and let him be told that he must call them *players*: that word will excite an epitome, as it were, of all that he has seen them perform; and if he attend to that complex idea, even the features, and most striking gestures of the principal performers will be conspicuous in it; and by degrees, as all these particulars get intermixed, and completely associated, whatever belonged to the separate persons will be dropped, and something will remain annexed to the term, when it is explained with due precision, that had been observed in them all.

This is the process that is called *abstraction*; and it is by means of this process, chiefly, that we acquire those ideas which have been referred to *reflection*; their deduction from sensible ideas being too remote and obscure to be apparent, or so much as suspected, at first sight.

In the same manner in which we get the idea which we have annexed to the word *player, merchant, king, &c.*, which are at first exceedingly complex, we get the idea that we have to the word *thought, or thinking*; which, in fact, is

* See the Author, on "The Discoveries of Sir I. Newton, *History*, I. p. 238, &c.

an abridgment, or coalescence, of the various external signs or marks, and also of the internal feelings, by which (exclusive of the general outward form) a man is distinguished from a brute animal.

If we only consider that short and simple process by which we get the idea of *white* or *whiteness*, namely, by leaving out what is particular in all the objects which we have seen of that colour, and restricting the meaning of the term to what is common to them all, we shall not be at a loss for the manner in which we come by such ideas as are denoted by the words *substance*, *space*, *duration*, *identity*, *reality*, *possibility*, *necessity*, *contingency*, &c.; for these only express those *circumstances*, in which a great variety of particular things, all originally the objects of our senses, agree, the peculiarities in each being overlooked.

In like manner the idea of *power* seems at first sight, to be a very simple one; but it is in fact, exceedingly complex. A child pushes at an obstacle, it gives way. He wishes to walk, or run, and finds that he can do it whenever he pleases. In like manner he practises a variety of other bodily and mental exercises, in which he finds that it only *depends upon himself* whether he performs them or not; and at length he calls that general feeling, which is the result of a thousand different impressions, by the name of *power*. He sees other persons perform the same things with himself, and therefore he says that they have the same power that he has; and other persons doing different things, gives him the idea of *different powers* or *faculties*. Even inanimate things have certain invariable *effects*, when applied in a particular manner. Thus a rope sustains a weight, a magnet attracts iron, a charged electrical jar gives a shock, &c. From these, and other similar observations, we get the idea of *power*, *universally and abstractedly considered*; so that, in fact, the idea of power is acquired by the very same mental process by which we acquire the idea of any other property belonging to a number of bodies, viz. by leaving out what is peculiar to each, and appropriating the term to that particular circumstance, or appearance, in which they all agree.

An excellent and truly valuable writer has pitched upon the idea of *solidity*, or *impenetrability*, as what could not be deduced from *sense*, but must have its origin in the *understanding*; because “we have had no actual experience of real impenetrability; since all the observations and experi-

ments, which we have hitherto made on bodies, may be accounted for without that supposition.”*

But it is obvious to remark, that the opinion of the impenetrability of matter, and the ideas belonging to it, are generated before the discovery of any fallacy in the case is made. What a child, or rather a boy, means by *impenetrability* may easily be supposed to arise from the impression that will be left upon his mind by pressing against any body that does not give way to him, and by frequently observing bodies impinging against one another, and changing places, without ever coalescing into one; except when several bodies unite to form a larger, or without some of them being received into the supposed interstices of others. And we see, in the case of Father Boscovich,† and Mr. Michell,‡ that the very idea of the proper impenetrability of matter may be disputed.

I can see no more difficulty in the idea of the *vis inertiae* of matter, or of its *resistance* and *inactivity*. For though “we never saw any portion of matter void of gravity, or other active powers,” § it is as easy as any other process of abstraction, to leave out the idea of those powers, in the contemplation of matter; and then, judging from universal experience, we cannot possibly have any idea of a *change* either of rest or motion, with respect to it, without something external acting upon it. The phenomena of a billiard table only, cannot but impress the mind in this manner. We there see balls at rest beginning to move, or change their direction in motion, by other balls impinging upon them; but never saw an instance of a ball beginning to move of itself. As the table is level, the idea of *gravity*, or of a tendency to move downwards, is easily excluded.

To account for the idea of *time*, it appears to me to be sufficient to attend to a few well-known facts, viz. that impressions made by external objects remain a certain space of time in the mind; that this time is different according to

* See Dr. Price's Review of the Principal Questions in Morals, p. 23. (P.)

† Joseph Roger Boscovich, F. R. S., a native of Ragusa, was a celebrated Geometer and Astronomer, who died at Milan in 1787, aged 75. Among other works, he published, *Theoria Philosophiæ Naturalis*, “in opposition to the atomical philosophy, which ascribes impenetrability to the particles of matter.” See Gen. Biog. II. p. 242.

‡ “The discoverer of the method of making artificial magnets.” See *Memoirs*, on the Author's residence at Leeds, where he acknowledges Mr. M.'s assistance, “in writing the History of Discoveries relating to Vision,” and his happiness “in his society.”

§ Dr. Price's Review, p. 26. (P.) “Never did any man yet see any portion of matter that was void of *gravity*, and many other active powers.” Ed. 3, p. 25.

the strength, and other circumstances of the impression, and that traces of these impressions, i. e. *ideas*, may be recalled after the intervention of other trains of ideas, and at very different intervals. If I look upon a house, and then shut my eyes, the impression it has made upon my mind does not immediately vanish; I can contemplate the idea of the house as long as I please; and also, by the help of a variety of associated circumstances, the idea of the house may be recalled several years afterwards.

Now do not these facts, and thousands of the same kind, necessarily give the ideas of *duration* and *succession*, which are the elements of our idea of *time*? If all our sensations and ideas were wholly obliterated the moment that an external object was withdrawn, there could be no ideas of duration and succession, because there could be no opportunity of *comparing* our ideas; but upon the contrary supposition (which is well known to be the truth) the ideas of *succession*, *duration*, and *time*, are necessarily generated; that is, states of mind are produced, to which those names (or any others synonymous to them) may be applied. The ideas of succession, duration, and time, are no more than other *ideas of reflection*, those terms expressing actual varieties in our *mental feelings*, occasioned by the impression of external objects.

I have very carefully considered all the other ideas mentioned by Dr. Price, but I own I can see no reason for having recourse to any thing besides mere sensation, and the restriction of the use of terms to any part of a sensible idea, or to a circumstance relating to it, in order to account for them.

He says, indeed, that “our abstract ideas seem most properly to belong to the understanding. They are undoubtedly essential to all its operations, every act of judging implying some abstract or universal idea. Were they formed by the mind, in the manner generally represented, it seems unavoidable to conceive that it has them at the very time that it is supposed to be employed in forming them. Thus from any particular idea of a *triangle*, it is said we can frame the general one; but does not the very reflection said to be necessary to this, on a greater or a lesser triangle, imply that the general idea is already in the mind? How else should it know how to go to work, or what to reflect on?” P. 37.

It is true that a person whose ideas have long been formed cannot name any particular triangle, as an *equilateral*, or

isosceles triangle, but, by distinguishing it in this manner from other triangles, he will discover that he is possessed of the abstract idea of a triangle; but this was not the case when the idea was formed. Originally the mind of a child is impressed with the idea of some particular triangle, at which time the word *triangle*, if he should be taught to call it by that name, would suggest nothing more than a figure of that very form and size which he had seen. Afterwards he sees other figures, bounded as that was by *three right lines*; and being taught to call these *triangles*, likewise, he then, and not before, abstracts from his former idea of a triangle whatever was peculiar to the first that he happened to see; and he appropriates the term to the circumstances which they have in common. Then also, and not before, in talking of different kinds of triangles, he shews that he has an idea of what a *triangle in general* is, that is, what the strict *definition* of it is: for still all the ideas of triangles, that he actually contemplates, are ideas of particular triangles, but variable, and indefinite.—To proceed to the consideration of some complex ideas which have the appearance of being simple ones.

Every person, I believe, feels a gleam of pleasure the moment that light is introduced into a dark room, and disagreeable sensations tending to melancholy, and sometimes verging towards the borders of terror, upon passing suddenly from a light into a perfectly dark place. These feelings are instantaneous and constant, and to appearance *simple*, yet they are, unquestionably, the offspring of association, but formed by a thousand sensations and ideas, which it is impossible to separate or analyze; and they vary exceedingly in different persons, especially according to the circumstances of their early lives.

The ideas annexed to the words *moral right* and *wrong* are, likewise, far from being simple in reality, though the association of their parts has become so intimate and perfect, in a long course of time, that, upon first naming them, they present that appearance. So the motion of the head, or of any particular limb, may seem to be a very simple thing, though a great number of muscles are employed to perform it.

The first rudiments of the ideas of *right*, *wrong* and *obligation*, seem to be acquired by a child when he finds himself checked and controuled by a superior power. At first he feels nothing but mere *force*, and consequently he has no idea of any kind of restraint but that of mere *necessity*. He

finds he cannot have his will, and therefore he submits. Afterwards he attends to many circumstances which distinguish the authority of a *father*, or of a *master*, from that of other persons. Ideas of *reverence*, *love*, *esteem* and *dependence*, accompany those commands; and by degrees he experiences the peculiar *advantages* of filial subjection. He sees also that all his companions, who are noticed and admired by others, obey their parents, and that those who are of a refractory disposition are universally disliked.

These and other circumstances, now begin to alter and *modify* the idea of mere *necessity*, till by degrees he considers the commands of a parent as something that *must not* be resisted or disputed, even though he has a power of doing it; and all these ideas coalescing form the ideas of *moral right* and *moral obligation*, which are easily transferred from the commands of a parent to those of a magistrate, of God, and of conscience. I will venture to say that any person who has attended to the ideas of children, may perceive that the ideas of moral right and moral obligation are formed very gradually and slowly, from a long train of circumstances; and that it is a considerable time before they become at all distinct and perfect.

This opinion of the gradual formation of the ideas of moral right and wrong, from a great variety of elements, easily accounts for that prodigious diversity in the sentiments of mankind respecting the objects of moral obligation; and I do not see that any other hypothesis can account for the facts. If the idea of *moral obligation* was a *simple idea*, arising from the view of certain actions, or sentiments, I do not see why it should not be as *invariable* as the perception of colours or sounds. But though the shape and colour of a flower appear the same to every human eye, one man practises as a moral duty what another looks upon with abhorrence, and reflects upon with remorse. Now a thing that varies with education and instruction as moral sentiments are known to do, certainly has the appearance of being generated by a series of different impressions, in some such manner as I have endeavoured to describe.

The most shocking crimes that men can commit are those of *injustice* and *murder*, and yet it is hardly possible to define any circumstances, in which some part of mankind have not, without the least scruple or remorse, seized the property, or taken away the lives of others, so that the definition of these crimes must vary in almost every country. Now, an idea, or feeling, that depends upon arbitrary defini-

tion cannot be, properly speaking, natural, but must be factitious.

A crime the least liable to variation in its definition is that of a *lie*, and yet I will venture to say that a child will, upon the slightest temptation, tell an untruth as readily as the truth; that is, as soon as he can suspect that it will be to his advantage; and the dread that he afterwards has of telling a lie is acquired principally by his being threatened, punished, and terrified by those who detect him in it; till at length, a number of painful impressions are annexed to the telling of an untruth, and he comes even to shudder at the thought of it. But where this care has not been taken, such a facility in telling lies, and such an indifference to truth are acquired, as is hardly credible to persons who have been differently educated.

I was myself educated so strictly and properly, that the hearing of the slightest oath, or irreverent use of the name of God, gives me a sensation that is more than mental. It is next to shuddering, and thousands, I doubt not, feel the same; whereas other persons, and men of strict virtue and honour in other respects, I am confident, from my own observation, feel not the least moral impropriety in the greatest possible profaneness of speech. But by a different education I might have been as profane as they, and without remorse; and (with the same sensibility to impressions in general, though equally indifferent to them all) my education would have given them my exquisite sensibility in this respect. Now no principle conceived to be *innate*, or natural, can operate more certainly, or more mechanically, than this, which I know to have been acquired, with respect to myself. But without reflection and observation, and judging by my own *present feelings*, I should have concluded, without the least apprehension of being mistaken, that the *dread of an oath*, had been natural, and invariable in mankind.

But whether the feelings which accompany the ideas of virtue and vice be instinctive, or acquired, their *operation* is the very same; so that the interests of virtue may be equally secured on this scheme as on any other. There is sufficient provision in the course of our lives to generate moral principles, sentiments and feelings, in the degree in which they are wanted in life, and with those variations, with respect to modes and other circumstances, which we see in different ages and countries; and which the different circumstances of mankind, in different ages and countries, seem to require.

DISQUISITIONS
RELATING TO
MATTER AND SPIRIT.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

The History of the Philosophical Doctrine concerning the
Origin of the Soul, and the Nature of Matter; with its
Influence on Christianity, especially with respect to the
Doctrine of the Pre-existence of Christ.

Si quelqu'un démontreroit jamais, que *l'ame est matérielle*, loin de s'en alarmer, il faudroit admirer la puissance, qui auroit donné à la matière la capacité de penser.

BONNET, *Palingenies*, I. p. 56.

[First published in 1777. Reprinted from the Second Edition, improved and enlarged, 1782.]



TO THE
REV. WILLIAM GRAHAM.*



DEAR SIR,

I TAKE the liberty to dedicate to you a work, written with greater freedom than any that I have hitherto offered to the public. An enemy of bigotry, and a distinguished champion for freedom of thinking, in very trying situations, as you have long been, I am satisfied you will not be displeased with any effort of the spirit with which you have ever been animated, and which you have done so much to inspire.

Educated, as you know I was, in the very straitest principles of *reputed orthodoxy*, and zealous as I once was for every tenet of the system, it was, in a great measure, by your example and encouragement, at my entrance on theological inquiries, that I adventured to think for myself on subjects of the greatest importance; and that I have been able, in the course of a slow and laborious investigation, to free myself from many vulgar prejudices, and to reject many gross corruptions, as I now deem them, of that religion which is the best gift of God to man, and to attain to the degree of conviction and satisfaction of mind which I now enjoy. Every obligation of this important kind I hope I shall always remember with peculiar pleasure and gratitude.

After a sufficiently tempestuous life, you are now enjoying yourself in a *tranquil retirement*, and seeing others contend with the storm, the fury of which you have borne, and which you have in some measure broken, and rendered less

* Of Halifax, where he died in 1782. See *Gent. Mag.* LII. p. 357. Mr. G. was one of the Author's earliest friends and a benefactor to him at his death. See the *Memoirs*. Five papers in the *Theol. Repos.* Vol. I. and II. have been attributed to Mr. Graham. They are under the signature *Pyrrho*. See *Mon. Repos.* XII. p. 601. Mr. G. is there said, on good authority, to have been also the "author of several very valuable sermons and tracts."

hazardous to those who come after you. My time of withdrawing from this busy scene is not yet come; but while I feel myself animated with your *love of truth*, I shall enjoy an enviable composure even in the midst of the tempest; and I shall endeavour to relieve the severity of these more serious pursuits, with those of *philosophy*, as you have done with those of *classical literature*.

Whatever you may think of some parts of my *reasoning* in the principal work, now presented to you, I am confident you will approve of the main *object* of it, and especially the *sequel*. You have long been an assertor of the *proper Unitarian doctrine*, and cannot be displeased with my endeavouring to trace to their source in Heathen antiquity, those capital corruptions of Christianity—the *Athanasian* and *Arian* opinions.

The proper *unity of God*, the maker and governor of the world, and the proper *humanity of Christ*, you justly consider as respectively essential to natural and revealed religion; and consequently entertain a reasonable suspicion and dread of any opinions that infringe upon them; and the more venerable those opinions have become on account of their *antiquity*, or the *numbers*, or worldly *power*, by which they are supported, so much the more do they excite your indignation and zeal.

I rejoice with you, on account of such a prevalence of free inquiry, and good sense in matters of religion, in the present age, as cannot fail, in the end, to overturn the *anti-christian systems* that have been permitted by Divine Providence to prevail so long in the Christian world, and consequently (though probably in a remote period) the *anti-christian tyrannies* that have supported them.

I am,

With the greatest esteem,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

And Christian brother,

J. PRIESTLEY.

Calne, July, 1777.

THE
PREFACE.

[1777.]



IT may appear something extraordinary, but it is strictly true, that, but a very few years ago, I was so far from having any thoughts of writing on the subject of this publication, that I had not even adopted the opinion contended for in it. Like the generality of Christians in the present age, I had always taken it for granted, that man had a soul distinct from his body, though with many modern divines,* I supposed it to be incapable of exerting any of its faculties, independently of the body; and I believed this soul to be a substance so entirely distinct from matter, as to have no property in common with it. Of this, several traces may be found in the first edition of my *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*, and probably in some of my other writings.

Not but that I very well remember many doubts occurred to me on the subject of the intimate union of two substances so entirely heterogeneous as the soul and the body were represented to be. And, even when I first entered upon metaphysical inquiries, I thought that either the *material*, or *immaterial* part of the universal system was superfluous. But not giving any very particular attention to a subject on which I could get no light, I relapsed into the general hypothesis of *two entirely distinct and independent principles in man*, connected in some unknown and incomprehensible manner; and I acquiesced in it as well as I could.

* Among whom were distinguished, Bishop Law, Archdeacon Blackburne, and Dr. Peckard, of the Church of England, and Dr. John Taylor among the Non-conformists. See his Letter to Bishop Law, quoted Vol. II. p. 258, Note.

Father Boscovich* and Mr. Michell's* new theory concerning matter, of which I gave an account in my *History of Discoveries relating to Vision, &c.*† was calculated, as will be seen, to throw the greatest light on the constituent principles of human nature; but it was a considerable time before I could bring myself really to receive a doctrine so new, though so strictly philosophical; and besides I had nothing of a metaphysical nature in contemplation at that time.

It was upon resuming some of my metaphysical speculations, to which (like most other persons of a studious turn) I had been exceedingly attached in the early period of my literary life, (when I published my *Examination of the Principles of Common Sense*, as maintained by Dr. Beattie, &c., and when I republished Dr. Hartley's *Theory of the Human Mind*;) that I first entertained a serious doubt of the truth of the vulgar hypothesis; and writing, as I always do, with great frankness, I freely expressed that doubt, exactly as it then stood in my mind; and I think it is hardly possible to express any thing with more hesitation and diffidence.‡

I little imagined that such a paragraph as this could have given the alarm that I presently found it had done. My doubts were instantly converted into a *full persuasion*, and the cry against me as an *unbeliever*, and a *favourer of Atheism*, was exceedingly general and loud; and was echoed from quarters where more candour and better discernment might have been expected. With what *intention* this was done, is best known to the authors of such gross defamation. I shall proceed to relate the *consequences* of it, for which they are in some measure answerable.§

This odium, which I had thus unexpectedly drawn upon myself, served to engage my more particular attention to the subject of it; and this at length terminated in a full conviction, that the doubt I had expressed was well-founded. Continuing to reflect upon the subject, I became satisfied that, if we suffer ourselves to be guided in our inquiries by the universally acknowledged *rules of philosophizing*, we shall find ourselves entirely unauthorized to admit any thing in man besides that *body* which is the object of our senses; and my own observations, and my

* See p. 192, Notes.

* Quoted at the close of Sect. II. *infra*.

† See the paragraph to which the Author alludes, pp. 181, 182 of this volume.

§ See p. 182, Note*.

collection of opinions on the subject, presently swelled to the bulk that is now before the public.

These observations I now lay before the reader (whatever be his disposition of mind with respect to myself, or my subject) with the same openness and simplicity with which I first proposed my simple doubt; and, judging from what has passed, I may imagine that, if the *simple doubt* occasioned so great an alarm and outcry, the unreserved avowal of my *entire conviction* on the subject will cause a much greater alarm. And yet in this apprehension I may possibly be mistaken; and as, on the former occasion, the offence was taken when I was least aware of it, the popular clamour may have spent itself, and may begin to subside, on the very occasion on which I imagined it would be inflamed to the utmost.

Men of reason and religion may attend to the arguments that I have produced, from *reason* and the *scriptures*, in support of my hypothesis, and may be satisfied that my opinion is neither irrational in itself, nor destitute of countenance in the sacred writings, and therefore certainly not *dangerous*; and the favour of *the few* may silence the clamour of *the many*.

On the other hand, the tide of popular prejudice may rise still higher, and though I have spent the greatest part of my life in the study and defence of Christianity, the suspicion of my being an unbeliever, and an underminer of all religion, may be confirmed; and, like Mr. Hobbes, I may for generations lie under the imputation of absolute Atheism.*

Be this as it may, I feel a great *present ease* in the idea of publishing my thoughts with the most unreserved freedom on this important subject; and I am not without hopes that, though many well-meaning Christians may, for some time, rank me with unbelievers, some unbelievers, of a philosophical turn of mind, may, on this very account, be prevailed upon to attend to the subject; and finding the true system of revelation to be quite another thing than they had imagined it to be, and infinitely more *consonant to*

* The *Atheism* or even *Deism* of this philosopher may be discovered in the writings of his opponents, far more readily than in his own. See the Author's opinion of *Hobbes* in the *Introduction* to his *Free Discussion*. Mrs. Macaulay Graham remarks that "Hobbes has been generally termed an Atheist; but, as he does not deny the existence of a God, from the religious, moral and political opinions which he inculcates, he may more justly be distinguished by Lord Shaftesbury's definition of a Demonist." *Immutability of Moral Truth*, 1783, p. 128. See also *Characteristics*, Treatise iv. Pt. i. Sect. 2.

the real appearances of nature, may think it worth their while to consider it in various *other lights*, and attend to the *evidence* that myself and others have produced in favour of it; and so, from being Infidels, (in consequence of not understanding what Christianity really is, and not sufficiently examining the evidence of it, which is generally the case,) they may become rational Christians.

A very few converts of this kind would, in my estimation, compensate for a great deal of odium among professed Christians. Their indignation will do neither themselves, nor me, much harm; whereas the conviction of the *reasonableness* and *truth* of Christianity, in a few really thinking and intelligent unbelievers, might do the greatest good, and even contribute to put a stop, sooner than otherwise would be done, to the infidelity of the philosophical part of the world.

To effect this, in any tolerable degree, would be an object indeed; and the man who should in any measure succeed in it, could not be said to have lived, to have written, or to have been calumniated in vain. I am fully satisfied that it will be to no purpose to expect the conversion of philosophical unbelievers to that system of opinions which now generally passes for Christianity, and especially that which is *established* in the different countries of Europe under that name; because conclusions contrary to all *natural appearances*, will never be admitted by them to be true.

So very free and undisguised an attack upon an opinion almost universally deemed to be of the utmost importance to all religion, natural or revealed, may be expected to rouse the zeal of many friends to the prevailing system, and produce *defences* of it. This is what I *expect*, and what I *wish*; and as I am prepared for it, I will take this opportunity of acquainting my readers with the rule I have laid down to myself on similar occasions, and to which I propose to adhere in this.

I by no means think it right to resolve, with Mr. Hume, to take no notice of any antagonist whatever.* I might as well refuse to make any reply to a person who should address himself to me in conversation, after I had thought proper to direct my discourse to him: for in printed publications we, in fact, address all the world. A *pertinent*, and especially a *decent* reply, requires, I think, a respectful notice, though a very *absurd* and *impertinent* one may justly,

* "I had fixed a resolution, which I inflexibly maintained, never to reply to any body." Hume's *Life written by himself*, 1777, p. 15.

as in conversation, be treated with neglect. The public, in whose presence every thing passes, will judge for themselves, whether a man refuses to make a reply because he is not able to make a good one, or because he has some sufficient reason for not doing it. It must, however, be acknowledged, that even the general and public opinion *may* be so unreasonable, that a writer may be justified in paying no attention to it, and in appealing to the more mature judgment of posterity.

It is, I presume, sufficiently evident from the strain of my publications, that *general applause* has not been my object. I know that they are rather calculated to narrow the circle of my friends, though I hope they will leave me enow for any valuable purpose in life. I shall not, therefore, feel myself disposed to take notice of *every* attack upon this treatise, and especially such as may be *anonymous*. But if the principles advanced in it be controverted by any person whose name, as a metaphysician, or divine, is *generally respected*, I do assure him that I will take more or less notice of him; either acknowledging any mistakes I may be convinced I have fallen into, or endeavouring to convince him of his. Even a very *able*, or *very plausible*, anonymous antagonist shall not be neglected: for, as in the controversy which I began with the Scotch writers, I really wish to have the subject freely and fully canvassed.

There are subjects on which, after a reasonable attention to them, a man may be authorized to *make up his mind*, so as to be justified in refusing even to lose his time in reading what may be addressed to him on it; because he may have sufficient ground to presume it cannot contain any thing materially new to him. This is what most Protestants will avow with respect to the Popish doctrine of *transubstantiation*, and I avow it with respect to the doctrine of the *Trinity*, and various other articles of Calvinistic theology. I have at this time by me several tracts, particularly *Letters* addressed to me, on those subjects, and which have been much applauded, which I have not looked into, and which I profess I never intend to look into. But this is not the case with respect to the subject of this treatise. I will carefully read, for some time at least, whatever shall be addressed to me, or the public, on the subject, provided the writers take care that their publications be transmitted, or properly announced, to me.

I do not, as many persons would, except against all answers that may be written in a manner not perfectly con-

sistent with the laws of *decorum*, or those in which I may think myself treated with too much *asperity*, or *ridicule*. I would have every man write as he actually *feels* at the time. There are few controversial writers, who, when the warmth of debate is over, may not see something of this kind to blame themselves for; but those who are acquainted with human nature, will make allowance for such *human imperfections*, and attend to the *merits of the case*; and it may be depended upon, that the real *weight of argument* is the thing that will decide in the end, when every thing of a *personal nature*, in the course of the controversy, will be forgotten.

If I were disposed, as I am not, to plead for *mercy*, I would allege the extreme unpopularity of my side of the question; and say, that a man who writes with the full tide of popular opinion in his favour, has no occasion for any *indirect method* of bearing down his antagonist. It is the man whose opinions are unpopular that stands in the most need of the arts of address, and in him they would be most excusable. But, notwithstanding this, I shall trust my very unpopular argument to its native strength, or weakness, without any artificial support whatever.

As I have extended this Preface thus far, I shall extend it a little farther, in order to answer an objection that may be made to religion, natural or revealed, from the very great *differences of opinion* among the professors of it, on such subjects as are here discussed, and from the *animosity* with which we may happen to debate about them. Now this does not at all arise from the *nature of the subject*, any farther than its greater importance necessarily, and justly, makes it more interesting, but from the *nature of man*, the same principles operating in a similar manner on similar occasions.

Men do not differ more, or dispute with more warmth, on subjects of *religion*, or *metaphysics*, than they do on those of civil *government*, *philology*, or even *philosophy*, which, one would imagine, *a priori*, must always be the calmest thing in the world, and could never occasion an angry debate. But by giving much *attention* to any thing, we may *interest* ourselves in any thing, and wherever that is the case, an intemperate warmth is the inevitable consequence. Besides, it is not in human nature not to feel one's self more or less interested in the support of an opinion which we have once advanced as *our own*. And whenever any thing *personal* mixes in a debate, (and it is barely possible that it

should not do so,) it is, in fact, a regard for *our reputation* and *character* that is the *stimulus*, and nothing necessarily belonging to the *subject*.

But the circumstance that chiefly interests the passions, and inflames the animosity of those who dispute on the subject of religion, is the *worldly emolument* annexed to the profession of particular tenets, in the civil establishments of Christianity. Did the civil magistrate shew no preference to one mode of religion more than to another, and was there no other motive concealed under the mask of *zeal for religion*, there would be no great reason to complain of its intemperance.

Few persons are, from their situation and experience, better qualified to speak on this subject than myself, few persons having been engaged in a greater variety of pursuits, or in a scene of more *various controversy*; and I see no reason whatever for accusing *religion*, more than any thing else, of exciting jealousy, hatred, or any other immediate cause of animosity and angry debate.

Many of my friends are frequently expressing their wishes, that I had nothing to do with *theology*, or *metaphysics*, flattering me with the prospect of a considerable degree of unenvied reputation as a *philosopher*. But the most rancorous opposition, and the most unprovoked abuse that I have met with, has been from persons who never knew any thing of me but in the character of a philosopher. And though I will venture to say, that it is not possible to write with more frankness than I have always done; describing, in the most natural manner, the very progress of my thoughts with respect to every discovery of consequence; and, upon all occasions, giving rather too much, than too little, to any person who has favoured me with the least assistance, as all my philosophical writings evidence, I have been treated as a notorious *plagiary*.* There are even many persons, not destitute of name and character themselves, who cannot bear to hear me spoken of, as having any pretensions to philosophy, without a sneer; and who think my publications on the subject a disgrace to philosophy, and to my country.

Can I, then, have a more ungracious reception among *divines*, *metaphysicians*, or *philologists*? In short, having no better treatment to expect in any walk of literature, I

* See my pamphlet entitled *Philosophical Empiricism. (P.)* "Containing Remarks on a Charge of Plagiarism made by Dr. Higgins," &c. 1775.

shall, without distinction, apply myself to any pursuit to which my attention shall be more particularly drawn. I have friends, and I have enemies, in every class of men, to whom I have been introduced. All the former I shall be happy to oblige in their turn, but I cannot be with any of them always. The latter I neither absolutely despise, nor greatly dread. Those of them who are disposed to be civil to me shall meet with civility from me in return: and, as to those of them who are otherwise disposed, I shall behave to them as I may happen to be affected at the time.

But, mindful of the motto which I have chosen for my coat of arms, *Ars longa, vita brevis*,* I shall devote as much of my time as possible to the *pursuit of truth*, and as little as I can help, to the mere *defence of it*, or of *myself*. The former is a noble and sublime exercise of the mind, exalting the soul, and improving the temper; whereas in the latter, though conducted with the greatest caution, there is a risk of debasing the mind, hurting the temper, and sacrificing our peace. For, controversy is, at best, a state of war.



THE historical account of the system of Heathenism concerning the pre-existence of souls in general, and of the pre-existence of the soul of Christ in particular, which was derived from it, I had once thought of reserving for my *Historical View of the Corruptions of Christianity*, which was originally intended to be the last part of my *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*. But as it was actually composed during my investigation of this subject, as it rose out of it, and is strictly connected with it, I have thought proper to subjoin it, by way of *Sequel*.†

Both the parts of this work, taken together, will shew, in a striking light, the very extensive mischief that has been done to revealed religion by the introduction of this part of the system of Heathenism, concerning the soul. And

* This thought is in one of the aphorisms of *Hippocrates*. See *Mon. Repos.* VI. p. 725. It was probably the origin of the following verse by Sir J. Davies:—

“ The wits that div'd most deep and soar'd most high,
 Seeking man's pow'rs have found his weakness such:
Skill comes so slow and life so fast doth fly;
 We learn so little and forget so much.”

Of the Soul. 1592. *Introduction.*

† See a passage quoted from one of the Author's letters to Dr. Toulmin, in the Editor's preface to this volume.

when the proper extent of this *foreign system* is seen, it may be hoped, that many persons who have rejected a part of it, will see equal reason to reject the whole. And, for my own part, I am satisfied that it is only by purging away the whole of this *corrupt leaven*, that we can recover the pristine simplicity and purity of our most excellent and truly rational, though much abused, religion.

Athanasianism, I think, will sufficiently appear to have been merely Oriental philosophy in its origin, and afterwards to have become more absurd than the original tenets of that philosophy; and Arianism is only the same philosophy altered, free indeed from the palpable *contradictions* of Athanasianism, but it is, in other respects, no less remote from the proper scheme of Christianity. I shall think myself happy if, by this or any other of my writings, I be able to throw the least new light upon a subject which has so near a relation to the fundamental principles of the Christian system.*

* To this edition was an engraved frontispiece which the Author thus described:—

“The idea is taken from 1 Cor. iii. 12, where different persons are represented as having built with different materials, on the solid foundation of Christianity, as laid by Christ and the apostles; and that what was built with wood, and other base materials, would be consumed by fire, while the rest would stand. Our Saviour, who revealed the future state of his church to the apostle John, is represented as shewing him this circumstance relating to it. The application of this scene to the object of this work, is sufficiently obvious.”

PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EDITION.

[1782.]



IT is with much satisfaction that I publish a second edition of this work, having found the first to have been much better received than there seemed to be any reason to expect. It was, particularly, the means of discovering that many persons, the most serious Christians, had either actually held the opinion I here contend for, or were well affected towards it, though they had not been disposed to write, or even to speak on the subject, on account of its extreme unpopularity. Hereafter, I hope that *materialism*, obnoxious as the term has hitherto been, will be so far from being peculiar to *unbelievers*, that it will be the favourite tenet of *rational Christians*; being perfectly consonant to the appearances of nature, and giving a peculiar value to the scheme of revelation.

I have now, I think, done all the justice to the subject that I am capable of; having not only written thus largely upon it, but having also, as I professed myself ready to do, entered into the defence of it with persons the best qualified to controvert it. This, at least, must be allowed to be the case with respect to Dr. Price, who, at the same time that he is one of the ablest writers of the age, is one of the most candid, and the best of men. The result of our friendly discussion of this subject is published in a volume by itself; but from that work I have now transferred into this the *Additional Illustrations*, which I took that opportunity of publishing, and have inserted them in the places to which they belong.* When the *Discussion* is reprinted, they shall be left out of it.

* To these *Illustrations*, when published in 1778, at the close of the *Free Discussion*, was prefixed the following Introduction: "That I might not obtrude upon the public a crude and hasty performance on subjects of so much importance as those

I do not think it will be expected of me that I should take notice of every thing that has been written in answer to this work; but I must not pass by two sections in M. De Luc's *Histoire de la Terre*,* in which he professedly animadverts upon this publication of mine. Not that he has advanced any thing that is *new* on the subject, (indeed he professes that his arguments are the same in substance with those of Dr. Price, † and to them I have already replied in a manner with which I am sufficiently satisfied,) but because his work is more likely to be read by foreigners. I have also a respect for the writer, as an excellent man, with whom I have the happiness of being acquainted, and whose intentions I am persuaded are the best that any man can have. ‡

In the first place, I must observe that he charges me unjustly with considering only that kind of *immaterialism* which is most open to objection, and which he professedly disclaims, viz. that which makes spirit to have no common property with matter, § and therefore to be incapable of any

which I have ventured to discuss in these *Disquisitions*, I put copies of the work, after it was completely printed off, into the hands of several of my friends, both well and ill affected to my general system, that I might have the benefit of their remarks, and take advantage of them, in an additional sheet of *Illustrations*, if that should appear to be necessary. Accordingly I have received, and considered, with as much attention as I can, various remarks that have been communicated to me, and have thought it might be of use to add some explanations in consequence of them. I hope they will be the means of obviating some cavils, and serve to make my meaning better understood, whether they make the doctrine itself more or less acceptable to my readers in general." Pp. 229, 250.

* "Lettres Physiques et Morales sur l'Histoire de la Terre et de l'Homme, adressées à la Reine de la Grande Bretagne. Par J. A. De Luc, Citoyen de Geneve, F. R. S. &c. 5 tomes, *La Haye*, 1779." This celebrated *Geologist*, justly distinguished by his various publications, on subjects Theological, Moral and Scientific, died on the 7th of *November*, 1817, aged 90, at Windsor, where, for many years he had the appointment of Reader to the Queen. It is remarkable that M. De Luc should, so late as 1800, in his *Lettres sur l'Education religieuse de l'Enfance*, have contended for the Trinity on the authority of the *three heavenly witnesses*. See Mr. Lindsey's "Conversations on the Divine Government." 1802, pp. 157—160.

† "Quelle n'a pas été ma satisfaction, au moment où cette Controverse est tombée entre mes mains, d'y voir que l'un des hommes dont je respectois le plus la Philosophie et le caractère moral, a défendu la cause de l'Homme par les mêmes arguments qui me frappent!" Tom. I. pp. 317, 318. Advt.

‡ M. De Luc says "j'étois l'avantage de connoître les deux Auteurs," and then does this justice to my Author: "Son motif est vertueux; il croit que *la Vérité ne peut qu'y gagner*; et il le suit, au risque d'en courir le blâme d'une grande partie du Public, qui attache beaucoup d'importance à des idées contraires aux siennes." He proceeds to discover his own liberal views of Religion: "Nous croyons lui et moi,—que l'Homme a une existence à attendre, à laquelle son existence actuelle n'est pas indifférente. C'est pour nous tous le fondement de la paix de l'Âme.—Et quand au Salut dans une autre vie, le *Dr. Priestley* n'est pas de ceux qui ont méconnu l'Essence de la Divinité, au point de croire qu'Elle punira les *Erreurs involontaires*." Ib. Advt. p. 317, and pp. eccli. and ecclii.

§ "Les *Spiritualistes* qu'il [Dr. Priestley] combat, sont ceux dont j'ai parlé dans le Discours précédent, qui croient que l'Âme et le Corps n'ont aucune Propriété commune. Ib. Dis. xiii. p. 321.

mutual action with it; whereas I have particularly considered that, and every other possible idea of spirit. But I have shewn that the progress from the original notion of it, which was that of *an attenuated kind of matter*, to that which made it to occupy no portion of space, and to bear no relation to it, was natural and necessary; and that, absurd as M. De Luc thinks this notion of spirit to be, it is, in fact, better covered from refutation than any other. The idea of spirits having extension, which is maintained by M. De Luc, I have considered at large in Section VIII., and I wish him to attend to what is there advanced.

He considers spirit as having *some* common property with matter; but let him consider what common property it *must* be, that can enable it to *act upon* matter. It cannot be mere *extension*, for then space and matter would be capable of a proper mutual action. And if, as he maintains, matter must have *solidity*, in order to its being possessed of the properties of attraction and repulsion, by which alone its action upon other matter is shewn, a spirit must have solidity also, in order to its being capable of the same kind of action.

To say, in general, that matter and spirit must have some common property, but that this common property is altogether *unknown* to us, cannot give any satisfaction. For till it be defined, I am at liberty to say that such unknown common property may be impossible in nature. Besides, those who, with M. De Luc, maintain the *impenetrability* of matter, always suppose that this is the foundation of all its other properties; for they say that, otherwise, they would be the properties of *nothing*. It must therefore, be the foundation of this unknown property which it has in common with spirit. Consequently, they must, if they argue consistently, suppose this property of impenetrability to be the foundation of this same unknown property in spirit, which makes it capable of mutual action with matter.

Indeed, I can see no ground on which we can suppose that spirit is not impenetrable, but on the supposition that matter is destitute of it also, if these two substances be capable of mutual action. I wish M. De Luc, and others who think as he does, would attentively consider this obvious train of reasoning; and they will perceive that this new notion of spirit, viz. its having some property in common with matter, is absolutely untenable, as much so as that which supposes it to have no common property with it

whatever, and to bear no relation to space. This they reject as chimerical, but they must take refuge in it, if they maintain *two principles* in man at all.

The only objection that M. De Luc, or any other person, can have to the hypothesis of man being wholly material, is, that he can perceive no *connexion* between *matter* and *sensation* or thought; but neither can he perceive any connexion between *solidity* or *impenetrability* and the other known properties of matter, such as *cohesion*, *gravitation*, &c. Here is, in fact, precisely the same difficulty as in the connexion between matter and sensation, only it has not been so much attended to.

This truly valuable writer employs another whole section of his work,* to convince me that I have done wrong in *publishing* my opinion on this subject; but I cannot say that his arguments have more weight with me in this case, than in the other. He urges very strongly that, when persons' minds are unhinged with respect to their opinions on subjects of importance, they are apt to give into universal scepticism. But this doctrine should have been preached to Luther, to Calvin; and the other reformers from Popery.† If their conduct be justifiable, I ask why may not we of this age humbly presume to be reformers from Popery also? They are in fact the remains of the same fabric of corruptions that I would contribute to clear away. The building itself has happily been thrown down; but I wish to dig up the very foundations, that they may never be built upon again.

He allows, that with a certain persuasion of the truth and importance of our opinions, we are justifiable in publishing them. I will then tell him, and I wonder he did not perceive it before, that I *have* this full persuasion. It is, I believe, as clear and full as that which he has of the contrary;

* Dis. xiv. "De la *Liberté d'écrire, dans les Matières Philosophiques.*"

† Sir John Denham, a professed Protestant, censures these *Reformers* on this very account, and thus brings them into bad company:—

"When Lucifer no longer could advance
His works on the false ground of ignorance,
New arts he tries, and new designs he lays,
Then his well-studied master-piece he plays;
Loyola, Luther, Calvin, he inspires,
And kindles, with infernal flames, their fires,
Sends their forerunner, (conscious of the event,)
Printing, his most pernicious instrument.
Wild controversy then, which long had slept,
Into the press from ruin'd cloysters leapt;
No longer by implicit faith we err,
Whilst ev'ry man's his own interpreter."

The Progress of Learning. Poems. Glasgow, 1751, pp. 106, 107.

and therefore I am as justifiable in advancing my opinions, as he is in opposing them.

He says that I cannot plead in defence of my publication its importance to the defence of Christianity, because he knows of no unbelievers who reject it on account of its being supposed to contain the doctrine of a soul; and that many unbelievers expect a future state upon that principle, which it is therefore an injury to deprive them of.* I answer that this might have been urged some time ago; but at present I know of no unbelievers who have what can be truly called an *expectation* of a future life, on any principles. Nor can this be at all wonderful, after they have rejected revelation. Unbelievers abroad almost universally reject the opinion of a *soul* as absurd; and if M. De Luc only reads *Le Système de la Nature*,† he will see both this opinion, and also that of *philosophical liberty* (both of which the writer took for granted were essential to the system of revealed religion) reprobated with contempt. On the whole, the state of things is now such, that it appears to me to be absolutely necessary to abandon the notion of a *soul*, if we would retain Christianity at all. And, happily, the principles of it are as repugnant to that notion, as those of any modern philosophy.

Lastly, M. De Luc seems willing to allow that I might be justified in publishing my opinions, provided I were *persecuted* for them, which he says I am not, except so far as I am excluded by them from all preferment in the church. And he takes this occasion of intimating, that I may not have sufficiently considered the necessity of some *establishment of religion*, in order to prevent controversy in the public exercises of it.‡ I answer, that I wish to have nothing to do with any establishment of religion by civil power. Our Saviour and the apostles certainly never looked to any such thing. They made no provision for it, and Christianity did much better when, for three hundred years, it had no such support, than it has since done with it; not-

* "Je ne me rapelle pas qu' aucun d'eux [les Incrédulés] ait refusé de l'admettre, sur ce qu'il supposoit que l'Âme survivoit au Corps avant la Resurrection.—Si dont il eût réussi à rendre incertain que l'Âme existe après la Mort de l'Homme, et qu'il les eût tous renvoyés aux promesses de l'Évangile pour une *Résurrection* que leur eût il laissé?" De Luc, *Lettres*, p. cclxvi.

† Attributed to the elder *Mirabeau*. See *Nouv. Dict. Hist.* Lyons, 1804, VIII. p. 318.

‡ "Sommes-nous au tems des Persécutions sur ces opinions particulières? Il dira peut-être, qu'a cause de son opinion à cet égard, il est exclu des Bénéfices de l'Église Anglicane, et que c'est une sorte de persécution.—N'est il pas convenable qu'il y ait une *Religion de l'Etat*, pour que les controverses ne soient pas portées jusques dans les Exercices publics." *Lettres*, p. cclxv.

withstanding there were sects enow among Christians in those ages, and therefore the inconvenience which M. De Luc so much dreads, must have affected them, as well as it does us.

But, in fact, establishments have not removed this inconvenience, if it be any. Few sectaries differ more from one another than members of the church of England do contrive to differ among themselves. The same is the case in the church of Rome. The doctrines publicly preached in the pulpits of the church of England are just as different from one another as those in Dissenting congregations. M. De Luc is a foreigner, and therefore may not be acquainted with the fact, but it is notorious. I think, therefore, he would be at some loss to shew what *good end* the establishment of religion in this country answers. I will undertake to point out to him many *bad* ones. On the other hand, let him look to America, and say what evils have arisen from a want of establishments.

The author of *Letters on Materialism* has written a very elaborate defence of his principles, in a treatise entitled, *Immaterialism Delineated*, giving his name (JOSEPH BERINGTON) to the public, and avowing himself a priest of the Roman Catholic church. As to the argument between us, I am willing to let it remain as it is, not thinking my system invalidated by what he has alleged; and his system of immaterialism is so peculiar (though perhaps the same with that of M. De Luc, if he would distinctly unfold it), that I imagine few will avail themselves of it.

I shall, therefore, only take this opportunity of expressing my sincere esteem for Mr. Berington, as a man of a truly liberal turn of mind and cultivated understanding, though warped, as I must think him to be, by his education.* I wish all Catholics were such as he is, and then the horror with which we now, and too justly, regard his religion, would vanish, and our invectives against it might be spared. His Defence of the Catholics, published soon after the late riots in London, was seasonable and excellent.

There has appeared an anonymous answer both to Dr. Price and myself, under the title of *An Essay on the Nature and Existence of a Material World*, the author himself asserting that no such thing exists. On this subject I have

* Mr. Berington, well known by several literary publications, is the *Catholic priest* mentioned Vol. II. p. 385, *Note*. The Author's Reply to the *Letters on Materialism* will be found in the next Volume.

advanced what I deem sufficient in my *Examination of the Writings of Dr. Reid*, &c. I shall therefore only observe, in this place, that this ingenious writer seems to have mistaken my argument, and by that means to have made his reply very easy.* I do not *produce a world at so small an expense* as he says, p. 81, and *motion is not my sole material*. I acknowledge with him, that *power* cannot mean any thing without a subject. But I do not therefore think that it follows, that the powers of attraction and repulsion must have a subject that has also the power or property of impenetrability. For then *spirit*, whose sole existence he contends for, and the Divine Being himself, could have no existence. But then, though we cannot speak of *power* but as existing in some *thing* or *substance*, it is equally true that, without those powers, that *something* is reduced to what, in our idea, is nothing at all.

As to what I advanced in the speculation concerning points, or *centres of attraction and repulsion*, on which alone all this writer's objections are founded, though I do not think it is at all invalidated by any thing that he has advanced, I professed never to lay any stress upon it, as not being necessary to my argument, and I shall not think it worth while to defend it.

He says, p. 92, that I seem to have fallen into a strange mistake, viz. that the form or shape of matter constitutes its essence; whereas I only observed, that solid matter must necessarily have some form or shape, and this no person can deny.

There has not been much written on my side of the question; but I must not omit to mention the *Slight Sketch of the Controversy* between me and my opponents, the writer of which has well defended my hypothesis from the charge of infidelity.† But I must more especially request the attention of my readers to the *Miscellaneous Observations on some Points of Controversy between the Materialists and their*


* "This writer defends, with no small degree of ability, Bishop Berkeley's ideal system. From the agreeable vivacity and wit with which he expresses himself, a person might sometimes be almost tempted to doubt whether he be in earnest." *New Ann. Reg.* 1781, [214]. In the same place is noticed "Mr. Gifford's *Outlines of an Answer to the Disquisitions*," "Mr. Rotherham's *Essay on the Distinction between the Soul and Body of Man*," and "a small tract, entitled, *The Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity invalidated*."

† "A *Slight Sketch of the Controversy between Dr. Priestley and his Opponents on the Subject of his Disquisitions on Matter and Spirit*," 1780, *Anonymous*, but well known to have been written by Mr. Badcock, who afterwards became, as a *Monthly Reviewer*, one of the Author's most severe opponents.

Opponents. This is the production of a masterly hand. It is only to be regretted that he has not entered more largely into the subject. He is a writer from whom I own I have considerable expectations.

I think I have now sufficiently fulfilled my promise to the public, viz. to reply, more or less largely, to whatever can be deemed worthy of any answer with respect to these *Disquisitions*, as well as to the *Treatise on Philosophical Necessity*. I shall now probably dismiss any farther particular attention to these subjects, and apply to other studies, which I know will be no displeasing information to some of my partial friends.*

* To this Preface the Author subjoined "A Catalogue of some of the Books which are quoted in this Treatise." This I have reserved to be noticed in a general, arranged Catalogue of all the Works mentioned in this Edition. Having spoken of *Beausobre* and *Dupin*, the Author added, "to both of whom, and especially the former, I am much indebted for my historical account of the opinions of the ancients. And I would observe, in this place, that when I might, with no great trouble, have given those opinions from the original authors themselves, I have often chosen to give them as reported by such writers as these. Because, as these things have been very differently represented, I was confident that the opinion of these writers would be more respected than my own, their learning and exactness being universally acknowledged; and their views in writing having been different from mine, they cannot be suspected of partiality to my hypothesis." Pp. xxxvii.



Disquisitions

RELATING TO

MATTER AND SPIRIT



THE

INTRODUCTION.



LEST any person should hastily misapprehend the *nature*, or *importance*, of the questions discussed in this treatise, or the manner in which I have decided for myself with respect to them, I shall here state the several subjects of inquiry as concisely, and with as much distinctness, as I can, and also inform the reader what my opinions concerning them really are.

It has generally been supposed that there are *two distinct kinds of substance* in human nature, and they have been distinguished by the terms *matter* and *spirit*. The former of these has been said to be possessed of the property of *extension*, viz. of length, breadth and thickness, and also of *solidity* or *impenetrability*, but it is said to be naturally destitute of all powers whatever. The latter has of late been defined to be a substance entirely *destitute of all extension*, or *relation to space*, so as to have no property in common with matter; and therefore to be properly *immaterial*, but to be possessed of the powers of *perception*, *intelligence* and *self-motion*.

Matter is that kind of substance of which our *bodies* are composed, whereas the principle of perception and thought belonging to us is said to reside in a *spirit*, or immaterial principle, intimately united to the body; while the higher orders of intelligent beings, and especially the Divine Being, are said to be purely immaterial.

It is maintained, in this treatise, that neither *matter* nor *spirit* (meaning by the latter the subject of sense and thought) correspond to the definitions above-mentioned. For, that matter is not that *inert* substance that it has been supposed to be; that *powers of attraction* or *repulsion* are necessary to its very being, and that no part of it appears to be *impenetrable* to other parts. I therefore define it to be a substance possessed of the property of *extension*, and of *powers of attraction* or *repulsion*. And since it has never yet been asserted, that the powers of *sensation* and *thought* are incompatible with these, (*solidity*, or *impenetrability* only, having been thought to be repugnant to them,) I therefore maintain, that we have no reason to suppose that there are in man two substances so distinct from each other as have been represented.

It is likewise maintained, in this treatise, that the notion of two substances that have no *common property*, and yet are capable of *intimate connexion* and *mutual action*, is both absurd and *modern*; a substance without extension or relation to place being unknown both in the Scriptures, and to all antiquity; the human mind, for example, having till lately been thought to have a proper *presence in the body*, and a *proper motion* together with it; and the Divine Mind having always been represented as being, truly and properly, *omnipresent*.

It is maintained, however, in the SEQUEL of this treatise, that such a distinction as the ancient philosophers *did* make between *matter* and *spirit*, though it was by no means such a distinction as was defined above (which does not admit of their having any common property), but a distinction which made the Supreme Mind the author of all good, and *matter* the source of all evil; that all inferior intelligences are *emanations from the Supreme Mind*, or made out of its substance, and that matter was reduced to its present form not by the Supreme Mind itself, but by *another intelligence*, a peculiar emanation from it, has been the real source of the greatest corruptions of true religion in all ages, many of which remain to this very day. It is here maintained, that this *system of philosophy*, and the *true system of revelation*, have always been diametrically opposite, and hostile to each other; and that the latter can never be firmly established but upon the ruins of the former.

To promote this firm establishment of the system of *pure revelation*, in opposition to that of a vain and absurd *philosophy*, here shewn to be so, is the true object of this work;

in the perusal of which I beg the candour and patient attention of the judicious and philosophical reader.*

It may not be unuseful to observe, that a distinction ought to be made with respect to the *relative importance* and *mutual subordination* of the different positions contended for in this treatise. The principal object is, to prove the uniform composition of man, or that what we call *mind*, or the principle of perception and thought, is not a substance distinct from the body, but the result of corporeal organization; and what I have advanced preliminary to this, concerning the *nature of matter*, though subservient to this argument, is by no means essential to it: for, whatever matter be, I think I have sufficiently proved that the human mind is nothing more than a modification of it.

Again, that man is wholly material is eminently subservient to the doctrine of the *proper, or mere humanity* of Christ. For, if no man has a soul distinct from his body, Christ, who, in all other respects, appeared as a man, could not have had a soul which had existed before his body; and the whole doctrine of the *pre-existence of souls* (of which the opinion of the pre-existence of Christ was a branch) will be effectually overturned. But I apprehend that, should I have failed in the proof of the materiality of man, arguments enow remain, independent of this, to prove the non-existence of Christ, and of this doctrine having been introduced into Christianity from the system of Oriental philosophy.

Lastly, the doctrine of *necessity*, maintained in the Appendix, is the immediate result of the doctrine of the materiality of man; for mechanism is the undoubted consequence of materialism. But, whether man be wholly material or not, I apprehend that proof enough is advanced that every human volition is subject to certain fixed laws, and that the pretended *self-determining power* is altogether imaginary and impossible.

In short, it is my firm persuasion, that the three doctrines of *materialism*, of that which is commonly called *Socinianism*, and of philosophical *necessity*, are equally parts of *one system*, being equally founded on just observations of nature, and fair deductions from the Scriptures; and that whoever shall duly consider their *connexion*, and *dependence on one another*, will find no sufficient consistency in any general scheme of principles, that does not comprehend them all. At the same

* The remainder of this *Introduction* was added to the Second Edition from the *Illustrations*, first published with the *Free Discussion* in 1778.

time, each of these doctrines stands on its own independent foundation, and is capable of such separate demonstration, as subjects of a moral nature require or admit.

I have advanced what has occurred to me in support of all the three parts of this system; confident that, in due time, the truth will bear down before it every opposing prejudice, how inveterate soever, and gain a firm establishment in the minds of all men.

SECTION I.*

Of the Nature and Essential Properties of MATTER.

I AM sorry to have occasion to begin these disquisitions on the nature of *matter and spirit*, with desiring my reader to recur to the universally received *rules of philosophizing*, such as are laid down by Sir Isaac Newton at the beginning of his third book of *Principia*. But though we have followed these rules pretty closely in other philosophical researches, it appears to me that we have, without any reason in the world, entirely deserted them in this. We have suffered ourselves to be guided by them in our inquiries into the causes of *particular appearances* in nature, but have formed our notions, with respect to the most *general and comprehensive principles* of human knowledge, without the least regard, nay, in direct contradiction to them. And I am willing to hope, that when this is plainly pointed out, the inconsistency of our conduct in these cases cannot fail to strike us, and be the means of inducing the philosophical part of the world to tread back their steps, and set out again on the same maxims which they have actually followed in their progress. For my own part, I profess an uniform and rigorous adherence to them; but then I must require, that my own reasoning be tried by this, and by no other test.

The first of these rules, as laid down by Sir Isaac Newton, is, that we are to *admit no more causes of things than are sufficient to explain appearances*; and the second is, that *to the same effects we must, as far as possible, assign the same causes*. †

* The less metaphysical reader may, without any inconvenience, entirely omit the three first Sections of this work, and begin with Section IV. For whatever be the essential properties of matter, man, according to the doctrine contended for in this work, is wholly composed of it, and his hope of a future life is only derived from revelation. (P.)

† “Regula 1, Causas rerum naturalium non plures admitti debere, quàm quæ et vere sint, et earum phænomenis explicandis sufficient. 2, Ideoque Effectuum naturalium ejusdem generis eadem assignandæ sunt Causæ, quatenus fieri potest.” Op. III. p. 2.

So long as we follow these maxims, we may be confident that we walk on sure ground ; but the moment we depart from them, we wander in the regions of mere *fancy*, and are only entertaining ourselves and others with our own crude imaginations and conceits. By these plain rules, then, let us pursue our inquiries concerning the nature and connexion of what have been called *material* and *thinking* substances, concerning both which, very great misconceptions seem to have very generally prevailed. And in the first place, let us attend to what metaphysicians and philosophers have advanced concerning *matter*, with respect to which (I mean its *fundamental properties*, and what may be absolutely affirmed or denied concerning them,) there are very few who have so much as expressed the least doubt or uncertainty.

It is asserted, and generally taken for granted, that matter is necessarily a *solid*, or *impenetrable* substance, and naturally, or of itself, destitute of all *powers* whatever, as those of *attraction* or *repulsion*, &c.

That the vulgar should have formed these opinions, and acquiesce in them, I do not wonder ; because there are *common appearances* enow which must necessarily lead them to form such a judgment. I press my hand against the table on which I am writing, and finding that I cannot penetrate it, and that I cannot push my hand into the place which it occupies, without first pushing it out of its place, I conclude that this table, and by analogy, *all matter is impenetrable to other matter*. These first appearances are sufficient for them to conclude, that matter is necessarily *solid*, and incapable of yielding to the impression of other solid matter.

Again, I see a billiard table ; and though I observe the balls upon it ever so long, I do not find any of them ever to change their places till they are pushed against ; but that when once they are put in motion, they continue in that *new state* till they are stopped, either by some obstacle, or their own friction, which is in fact the result of a series of obstacles. And therefore I conclude, that, had there been no obstacle of any kind in the way, a ball would have continued in that state of *motion* (as, without being impelled by a foreign force, it would have continued in its former state of *rest*) for ever ; having no power *within itself* to make any change in either of those states. I therefore conclude universally, that all matter, as such, is entirely destitute of *power*, and whatever is true of larger bodies with respect to each other, must be equally true of the smallest component

parts of the same body ; and consequently that all *attraction* or *repulsion* must be the effect of some *foreign power* disposing either larger bodies, or their small component parts, to certain motions and tendencies, which otherwise they would not have had.

Such appearances as these, I imagine, have led to the conclusions above-mentioned, concerning the fundamental properties of matter. But then they are no more than *superficial appearances*, and therefore have led to superficial and false judgments ; judgments which the *real appearances* will not authorize. For, in fact, when the appearances above-mentioned are considered in the new and just lights which late observations have thrown upon this part of philosophy, they will oblige us, if we adhere to the rules of philosophizing laid down above, to conclude that *resistance*, on which alone our opinion concerning the solidity or impenetrability of matter is founded, is never occasioned by *solid matter*, but by something of a very different nature, viz. a *power of repulsion* always acting at a real, and in general, an assignable distance from what we call the body itself.

It will also appear, from the most obvious considerations, that without a power of attraction, a *power* which has always been considered as something quite distinct from matter itself, there cannot be any such thing as matter ; consequently, that this *foreign property*, as it has been called, is in reality absolutely essential to its very *nature* and *being* : for when we suppose bodies to be divested of it, they come to be *nothing at all*.

These positions, though not absolutely new, will appear paradoxical to most persons, but I beg a candid hearing ; and I appeal to the allowed rules of philosophizing above-mentioned, being confident that they will sufficiently support my conclusions.

It will readily be allowed, that every body, as *solid* and *impenetrable*, must necessarily have some particular *form* or *shape* ; but it is no less obvious, that no such *figured thing* can exist, unless the parts of which it consists have a *mutual attraction*, so as either to keep contiguous to, or preserve a certain distance from each other. This power of attraction, therefore, must be essential to the *actual existence* of all matter, since no substance can retain any *form* without it.

This argument equally affects the smallest atoms, as the largest bodies that are composed of them. An atom, by which I mean an ultimate component part of any gross body, is necessarily supposed to be perfectly solid, wholly im-

pervious to any other atom; and it must also be round, or square, or of some other *determinate form*. But the parts of such a body (as this solid atom must be *divisible*, and therefore have parts,) must be infinitely hard, and therefore must have powers of mutual attraction infinitely strong, or it could not hold together, that is, it could not exist as a *solid atom*. Take away the *power* therefore, and the solidity of the atom entirely disappears. In short, it is then no longer *matter*, being destitute of the fundamental properties of such a substance.

The reason why *solid extent* has been thought to be a complete definition of matter, is because it was imagined that we could separate from our idea of it every thing else belonging to it, and leave these two properties independent of the rest, and subsisting by themselves. But it was not considered, that, in consequence of taking away *attraction*, which is a *power*, *solidity* itself vanishes.

It will perhaps be said, that the particles of which any solid atom consists, may be conceived to be placed close together, without any mutual attraction between them. But then this atom will be entirely destitute of *compactness*, and hardness, which is requisite to its being *impenetrable*. Or if its parts be held together by some *foreign power*, it will still be true that *power* is necessary to its *solidity* and *essence*; since without it every particle would fall from each other, and be dispersed. And this being true of the ultimate particles, as well as of gross bodies, the consequence must be, that the whole substance will absolutely vanish. For as the large bodies would be dissolved without some principle of union, or some *power*, internal or external, so the parts of which they are composed would, in similar circumstances, be resolved into smaller parts, and consequently (the smallest parts being resolved in the same manner,) the whole substance must absolutely disappear, nothing at all being left for the imagination to fix upon.

It will be observed, that, in this disquisition, I by no means suppose that these powers, which I make to be essential to the being of matter, and without which it cannot exist as a material substance at all, are *self-existent* in it. All that my argument amounts to, is, that from whatever source these powers are derived, or by whatever being they are communicated, matter cannot exist without them; and if that superior power, or being, withdraw its influence, the substance itself necessarily ceases to exist, or is annihilated. Whatever *solidity* any body has, it is possessed of it only in

consequence of being endued with certain *powers*, and together with this *cause*, solidity, being no more than an *effect*, must cease, if there be any foundation for the plainest and best established rules of reasoning in philosophy.

Though Mr. Locke considered *solidity* as constituting the essence of matter, where he says that "substance that has the modification of solidity is matter,"* yet it is plain he had an idea of something else being in fact necessary to its cohesion. "If God," says he, "cannot join things together by connexions inconceivable to us, we must deny even the consistency and being of matter itself; since every particle of it having some bulk, has its parts connected by ways inconceivable to us."†

Mr. Baxter, ‡ who, I believe, is considered as the ablest defender of the strict immaterial system, acknowledges that *powers of resistance and cohesion* are essential to matter, and absolutely make it a solid substance. But asserting, as he does, that these powers are the immediate agency of the Deity himself, it necessarily follows, that there is not in nature any such thing as *matter* distinct from *the Deity* and *his operations*: an opinion in which Mr. Baxter's hypothesis necessarily terminates.

"Resistance," says Mr. Baxter, "is fundamental in the nature of matter, and this itself is the power of the immaterial cause, indesinently impressed upon, and exerted in, every possible part of matter. And since without this, these least parts could not cohere at all, or make a solid, making resistance, it appears that the power of this cause thus incessantly put forth, through all its possible parts, is that which *constitutes* the solidity and resistance of matter.—Without this *foreign influence* to effect cohesion, and solidity in it, we could not conceive it to be at all a substance."§

The opinion that all the powers of matter are nothing but the immediate agency of the Deity, is not peculiar to Mr.

* See *Essay*, &c. II. p. 141. (P.) "Letter to the Bishop of Worcester," Works, fol. 1740, l. p. 371.

† *Essay*, II. p. 148. (P.) 2nd. Letter, Works, I. p. 591.

‡ Andrew Baxter, a native of Aberdeen, whose "principal employment was that of a private tutor." It is remarkable that a person whose character and pursuits were so dissimilar should have, from accidentally meeting him abroad, become the intimate friend and correspondent of the celebrated *John Wilkes*. Mr. B. died in 1750, aged about 63. See *Biog. Brit.* II. pp. 22—24, and *Life of Lord Kames*, I. pp. 31—37.

§ *Essay*, 1765, II. p. 345. (P.) This work is entitled "An Inquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul; wherein the Immateriality of the Soul is evinced from the Principles of Reason and Philosophy." The 2nd. Ed. of the *Inquiry* was published in 1737.

Baxter, though it is that which chiefly distinguishes his writings. It was held by the famous Jordano Bruno, as his sentiments are represented by the author of *Examen du Fatalisme*, "All the motions," says he, "which strike our senses, the resistance which we find in matter are the effect of the immediate action of God. The smallest parts of matter are united by a force; and as there is no active force in nature, but that of God, this being is the infinite force which unites all the parts of matter, an immense spring which is in continual action."* It is evident, however, that this philosopher considered the ultimate particles of matter as something different from any thing belonging to the Deity. But his principles, pursued to their proper extent, would have been the same with those of Mr. Baxter.

SECTION II.

Of IMPENETRABILITY, as ascribed to Matter.

As philosophers have given *too little* to matter, in divesting it of all *powers*, without which I presume it has been proved that no such substance can exist, so it equally follows, from the plain rules of philosophizing above laid down, that they have ascribed *too much* to it, when they have advanced that *impenetrability* is one of its properties. Because, if there be any truth in late discoveries in philosophy, resistance is in most cases caused by something of a quite different nature from any thing *material*, or *solid*, viz. by a *power of repulsion* acting at a distance from the body to which it has been supposed to belong, and in no case whatever can it be proved that resistance is occasioned by any thing else.

* Vol. I. p. 227. (*P.*) *Jordanus Brunus* was a native of Nola, in the kingdom of Naples. Driven from Italy, for his free opinions, he retired to Geneva, then into France, and afterwards spent two years in London, where "he was very well received by Queen Elizabeth, and the politer part of the court. His principal friends were Sir Philip Sidney and Sir Fulke Greville," to the former of whom he dedicated, in 1584, his *Spaccio della Bestia trionfante*, of which he printed only twenty copies. "There was an edition of it in English in 1713." *Jordanus Brunus* returned to his native country, where he was burned alive at Venice by the Inquisition, in 1600. See *Spectator*, No. 389, and Ed. 12mo. with Notes, V. p. 30. *Granger's Biog. Hist.* Ed. 2nd, IV. p. 325. *Nouv. Dict. Hist.* Paris 1772, I. p. 520. *Biog. Dict.* 1784, II. p. 469. The last writer, after the *Spectator*, describes *Brunus* as an Atheist, but he is thus vindicated by the learned *Morhoff*:—"Jordanum tamen Brunum huic classi non annumerarem quanquam enim pluralitatem terrarum et solum statuit in libro—*de universo et mundis*, quod aliis quoque factum; manifesta tamen in illo Atheismi vestigia non deprehendo. Is tamen ignis supplicio, teste *Sorello*, affectus fuit." He afterwards describes him as "vir ingeniosus et meliore fato dignus." See "D. G. Morhoffii Polyhistor Literarius, &c. *Lubec*, 1747, c. viii. *de libris damnatis*, par. 22, 4to. I. pp. 73 and 355.

Now if *resistance*, from which alone is derived the idea of impenetrability, is in most cases certainly caused by *powers*, and in no case certainly by any thing else, the rules of philosophizing oblige us to suppose, that the cause of *all* resistance is *repulsive power*, and in no case whatever the thing that we have hitherto improperly termed *solid*, or *impenetrable matter*.

As all resistance can differ only in degree, this circumstance can only lead us to the supposition of a greater or less repulsive power, but never to the supposition of a cause of resistance entirely different from such a power. This would be exceedingly unphilosophical. To judge in this manner, is to judge altogether *without*, nay, really *contrary to evidence*. But I come to the *facts* themselves, which no philosopher will pretend to controvert.

When I press my hand against the table, as was mentioned above, I naturally imagine that the obstacle to its going through the table is the *solid matter* of which it consists; but a variety of philosophical considerations demonstrate, that it generally requires a much greater power of pressure than I can exert to bring my fingers into actual contact with the table. Philosophers know that, notwithstanding their seeming contact, they are actually kept at a real distance from each other, by *powers of repulsion* common to them both. Also, electrical appearances shew that a considerable weight is requisite to bring into contact, even links of a chain hanging freely in the air; they being kept asunder by a repulsive power belonging to a very small surface, so that they do not actually touch, though they are supported by each other.

I have myself, as will be seen in the account of my electrical experiments,* endeavoured to ascertain the weight requisite to bring a number of pieces of money, lying upon one another, into seeming contact, or so near to one another only as the particles that compose the same continued piece of metal, and I found it to be very considerable. These, however, are supposed by philosophers not to be in *actual contact*, but to be kept at certain distances from each other by powers of resistance within the substance itself.

Indeed, that the component particles of the hardest bodies do not actually touch one another, is demonstrable from their being brought nearer together by cold, and by their being removed farther from each other by heat. The power,

* See History and Present State of Electricity, 1769, p. 702. (P.)

sufficient to overcome these internal forces of repulsion, by which the ultimate particles of bodies are prevented from coming into actual contact, is what no person can pretend to compute. The power, requisite to break their cohesion, or to remove them from the sphere of each other's attractions, may, in some measure, be estimated; but this affords no *duta* for ascertaining the force that would be necessary to bring them into actual contact, which may exceed the other almost infinitely.

Mr. Melville has shewn, from optical considerations,* that a drop of water rolls upon a cabbage leaf without ever coming into actual contact with it; and indeed all the phenomena of *light* are most remarkably unfavourable to the hypothesis of the solidity or impenetrability of matter.

When light is reflected back from a body on which it seems to strike, it was natural to suppose that this was occasioned by its impinging against the *solid parts* of the body; but it has been demonstrated by Sir Isaac Newton, that the rays of light are always reflected by a *power of repulsion*, acting at some distance from the body. Again, when part of a beam of light has overcome this power of repulsion, and has entered any transparent substance, it goes on in a right line, provided the medium be of an uniform density, without the least interruption, and without a single particle being reflected, till it comes to the opposite side; having met with no solid particles in its way, not even in the densest transparent substances, as glass, crystal, or diamond; and when it is arrived at the opposite side, it is solely affected by the laws of attraction and repulsion. For, with a certain angle of incidence, the greatest part, or the whole of it, will be drawn back into the solid body, without going on into the air, where it should seem that there would have been less obstruction to its passage.

Now these facts seem to prove, that such dense bodies as glass, crystal and diamonds, have no solid parts, or so very few, that the particles of light are never found to impinge upon them, or to be obstructed by them. And certainly till some portion of light can be shewn to be reflected within the substance of a homogeneous transparent body, there can be no reason from *fact* and *appearances* to conclude, that they have any such solid parts; but, on the contrary, there

* See "History of Discoveries relating to Vision," &c. 1772, II. p. 454. (*P.*) The Author having before mentioned "Mr. Melville's Answer to Euler," says that he "died at the age of twenty-seven, after leaving some ingenious thoughts on the subject of Light and Colours." *Ib.* p. 359.

must be all the reason in the world to believe, that no such solid resisting particles exist. All the phenomena may be explained without them, and indeed cannot be explained with them.

Since then it is demonstrable that no common pressure is sufficient to bring bodies even into *seeming contact*, or that near approach which the component parts of the same body make to each other (though these are by no means in *absolute contact*, as the phenomena of heat and cold fully prove), but the resistance to a nearer approach is in all cases caused by *powers of repulsion*, there can be no sufficient reason to ascribe resistance *in any case* to any thing besides similar *powers*. Nay, the established rules of philosophizing above recited, absolutely require that we ascribe *all resistance* to such powers; and consequently the supposition of the *solidity* or *impenetrability* of matter, derived solely from the consideration of the resistance of the solid parts of bodies, (which, exclusive of a *power* operating at a distance from them, cannot be proved to have any resistance,) appears to be destitute of all support whatever. The hypothesis was suggested by a mere fallacy, and therefore ought to be discarded now that the fallacy is discovered.

It will be said, that if matter be not a solid, or impenetrable substance, *what is it?* I answer, with respect to this, as I should with respect to any other substance, that it is possessed of such properties, and such only, as the actual well-examined *appearances* prove it to be possessed of. That it is possessed of powers of attraction and repulsion, and of several spheres of them, one within another, I know, because appearances cannot be explained without supposing them; but that there is any thing in, or belonging to matter, capable of resistance, besides those powers of repulsion, does not appear from any phenomena that we are yet acquainted with, and, therefore, as a philosopher, I am not authorized to conclude that any such thing exists. On the contrary, I am obliged to deny that matter has such a property.

If I be asked how, upon this hypothesis, *matter* differs from *spirit*, if there be nothing in matter that is properly solid or impenetrable; I answer, that it no way concerns me, or true philosophy, to maintain that there is any such difference between them as has hitherto been supposed. On the contrary, I consider the notion of the union and mutual influences of substances so essentially different from one another, as *material* and *immaterial* substances have been represented, as an opinion attended with diffi-

culties infinitely embarrassing, and indeed actually insuperable, as may appear in the course of these disquisitions.

The considerations suggested above, tend to remove the *odium* which has hitherto lain upon matter, from its supposed necessary property of *solidity*, *inertness*, or *sluggishness*; as from this circumstance only the *baseness* and *imperfection*, which have been ascribed to it are derived. Since, besides extension, matter has, in fact, no properties but those of *attraction and repulsion*, it ought to rise in our esteem, as making a nearer approach to the nature of spiritual and immaterial beings, as we have been taught to call those which are opposed to gross matter.

The principles of the Newtonian philosophy were no sooner known, than it was seen how few, in comparison of the phenomena of nature, were owing to *solid matter*, and how much to *powers*, which were only supposed to accompany and surround the solid parts of matter. It has been asserted, and the assertion has never been disproved, that for any thing we know to the contrary, all the solid matter in the solar system might be contained within a nut-shell, there is so great a proportion of *void space* within the substance of the most solid bodies. Now when solidity had apparently so very little to do in the system, it is really a wonder that it did not occur to philosophers sooner, that perhaps there might be nothing for it to do at all, and that there might be no such a thing in nature.

Since the only reason why the principle of thought, or sensation, has been imagined to be incompatible with matter, goes upon the supposition of impenetrability being the essential property of it, and consequently that *solid extent* is the foundation of all the properties that it can possibly sustain, the whole argument for an immaterial thinking principle in man, on this new supposition, falls to the ground; matter, destitute of what has hitherto been called *solidity*, being no more incompatible with sensation and thought, than that substance, which, without knowing any thing farther about it, we have been used to call *immaterial*.

I will add in this place, though it will be considered more fully hereafter, that this supposition, of matter having (besides extension) no other properties but those of attraction and repulsion, greatly relieves the difficulty which attends the supposition of the *creation of it out of nothing*, and also the continual moving of it, by a Being who has

hitherto been supposed to have no common property with it. For, according to this hypothesis, both the creating mind, and the created substance, are equally destitute of *solidity* or *impenetrability*; so that there can be no difficulty whatever in supposing, that the latter may have been the offspring of the former.

This opinion, which I here maintain, of the *penetrability of matter*, is not my own, but what, from a conviction of its truth, I have adopted from Father Boscovich* and Mr. Michell,* to both of whom, independently of each other, this theory had occurred. Their ideas upon this subject, I have represented in my *History of Discoveries relating to Vision, Light and Colours*; and as the doctrine is there placed in somewhat of a different light, and in language chiefly borrowed from my authors, I shall, in order to throw greater light on the subject, quote the whole passage relating to it in this place, and with it shall close this Section.

“ The easiest method of solving all the difficulties attending the subject of *the subtlety of light*, and of answering Mr. Euler’s objections to its materiality, is to adopt the hypothesis of M. Boscovich, who supposes that matter is not *impenetrable*, as before him it had been universally taken for granted; but that it consists of *physical points* only, endued with powers of attraction and repulsion, taking place at different distances, that is, surrounded with various spheres of attraction and repulsion; in the same manner as solid matter is generally supposed to be. Provided, therefore, that any body move with a sufficient degree of velocity, or have sufficient momentum to overcome any powers of repulsion that it may meet with, it will find no difficulty in making its way through any body whatever. For nothing will interfere, or penetrate one another, but *powers*, such as we know do, in fact, exist in the same place, and counterbalance or over-rule one another; a circumstance which never had the appearance of a contradiction, or even of a difficulty.

“ If the momentum of such a body in motion be sufficiently great, M. Boscovich demonstrates that the particles of any body, through which it passes, will not even be moved out of their place by it. With a degree of velocity something less than this they will be considerably agitated,

* See p. 192 Notes † ‡ and the references.

and ignition might perhaps be the consequence, though the progress of the body in motion would not be sensibly interrupted; and with a still less momentum it might not pass at all."*

"This theory M. Boscovich has taken a great deal of pains to draw out at full length and illustrate; shewing, that it is by no means inconsistent with any thing that we know concerning the laws of mechanics, or our discoveries in natural philosophy, and that a great variety of phenomena, particularly those which respect *light*, admit of a much easier solution upon this hypothesis than upon any other.

"The most obvious difficulty, and indeed almost the only one that attends this hypothesis, as it supposes the *mutual penetrability of matter*, arises from the difficulty we meet with in attempting to force two bodies into the same place. But it is demonstrable, that the first obstruction arises from no actual contact of matter, but from mere powers of repulsion. This difficulty we can overcome; and having got within one sphere of repulsion, we fancy that we are now impeded by the solid matter itself. But the very same is the apprehension of the generality of mankind with respect to the first obstruction. Why, therefore, may not the next resistance be only another sphere of repulsion, which may only require a greater force than we can apply to overcome it, without disordering the arrangement of the constituent particles, but which may be overcome by a body moving with the amazing velocity of light.

"This scheme of—the *mutual penetration of matter*, first occurred to Mr. Michell on reading *Baxter on the Immateriality of the Soul*. He found, that this author's idea of matter was, that it consisted, as it were, of bricks cemented together by an immaterial mortar. These bricks, if he would be consistent in his own reasoning, were again composed of less bricks cemented likewise by an immaterial mortar, and so on *ad infinitum*. This putting Mr. Michell upon the consideration of the several appearances of nature, he began to perceive that the bricks were so covered with this immaterial mortar, that, if they had any existence at all, it could not possibly be *perceived*, every *effect* being produced at least in nine instances in ten certainly, and probably in the tenth also, by this immaterial, spiritual and

* *Theoria Philosophiæ Naturalis*, p. 167. (P.)

penetrable mortar. Instead, therefore, of placing the world upon the giant, the giant upon the tortoise, and the tortoise upon he could not tell what, he placed the world at once upon itself; and finding it still necessary, in order to solve the appearances of nature, to admit of extended and penetrable immaterial substance, if he maintained the impenetrability of matter, and observing farther, that all we perceive by contact, &c. is this penetrable immaterial substance, and not the impenetrable one; he began to think he might as well admit of *penetrable material*, as *penetrable immaterial* substance; especially, as we know nothing more of the nature of substance than that it is something which supports properties, which properties may be whatever we please, provided they be not inconsistent with each other, that is, do not imply the absence of each other. This by no means seemed to be the case in supposing two substances to be in the same place, at the same time, without excluding each other, the objection to which is only derived from the resistance we meet with to the touch, and is a prejudice that has taken its rise from that circumstance, and is not unlike the prejudice against the antipodes, derived from the constant experience of bodies falling, as we account it, downwards.

“ I hope I shall be excused dwelling so long on this hypothesis, on account both of the novelty and importance of it, especially with respect to the phenomena of light. If I were to make any alteration in it, it would be to suppose the force of the sphere of repulsion next to any of the *indivisible points*, which constitute what we call solid bodies, not to be absolutely *infinite*, but such as may be overcome by the momentum of light; which will obviate the objection of Mr. Melville. If, however, we consider that M. Bosovich makes this nearest power of repulsion not to extend to any *real space*, but to be confined to the indivisible point itself, it may appear to be sufficient for the purpose; since the chance of such points impinging upon one another is so little, that it needs not to be considered at all.”*

* The History, &c. II. pp. 390—394.

SECTION III.*

Various OBJECTIONS to the preceding Doctrine concerning the Nature of Matter particularly considered.

I. *Of Bodies acting where they are not.*

IT is objected to the doctrine of these papers, which supposes that the repulsion, ascribed to bodies, takes place at some distance from their real surfaces, that bodies must then *act where they are not*, which is deemed to be an absurdity. I acknowledge that there is a considerable difficulty in this case; but it does not in the least affect the hypothesis that I have adopted concerning matter, any more than that which is commonly received. According to Sir Isaac Newton's Observations, rays of light begin to be reflected from all bodies at a certain distance from their surfaces; and yet he considers those rays as reflected by those bodies, that is, by powers inhering in and properly belonging to those bodies. So also the gravitation of the earth, and of the other planets to the sun, he considers as produced by a power of attraction properly belonging to the sun, which is at an immense distance from them.

If Sir Isaac Newton would say that the impulse, by which light is reflected from any body, and by which planets are driven towards the sun, is really occasioned by other *invisible matter* in actual contact with those bodies which are put in motion, I also am equally at liberty to relieve my hypothesis by the same means. But the existence of this invisible substance, to the agency of which that great philosopher ascribes so very much, and which he calls *ether*, has not yet been proved, and is therefore generally supposed not to exist. And, indeed, if it did exist, I do not see how it could produce the effects that are ascribed to it. For the particles of this very ether could not impel any substance, if they were not themselves impelled in the same direction; and must we provide a still more subtle ether for the purpose of impelling the particles of the grosser ether? If so, we must do the same for this other ether, and so on, *ad infinitum*, which is absurd.

Also, if the parts of solid bodies, as, for instance, of gold (which by its expansion when hot, and contraction when

* Added to the 2d Edition from the *Illustrations*.

cold, appear not actually to touch one another) be kept asunder by a subtle matter, viz. the same ether above-mentioned, the parts of this ether must be kept asunder by a still more subtle ether, as before, and so on, till the whole space, occupied by the dimensions of the piece of gold, be absolutely solid, and have no pores or vacuum whatever, which would be contrary to appearances, and make it impossible to contract by cold, or by any other means. I do not say that there is no difficulty in this case, but it is not a difficulty that affects my system more than the common one; and therefore it is no particular business of mine to discuss it.

If it be supposed that no kind of matter is concerned in producing the above-mentioned effects at a distance from the surfaces of bodies, but that the Deity himself causes these motions, exerting his influence according to certain laws, am not I at liberty to avail myself of the same assistance? And surely I must have less objection to this resource than those who believe that God is not the only proper agent in the universe. As a Necessarian, I, in fact, ascribe every thing to God, and, whether mediately or immediately makes very little difference. But I believe that it is possible, though we cannot clearly answer every objection to it, that God may endue substances with powers, which, when communicated, produce effects in a manner different from his own immediate agency.

II. *Whether Matter be any Thing on this Hypothesis.*

It is said that, according to my definition of matter, it must be absolutely *nothing*; because, besides extension, it consists of nothing but the powers of attraction and repulsion, and because I have sometimes said that it consists of physical points only, possessed of those powers. In this I may have expressed myself rather incautiously; but the *idea* that I meant to convey was evidently this, that, whatever other powers matter may be possessed of, it has not the property that has been called *impenetrability* or *solidity*.

From the manner of expressing our ideas, we cannot speak of powers or properties, but as powers and properties of some *thing* or *substance*, though we know nothing at all of that thing or substance besides the powers that we ascribe to it; and, therefore, when the powers are supposed to be withdrawn, all idea of substance necessarily vanishes with them. I have, therefore, the same right to say that matter

is a substance possessed of the properties of attraction and repulsion only, as another has to say, that it is a substance possessed of the property of impenetrability together with them, unless it can be proved that the property of attraction or repulsion necessarily implies, and cannot exist without, that of impenetrability. Whether it be possessed of *any* of these properties must be determined by experiment only. If, upon my idea of matter, every thing vanishes upon taking away the powers of attraction and repulsion, in like manner every idea vanishes from the mind, if, upon the common hypothesis, solidity or impenetrability be taken away. I own that I can see no difference in this case; *impenetrability* being as much a property as *penetrability*, and its actual existence equally to be ascertained by experiment, which, in my opinion, is decisive in favour of penetrability.

They who suppose spirit to have proper *extension*, and the Divine Being to have a proper *ubiquity*, must believe the mutual penetrability of real substance; and by whatever names they may choose to call the substances, is of no consequence. If they say that, on my hypothesis, there is no such thing as matter, and that every thing is spirit, I have no objection, provided they make as great a difference in *spirits*, as they have hitherto made in *substances*. The world has been too long amused with mere names.

III. *Of the Laws of Motion.*

It is said, that if there is not what has been termed a *vis inertiae* in matter, the foundation of the Newtonian Philosophy is overturned; for that the *three laws of motion*, laid down by Sir Isaac Newton, in the beginning of his *Principia*,* have no meaning on any other supposition.

I answer, that these laws of motion are founded on certain *facts*, which result just as easily from my hypothesis concerning matter, as from the common one. It is an undoubted fact, that every body perseveres in a state of rest or motion, till it be compelled to change that state by some external force, which is the first of the three laws, and the foundation of the other two. But this will follow just as

* "Lex I. Corpus omne perseverare in statu suo quiescendi vel movendi uniformiter in directum, nisi quatenus illud à viribus impressis cogitur statum suum mutare. II. Mutationem motûs proportionalem esse vi motrici impressæ, et fieri secundum lineam rectam quâ vis illa imprimitur. III. Actioni contrariam semper et æqualem esse reactionem: sive corporum duorum actiones in se mutuò semper esse æquales et in partes contrarias dirigi." Op. II. pp. 13, 14.

well upon the supposition of that mutual action between two bodies taking place at any given distance from their surfaces. Newton himself shews, that rays of light are reflected by a power belonging to other bodies, without actually impinging upon them, and, consequently, by a power which takes place at a certain distance from their surfaces, without supposing that any of his laws of motion were violated.

IV. *Of Powers of Attraction, &c., belonging to physical Points.*

Several of my friends have proposed to me queries concerning the *physical indivisible points*, of which I have sometimes supposed matter to consist. But I beg it may be considered, that the only mention I have made of such *points* is in the extract from my *History of Vision, &c.*, in which I gave an account of the hypothesis of Father Bosovich and Mr. Michell, adding only a single observation of my own; and that, in what properly belongs to these *Disquisitions*, I have not, as far as I can recollect, encumbered my doctrine with any of the difficulties attending the consideration of the *internal structure of matter*, concerning which we know, indeed, very little, having few *data* to argue from.

In this *metaphysical work*, I have confined myself to the exclusion of the property of *impenetrability*, which is generally considered as essential to all matter, and to the claim of the property of *attraction* or *repulsion*, as appearing to me not to be properly what is *imparted* to matter, but what really *makes it to be what it is*, in so much that, without it, it would be nothing at all; which is giving it the same rank and importance that has usually been assigned to the property of *solidity* or *impenetrability*. By this means it is, that I leave no room for the popular objection to the materiality of man, founded on the idea of matter, as *solid* and *inert*, being incapable of the powers of sensation and thought.

This, I say, is all that my purpose in these *Disquisitions* requires; and so far I see no difficulty that appears to me to be of much moment, and the argument lies in a very small compass. I deny that matter is impenetrable to other matter, because I know no one *fact*, to the explanation of which that supposition is necessary; all those facts which led philosophers to this supposition, later, and more accu-

rate observations, having shewn to be owing to, *something else* than solidity or impenetrability, viz. a *power of repulsion*, which, for that reason, I would substitute in its place. As other philosophers have said, "Take away solidity, and matter vanishes;" so, I say, "Take away attraction and repulsion, and matter vanishes." Also, if any person asks *what it is* that attracts and repels, or what is left when the powers of attraction and repulsion are taken away, I, in my turn, ask, What is it that is solid, or what is left when the property of solidity is taken away? The immaterialist, whether his immaterial substance be extended, or not, cannot, with the least reason, ask such a question as this. If he do, he must be effectually silenced by being asked, what will be left of *spirit*, when the powers of sensation and thought are taken from it. If the immaterial substance he contends for be extended, it must, in that case, be reduced to *mere space*, and if it be not extended, it must be reduced to *nothing at all*. It is, moreover, not a little remarkable, that, according to the common hypothesis, spirit, though destitute of solidity, has the power of acting upon matter, or in other words, has the same property of attraction and repulsion with respect to matter, that I ascribe to unsolid matter; so that it is with a very ill grace indeed, that the abettors of that hypothesis can object to mine, that nothing will remain when the powers of attraction and repulsion are withdrawn.

Farther than this, which I think very clear ground, it does not appear to me that I have any proper call, or business, to proceed. In what *manner* matter, penetrable or impenetrable, is formed, with what interstices, &c., and how far the powers which we ascribe to it may be said to *inhere in*, or *belong to* it, or how far they are the effect of a *foreign power*, viz. that of the Deity, concerns not my system in particular. And whatever difficulties may be started as resulting from these considerations, the very same I think or greater, may fairly be charged upon the opposite system. If I have advanced beyond these narrow bounds, it has been inadvertently, and for the sake of answering objections. The metaphysician has no business to speculate any farther, and the natural philosopher will find, I imagine, but few *data* for farther speculation.

In fact, what I have advanced above, is all that I have ascribed to that excellent and truly cautious philosopher, Mr. Michell. I will venture, however, in order to give all the satisfaction I am able to the inquisitive natural philosopher, to go one step farther in this speculation, on the idea

suggested at the conclusion of my account of that hypothesis. I am well aware that the generality of my readers will revolt at the ideas I am about to present to them ; but I beg their patient attention, and I may, perhaps, convince them, that the common hypothesis, when considered in connexion with *facts*, is no less revolting.

Suppose then that the Divine Being, when he created *matter*, only fixed certain *centres of various attractions and repulsions*, extending indefinitely in all directions, the whole effect of them to be upon each other ; these centres approaching to, or receding from each other, and consequently carrying their peculiar spheres of attraction and repulsion along with them, according to certain definite circumstances ; it cannot be denied that these spheres may be diversified infinitely, so as to correspond to all the kinds of bodies that we are acquainted with, or that are possible : for all effects in which bodies are concerned, and of which we can be sensible by our eyes, touch, &c., may be resolved into attraction or repulsion.

A compages of these centres, placed within the sphere of each other's attraction, will constitute a body that we term *compact* ; and two of these bodies will, on their approach, meet with a repulsion or resistance, sufficient to prevent one of them from occupying the place of the other, without a much greater force than we are capable of employing, so that to us they will appear perfectly hard.

As in the constitution of all actual bodies that we are acquainted with, these centres are placed so near to each other, that, in every division that we can make, we still leave parts which contain many of these centres, we, reasoning by analogy, suppose that every particle of matter is infinitely divisible ; and the *space* it occupies is certainly so. But, strictly speaking, as these centres which constitute any body are not absolutely infinite, it must be naturally possible to come, by division, to one single centre, which could not be said to be divisible, or even to occupy any portion of space, though its sphere of action should extend ever so far ; and had only *one* such centre of attraction, &c., existed, its existence could not have been known, because there would have been nothing on which its action could have been exerted ; and there being no *effect*, there could not have been any ground for supposing a *cause*.

Father Boscovich supposes that no two of these centres can ever coincide, the resistance at the point itself being infinite. But admitting their coincidence, they would only

form *another centre*, with different powers, those belonging to one centre modifying those belonging to the other. Had their powers been *the very same* before such coincidence, at the same distances, they would have been just doubled at those distances. Also, though united by one cause, they might possibly be separated by another.

To philosophical people, and I am not now writing for the use of any other, I do not need to explain myself any farther. They will easily see, or F. Boscovich, in his elaborate work will shew them, that this hypothesis will account for all the phenomena of nature.

The principal objection to this hypothesis, is, that matter is, by this means, resolved into nothing but the *Divine agency*, exerted according to certain rules. But as, upon the common hypothesis, it has been again and again admitted, that, notwithstanding the existence of solid matter, every thing is really *done* by the Divine power, what material objection can there be to every thing *being* the Divine power? There is, at least, this advantage in the scheme, that it supposes *nothing to be made in vain*.

Admitting that bodies consist of solid atoms, there is no sort of connexion between the idea of them, and that of *attraction*; so that it is impossible to conceive that any one atom should approach another without a *foreign power*, viz. that of the Deity; and therefore bodies consisting of such atoms could not hold together, so as to constitute *compact substances*, without this constant agency.

There is, again, as little connexion between the idea of these solid atoms, and that of *repulsion at the least distance from the point of contact*. So that, since the constituent particles of no substance actually touch one another, as is evident from the effects of cold (which brings them nearer together), their coherence cannot be accounted for without the constant agency of the same external power. And though mere *resistance* (not repulsion) *at the place of contact* might be explained on the principle of solidity, it is remarkable, that in no *known case* of resistance can it be proved that real contact is concerned, and in most cases of resistance it is demonstrable that there is no real contact; and therefore, there can be no *reason from fact* to believe, that there is any such thing as real contact in nature; so that if there be such a thing as solid matter, it is altogether *superfluous*, being no way concerned in producing any effect whatever.

If I have bewildered myself, and my reader, with this

speculation, I can only say that I have been drawn into it, when I would willingly acquiesce in what I have observed concerning the simple *penetrability of matter*; confessing myself unable to proceed any farther on tolerably sure ground, and my readiness to abandon all this hypothesis, whenever a better, that is, one more nearly corresponding to facts, shall be suggested to me: and I own, that I should much prefer an hypothesis which should make provision for the use of created matter without the necessity of such a *particular agency* as the preceding hypothesis requires; though, of the two, I shall certainly prefer one which admits nothing being made in vain.

Being, however, engaged thus far, I must be permitted to advance one step farther, for the sake of observing, that there is nothing more approaching to *impiety* in my scheme than in the common one. On this hypothesis every thing is the *Divine power*; but still, strictly speaking, every thing is not *the Deity himself*. The centres of attraction, &c. are fixed by him, and all action is his action; but still these centres are no part of *himself*, any more than the solid matter supposed to be created by him. Nor, indeed, is making the Deity to *be*, as well as to *do* every thing, *in this sense*, any thing like the opinion of Spinoza; because I suppose a source of infinite power, and superior intelligence, from which all inferior beings are derived; that every inferior intelligent being has a consciousness distinct from that of the Supreme Intelligence, that they will for ever continue distinct, and that their happiness or misery to endless ages, will depend upon their conduct in this state of probation and discipline.

On the other hand, the common hypothesis is much less favourable to piety, in that it supposes something to be *independent of the Divine power*. Exclude the idea of Deity on my hypothesis, and every thing except *space* necessarily vanishes with it, so that the Divine Being, and his energy, are absolutely necessary to that of every other being. His power is the very *life and soul* of every thing that exists; and, strictly speaking, *without him, we ARE*, as well as, *can do nothing*. But exclude the idea of Deity on the common hypothesis, and the idea of *solid matter* is no more excluded than that of *space*. It remains a problem, therefore, whether matter be at all dependent upon God, whether it be *in his power* either to *annihilate* or to *create* it; a difficulty that has staggered many, and on which the doctrine of *two original independent principles* was built. My hypothesis, what-

ever other defects it may have, leaves no foundation for this *system of impiety*; and in this respect it has, I think, a great and desirable advantage.

I own that, for my part, I feel an inexpressible satisfaction in the idea of that most intimate connexion which, on my hypothesis, myself, and every thing in which I am concerned, have with the Deity. On his will I am entirely dependent for my *being*, and all my *faculties*. My sphere, and degree of influence on other beings and other things, is *his* influence. I am but an instrument in his hands for effecting a certain part of the greatest and most glorious of purposes. I am happy in *seeing* a little of this purpose, happier in the *belief* that the operations in which I am concerned, are of infinitely greater moment than I am capable of comprehending, and in the persuasion that, in the continuance of my existence, I shall see more and more of this great purpose, and of the relation that myself and my sphere of influence bear to it. Let the abettors of the common hypothesis say more than this if they can, or any thing different from this, that shall give them more satisfaction.

SECTION IV.

The proper and direct Proof, that the Seat of the Sentient Principle in Man, is the material Substance of the Brain.

IN the preceding Sections I have endeavoured to rectify the notions which we have been taught to entertain concerning matter, as not being that *impenetrable, inert* substance that we had imagined it to be. This, being admitted, will greatly facilitate our farther progress in these disquisitions; as I hope we shall not consider matter with that contempt and disgust, with which it has generally been treated, there being nothing in its real nature that can justify such sentiments respecting it.

I now proceed to inquire whether, when the nature of matter is rightly understood, there be any reason to think that there is in man any substance essentially different from it, that is, any thing possessed of other properties besides such as may be superadded to those of *attraction* and *repulsion*, which we have found to belong to matter, or that may be consistent with those properties. For if this be the case, true philosophy, which will not authorize us to *multiply causes*, or kinds of substance, *without necessity*, will forbid us to admit of any such substance. If *one kind of substance* be

capable of supporting all the known *properties* of man ; that is, if those properties have nothing in them that is absolutely incompatible with one another, we shall be obliged to conclude (unless we openly violate the rules of philosophizing), that no other kind of substance enters into his composition, the supposition being manifestly *unnecessary*, in order to account for any appearance whatever.

All the properties that have hitherto been attributed to matter, may be comprised under those of *attraction* and *repulsion* (all the effects of which have been shewn to be produced by *powers* independent of all *solidity*), and of *extension*, by means of which matter occupies a certain portion of space. Besides these properties, man is possessed of the powers of *sensation* or *perception*, and *thought*. But if, without giving the reins to our imaginations, we suffer ourselves to be guided in our inquiries by the simple rules of philosophizing above-mentioned, we must necessarily conclude, as it appears to me, that these powers also may belong to the same substance, that has also the properties of attraction, repulsion and extension, which I, as well as others, call by the name of *matter*; though I have been obliged to divest it of one property which has hitherto been thought essential to it, as well as to give it others which have not been thought essential to it, and consequently my idea of this substance is not, in all respects, the same with that of other metaphysicians.

The reason of the conclusion above-mentioned is simply this, that the powers of sensation or perception, and thought, as belonging to man, have never been found but in conjunction with a certain *organized system of matter*, and, therefore, that those powers necessarily exist in, and depend upon, such a system. This, at least, must be our conclusion, till it can be shewn that these powers are incompatible with other known properties of the same substance, and for this I see no sort of pretence.

It is true, that we have a very imperfect idea of what the *power of perception* is ; and it may be as naturally impossible that we should have a clear idea of it, as that the eye should see itself. But this very ignorance ought to make us cautious in asserting with what other properties it may, or may not, exist. Nothing but a precise and definite knowledge of the nature of perception and thought can authorize any person to affirm, whether they may not belong to an extended substance, which has also the properties of attraction and repulsion. Seeing, therefore, no sort of reason to

imagine that these different properties are really *inconsistent*, any more than the different properties of *resistance* and *extension*, I am, of course, under the necessity of being guided by the *phenomena* in my conclusions concerning the proper seat of the powers of perception and thought. These phenomena I shall now briefly represent.

Had we formed a judgment concerning the necessary seat of thought, by the *circumstances that universally accompany it*, which is our rule in all other cases, we could not but have concluded, that in man it is a property of the *nervous system*, or rather of the *brain*; because, as far as we can judge, the faculty of thinking, and a certain state of the brain, always accompany and correspond to one another; which is the very reason why we believe that any property is inherent in any substance whatever. There is no instance of any man retaining the faculty of thinking, when his brain was destroyed; and whenever that faculty is impeded, or injured, there is sufficient reason to believe that the brain is disordered in proportion, and therefore we are necessarily led to consider the latter as the seat of the former.

Moreover, as the faculty of thinking in general ripens and comes to maturity with the body, it is also observed to decay with it; and if, in some cases, the mental faculties continue vigorous when the body in general is enfeebled, it is evidently because, in those particular cases, the *brain* is not much affected by the general cause of weakness. But, on the other hand, if the brain alone be affected, as by a blow on the head, by actual pressure within the skull, by sleep, or by inflammation, the mental faculties are universally affected in proportion.*

Likewise, as the mind is affected in consequence of the affections of the body and brain, so the body is liable to be reciprocally affected by the affections of the mind, as is evident in the visible effects of all strong passions, hope or fear, love or anger, joy or sorrow, exultation or despair. These are certainly irrefragable arguments, that it is properly no other than *one and the same thing* that is subject to these affections, and that they are necessarily dependent upon one another. In fact, there is just the same reason to conclude, that the powers of sensation and thought are the necessary result of a particular organization, as that sound is the necessary result of a particular concussion of the air. For in both cases equally the one constantly accompanies the other,

* See Dr. Taylor to Bishop Law, in Vol. II. p. 258, *Note*.

and there is not in nature a stronger argument for a necessary connexion of any cause and any effect.

To adopt an opinion different from this, is to form an hypothesis without a single fact to support it. And to conclude, as some have done, that a material system is so far from being a necessary pre-requisite to the faculty of thinking, that it is an obstruction to it, is to adopt a method of argumentation the very reverse of every thing that has hitherto been followed in philosophy. It is to conclude, not only *without*, but directly *contrary* to all appearances whatsoever.

That the perfection of thinking should depend on the sound state of the body and brain *in this life*, insomuch that a man has no power of thinking without it, and yet that he should be capable of thinking better when the body and brain are destroyed, seems to be the most unphilosophical and absurd of all conclusions. If death be an advantage with respect to thinking, *disease* ought to be a proportional advantage likewise; and, universally, the nearer the body approaches to a state of dissolution, the freer and less embarrassed might the faculties of the mind be expected to be found. But this is the very reverse of what really happens.

Part of this argument is so well represented, and so forcibly urged, by the excellent Mr. Hallet, that I shall quote the entire passage from his *Discourses*.

“ I see a man move, and hear him speak, for some years. From his speech I certainly infer he *thinks*, as I do. I see, then, that man is a being who thinks and acts. After some time the man falls down in my sight, grows cold and stiff. He speaks and acts no more. Is it not then natural to conclude, that he *thinks* no more? As the only reason I had to believe that he did think, was his motion and speech, so now this motion and speech cease, I have lost the only way of proving that he has a power of thought. Upon this sudden death, the one visible thing, the one man, is greatly changed. Whence could I infer that the same *he* consists of two parts, and that the inward part continues to live and think, and flies away from the body, when the outward part ceases to live and move? It looks as if the *whole man* was gone, and that all his powers cease at the same time. His motion and thought die together, as far as I can discern. The powers of *thought*, *speech* and *motion* equally depend upon the body, and run the same fate in case of mens' declining in old age. When a man dies through old age, I

perceive his powers of speech, motion and thought decay and die together, and by the same degrees. The moment he ceases to move and breathe, he appears to cease to *think* too. When I am left to mere reason, without the help of a revelation, and view my own nature, it seems to me that my power of *thought* as much depends upon my body, as my power of *sight* or *hearing*. I could not think in infancy. My powers of thought, of sight, and of feeling, are equally liable to be obstructed by the body. A blow on the head has deprived a man of thought, who could yet feel and see and move; so that naturally the power of thinking seems as much to belong to the body as any power of man whatsoever. Naturally there appears to be no more reason to suppose that a man can *think* out of a body, than that he can *hear sounds*, or *feel cold*, out of the body."*

Notwithstanding Mr. Hallet was satisfied, that there was no good argument from the light of *nature*, in favour either of the immateriality or immortality of the soul, he still retained the belief of it on the authority, as he imagined, of *revelation*.† But it will be seen, in a subsequent Section, that the Scriptures afford no evidence whatever of a thing so contrary to the principles of reason; but that the sacred writers go upon quite different principles, always taking for granted the very thing I am here contending for; and that the notion of the soul being a substance distinct from the body, was originally a part of the system of *heathenism*, and was from thence introduced into Christianity, which has derived the greatest part of its corruptions from this source.

It is still more unaccountable in Mr. Locke, to suppose, as he did, and as he largely contends, that, for any thing that we know to the contrary, the faculty of thinking may be a property of the body, and yet to think it more probable that this faculty inhered in a different substance, viz. an immaterial soul.‡ A philosopher ought to have been apprised that we are to suppose no more *causes* than are necessary to produce the *effects*; and therefore, that we ought to conclude,

* "Discourses and Observations" annexed to the "Notes on some peculiar Texts, by Joseph Hallett, Jun." 1729, l. pp. 212—214.

† "What I have here said does not prove that the soul cannot think out of the body (for I am sure from revelation that it can), but only that we cannot infer from a mere view of our nature that thought will survive the body." Ib. p. 214.

‡ See the quotation from B. iv. C. iii. Sect. vi. *infra* S. xx. p. iv. *Note*, and Locke's *qualifications* of that opinion in his first "Letter to the Bishop of Worcester." Works, l. p. 374.

that the whole man is material, unless it should appear, that he has some powers or properties that are absolutely incompatible with matter.

Since then, Mr. Locke did not apprehend, that there was any real inconsistency between the known properties of *body*, and those that have generally been referred to mind, he ought, as became a philosopher, to have concluded, that the *whole substance of man*, that which supports all his powers and properties, was one uniform substance, and by no means that he consisted of *two substances*, and those so very different from one another as *body* and *spirit* are usually represented to be; so much so, that they have been generally thought incapable of having any common property. Accordingly, the best writers upon this subject, always consider the union of these two very different substances as a most stupendous and wonderful thing. “*Le Tout Puissant,*” says the author of *La Vraye Philosophie*, “*pouvoit seul établir un accord si intime entre deux substances si discordantes par leur nature.*”

SECTION V.

Additional Considerations in Favour of the Materiality of the Human Soul.

IN the preceding Section, I have represented how unphilosophical it is to conclude, that all the powers of man do not belong to *the same substance*, when they are observed to have a constant and necessary dependence upon one another, and when there is not, as far as we know, the least inconsistency or incompatibility between them. If there be any foundation for the established rules of philosophizing, the argument ought to be conclusive with us, and every thing that can be added to it is really superfluous. However, for the greater satisfaction of some of my readers, I shall, in this Section, subjoin some additional arguments, or considerations, or rather, in some cases, distinct illustrations of the preceding argument.

1. That the faculty of thinking necessarily depends, for its *exercise*, at least, upon a stock of ideas, about which it is always conversant, will hardly be questioned by any person. But there is not a single idea of which the mind is possessed, but what may be proved to have come to it from the bodily senses, or to have been consequent upon the perceptions of sense. Could we, for instance, have had any idea of *colour*, as *red*, *blue*, &c. without the eyes, and optic

nerves ; of *sound*, without the ears, and auditory nerves ; of *smell*, without the nostrils, and the olfactory nerves, &c. &c. ? It is even impossible to conceive how the mind could have become possessed of any of its present stock of ideas, without just such a body as we have ; and consequently, judging from present appearances (and we have no other means of forming any judgment at all) without a body, of some kind or other, we could have had no ideas at all, any more than a man without eyes could have any particular ideas belonging to colours. The notion, therefore, of the *possibility* of thinking in man, without an organized body, is not only destitute of all evidence from actual appearances, but is directly contrary to them ; and yet these appearances ought alone to guide the judgment of philosophers.

Dr. Clark seems to have imagined, that he had fully answered the argument for the materiality of the human soul, from its having received all its ideas from the bodily senses, by asking, whether there might not possibly have been *other inlets to ideas* besides our present senses. “ If they,” says he, “ be purely arbitrary, then the want of these does by no means infer a total want of perception, but the same soul, which in the present state has the powers of *reflection, reason* and *judgment*, which are faculties entirely different from sense, may, as easily in another state, have different ways even of perception also.”*

To this it is easy to reply, that mere *possibility* is no foundation for any conclusion in this case. We see, in fact, that all our sensations come to us by the way of the corporeal senses ; and though our observing this will authorize us to say, that, if the Divine Being had so pleased, we might have had *more*, or *fewer*, or quite *different* senses, and, of course, should have had very different sets of sensations and ideas, it will by no means authorize us to say, that it was even *possible* for us to have had sensations and ideas *without any corporeal senses* at all. We have no *example* of any such thing, and therefore cannot say that it is even *possible*, much less that it is actually the case. Present appearances certainly lead us to think, that our mental powers *necessarily* depend upon our corporeal ones ; and till some very different appearances present themselves, it must be exceedingly unphilosophical to imagine that the connexion is not necessary.

2. The only reason why it has been so earnestly con-

* *Demonstration*, &c. 1732, Ed. 8, p. 81.

tended for, that there is some principle in man that is not material, is, that it might subsist, and be capable of sensation and action, when the body was dead. But, if the mind was naturally so independent of the body, as to be capable of subsisting by itself, and even of appearing to more advantage after the death of the body, it might be expected to discover some signs of its independence before death, and especially when the organs of the body were obstructed, so as to leave the soul more at liberty to exert itself, as in a state of *sleep*, or *swooning*, which most resemble the state of death, in which it is pretended that the soul is most of all alive, most active and vigorous.

But, judging by appearances, the reverse of all this is the case. That a man does not think during sleep, except in that imperfect manner which we call *dreaming*, and which is nothing more than an approach to a state of vigilance, I shall not here dispute, but take for granted, referring my readers to Mr. Locke,* and other writers upon that subject; and that all power of thinking is suspended during a swoon, I conclude with certainty, because no appearance whatever can possibly lead us to suspect the contrary.

3. If the mental principle was, in its own nature, immaterial and immortal, all its particular *faculties* would be so too; whereas, we see that every faculty of the mind, without exception, is liable to be impaired, and even to become wholly extinct before death. Since, therefore, all the faculties of the mind, separately taken, appear to be mortal, the substance, or principle, in which they exist, must be pronounced to be mortal too. Thus, we might conclude, that the *body* was mortal, from observing that all the separate *senses* and *limbs* were liable to decay and perish.

4. If the sentient principle in man be immaterial, it can have no *extension*, it can neither have length, breadth, nor thickness, and consequently every thing within it, or properly belonging to it, must be *simple* and *indivisible*. Besides, it is universally acknowledged, that if the substance of the soul was not simple and indivisible, it would be liable to corruption and death, and, therefore, that no advantage would be gained by supposing the power of thinking to belong to any substance distinct from the body. Let us now consider how this notion agrees with the phenomena of sensation and ideas, which are the proper subject of thought.

* *Essay*, B. ii. Ch. i. Sect. 10—19.

It will not be denied, but that sensations, or ideas, properly exist *in the soul*, because it could not otherwise retain them, so as to continue to perceive and think after its separation from the body. Now, whatever ideas are in themselves, they are evidently produced by external objects, and must therefore correspond to them; and since many of the objects, or archetypes of ideas are divisible, it necessarily follows, that the ideas themselves are divisible also. The idea of a *man*, for instance, could in no sense correspond to a man, which is the archetype of it, and therefore could not be the idea of a man, if it did not consist of the ideas of his *head, arms, trunk, legs, &c.* It therefore consists of *parts*, and consequently is *divisible*. And how is it possible that a thing (be the *nature* of it what it may) that is *divisible*, should be contained in a substance, be the nature of *it* likewise what it may, that is *indivisible*?

If the archetypes of ideas have extension, the ideas which are expressive of them, and are actually produced by them, according to certain mechanical laws, must have extension likewise; and therefore the mind in which they exist, whether it be material or immaterial, must have extension also. But how any thing can have extension, and yet be immaterial, without coinciding with our idea of mere empty *space*, I know not. I am therefore obliged to conclude, that the sentient principle in man, containing ideas which certainly have parts, and are divisible, and consequently must have extension, cannot be that simple, indivisible and immaterial substance that some have imagined it to be, but something that has real *extension*, and therefore may have the other properties of matter.

To this argument for the extension and materiality of the human soul, the author of *La Vraye Philosophie* replies, in a manner very singular, and to me not very intelligible. He says, “the impression of a circle, or any object that is divisible, strikes the organ of sense; this action is transmitted by some unknown law to the soul, which is thereby modified, and which refers its own modifications, indivisible as *itself* is, to external objects. Thus, the idea of a circle is not round, nor has any extension, though it answers perfectly to a circle that is divisible, and has extension.” This doctrine he illustrates by what is observed of those who *dream*, and *walk in their sleep*, imagining they see what is not before them, and also by optical deceptions. “This,” says he, “is the case with all *colour*, which is falsely thought to be in bodies; but though the coloured body moves, its colour is as

immoveable as the soul that perceives it." What he farther adds upon this subject is still more unintelligible to me. "The sensations, simple and indivisible as they are, contain, in an eminent manner, the quality of extension, and thereby prove, that the substance which they modify, viz. the soul, is of an order superior to matter."*

5. All the defenders of the *simple, indivisible* and *unalterable* nature of the soul, that I have met with, appear to me to have overlooked a great variety of mental *affections*, which necessarily imply alteration, especially *melioration* and *depravation*, which is something so similar to *corruption*, that it has universally obtained the same name, and which is certainly incompatible with natural and perfect *simplicity*. From Mr. Baxter's own acknowledgment, expressed in words which it is impossible to misconstrue, it necessarily follows that, whatever may happen to the soul, during its temporary connexion with the body, it must, whenever it is set at liberty from it, immediately recover its pristine purity. But what then becomes of the Christian doctrine, upon his own hypothesis, of vicious habits (which are the proper *disease* of the mind) inhering in the soul after death, and its being liable to punishment, in a separate unembodied state, on that account?

Mr. Baxter, however, says, "the soul cannot have a disorder lodged in itself, nor be subject to any disease. A man who considers the *simple nature* of it will never affirm this.—The soul can admit of no disease from matter, as having no *parts* to be disordered. It can suffer no alteration in its own substance, if that substance be not annihilated.—We would have the soul to grow up, to decay, to sleep, to be mad, to be drunk. Who does not see all these are ridiculous fancies, too gross to be entertained concerning a simple uncompounded substance? If the soul were mad, or had the disease lodged in itself, what could cure it?"†

If this reasoning have any foundation, it will follow, that nothing is requisite to discharge all the vices of the soul, but to detach it from its fatal connexion with the body, and leave it to itself. All vice and disorder, as it came with the body, and always inhered in it, must terminate and depart with it.

* See *La Vraie Philosophie*, pp. 104, 108 and 113. (P.)

† Vol. II. p. 161. (P.) *Inquiry*, &c.

SECTION VI.

Advantages attending the System of MATERIALISM, especially with respect to the Doctrines of REVEALED RELIGION.

IT is a great advantage attending the system of materialism, that we hereby get rid of a great number of *difficulties* which exceedingly clog and embarrass the opposite system; such, for instance, as these, *What becomes of the soul during sleep, in a swoon, when the body is seemingly dead* (as by drowning, or other accidents), and especially *after death*; also, *what was the condition of it before it became united to the body, and at what time did that union take place, &c. &c. &c.?*

If the soul be immaterial, and the body material, neither the generation nor the destruction of the body can have any effect with respect to it. This *foreign principle* must have been united to it either at the time of conception, or at birth, and must either have been created at the time of such union, or have existed in a separate state prior to that period.* Now all these suppositions are clogged with great difficulties, and indeed can hardly be considered at all, without being immediately rejected as extremely improbable, if not absurd.

Must the Divine Power be necessarily employed to produce a soul, whenever the human species copulate? Or must some of the pre-existent spirits be obliged, immediately upon that event, to descend from the superior regions, to inhabit the new-formed embryo? If this be the case, (which was the original hypothesis of the separability of the soul from the body,) by what *rule* must this descent be regulated? Must these unembodied spirits become embodied in *rotation* according to some rank and *condition*, or must it be determined by *lot*, &c.?

If *man* be actuated by a principle distinct from his body, every *brute animal* must have an immaterial soul also, for they differ from us in *degree* only, and not at all in *kind*; having all the same mental, as well as corporeal powers and faculties that we have, though not in the same extent; and

* See on the latter *hypothesis*, “*Lux Orientalis, or an Inquiry into the Opinion of the Eastern Sages, concerning the Pre-existence of Souls, being a Key to unlock the grand Mysteries of Providence, in relation to Man’s Sin and Misery.*” Ed. 2d, 1682, dedicated to Dr. H. More, who appears to have inclined to the same *hypothesis*. Mr. Jos. Glanville, the learned advocate for the reality of *witchcraft* and *apparitions*, was the author of *Lux Orientalis*, first published in 1662. See the publisher’s preface, 1682, and Wood’s *Athen. Oxon.* II. p. 498.

they are possessed of them in a greater degree than those of our race that are *idiots*, or that die *infants*.*

Now the state of the souls of brutes is perhaps more embarrassing than that of human beings. Are *they* originally, and naturally, the same beings with the souls of men? Have they pre-existed, and are they to continue for ever? If so, *how* and *where* are they to be disposed of after death, and are they also to be re-united to their present bodies, as well as the souls of men? These are only a few of the difficulties which must necessarily occur to any thinking person, who adopts the opinion of the essential difference between soul and body.

Some hypothesis or other, every person who maintains the immaterial system, and reflects upon it at all, must necessarily have, in order to solve these questions, and many others of a similar nature. For every general system must be consistent, and also have all its parts properly filled up. The questions that I have mentioned must perpetually obtrude themselves upon those persons whose system admits of their being asked, as indeed is evident from the formal discussion of most of them by systematical writers; and whether any person be able to satisfy himself with respect to them or not, he cannot be without some hypothesis or other for that purpose. Now I will venture to pronounce, without discussing the questions above-mentioned particularly, that there is no method of solving them that can give any tolerable satisfaction to an ingenuous mind.

Metaphysicians, who have conceived high notions of the dignity of *immaterial substances*, and who have entertained a great contempt for every thing *material*, are much embarrassed when they consider the *use of the body*. The ancients, indeed, who imagined all souls to have pre-existed, and to have been sent into the bodies in which they are now confined, as a *punishment*, for offences committed in their pre-existent state, found no difficulty in this case. The body is necessarily a *clog* and an *impediment* to the soul, and it was provided for that very purpose. But the moderns, who have dropped the notion of pre-existence, and of offences committed prior to birth,† and yet retain from that system the entire doctrine of the *contagion of matter*, which is a language that, among others, Mr. Baxter makes use of,‡ must

* On *Brutes*. See pp. 21, 56, 144, 182, and *Burnet's Expos.* Art. i. Ed. 4. p. 34.

† Mr. Soame Jenyns was an exception. On this hypothesis he explained the doctrine of *Original Sin*. See his *Disquisitions*.

See *Matho*, II. p. 212. (P.)

necessarily be exceedingly embarrassed, when they connect with this mutilated *Heathenish system* the peculiar doctrines of *Christianity*.

Indeed, what is advanced by the most acute of these Christian metaphysicians upon this subject is little short of a contradiction in terms. Mr. Baxter, for instance, says, that “nothing could be fitter than matter to initiate beings, whose first information of things is from sense, and to train them up in the elements of knowledge and admiration.”* Let us now see what consistency there is between this notion of the use of matter, with what he had said before,† of the absolute *unfitness* of matter for this purpose of training up the soul in the elements of knowledge.

“We know not,” says he, “nor can we name a greater absurdity, than that union to a dead and torpid substance should give the soul life and power, or any degree of them, or that separation should again deprive it of these. The soul, therefore, must be percipient and active in its own nature, independent of matter.” Again he says, “matter, when best disposed, must limit the power and activity of the soul, and when disordered and indisposed, may quite obstruct or impede its operations, but can in no manner aid or assist its powers and energy, otherwise than by confining and determining them to one manner of exertion. Hence the soul, when separate from matter, must be freed from indisposition, and the confinement be taken off from its natural activity.”

The manifest contradiction between these two accounts of matter, hardly needs to be pointed out. The immaterial principle, it seems, is to be *initiated in the elements of knowledge* by its union to a dead and torpid substance, which is so far from *giving it any life or power, or any degree of them*, that we cannot name a greater absurdity than such a supposition; a substance which, *when best disposed*, must limit the powers and activity of the soul, and when *disordered and indisposed*, as it is evidently very liable to be, and indeed is hardly ever otherwise, may quite *obstruct and impede* all its operations, and can in no manner *aid or assist* its powers or energy.

If the soul, as this ingenious writer says, be *percipient and active in its own nature*, and when separate from the body must be freed from indisposition, and have a confinement taken off from its natural activity, it would certainly

* *Matho*, II. p. 211. (P.)

† P. 173. (P.)

have been very happy for it never to have been subject to such a *confinement*, and a great advantage never to have been affected by such a *contagion*.

The only shadow of consistency that is preserved in this account, is hinted at where he says, that "matter can no otherwise aid and assist the powers of the soul, than by confining and determining them to one manner of exertion." This, however, is but a shadow of consistency, for, by the very same way of reasoning, it might be proved, that a man is a gainer by the loss of his eyes or ears, and indeed of all his senses except one, because his sentient powers being, by this means, *confined and determined to one manner of exertion*, he becomes more perfect in the exercise of it; whereas he is certainly a loser *upon the whole*, by having his senses and faculties thus curtailed. But allowing that some small advantage might possibly accrue to the soul from this great limitation of its percipient and active powers, what chance is there for its receiving any benefit upon the whole; when the thing that is employed to confine it is sure to become, if we judge from fact and experience, exceedingly disordered; so that, by this writer's own confession, it must quite obstruct and impede all its operations; and when, by its union to this contagious principle, it is liable to be contaminated in such a manner as to be utterly ruined and lost to every valuable end of existence? Great, indeed, we see, is the risk that the immaterial soul runs by its union with this gross material body, and small, very small indeed, is the advantage that it may happen to derive from it.

It seems, however, that when the Christian, after having long struggled and maintained a very unequal combat in his present state of confinement, in which his soul can have little or no use of its native powers and faculties, has, by the benevolent constitution of nature, at length got rid of this *encumbrance of clay*, these *fetters of matter*, and this dreadful *contagion of flesh and blood*, and with all the privileges and all the powers of action and enjoyment, naturally belonging to an *unembodied spirit*, has ranged the regions of empyreum for some thousands of years, these powers are to be again clogged and impeded by a *second union to matter*, though better tempered than before, and therefore a less though a real and necessary encumbrance. And what is most extraordinary in the case is, that this *second degradation* takes place at a period which Christianity points out to us as the

great jubilee of the virtuous and the good; when (all mankind being judged according to their works) they shall receive the plaudit of their judge, and shall enter upon the “inheritance of a kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world;” at which time, and not before, they are to be admitted to be for “ever with the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Mr. Baxter, in his *Essay on the Soul*, says, that “after the resurrection, the re-union of souls to their bodies may be no punishment, or diminution of the happiness designed them, if we conceive it to be within the reach of Infinite Power to bring this union to a state of *indolence*, or *inoffensiveness on the part of matter*. For to have no trouble or uneasiness at all from matter, is precisely the state of happiness with respect to it, that spirits have which are entirely free from it. But no attentive man,” he adds, “ever thought that there consisted any real felicity in being united to material substance.”*

That this account of the effects of the union of the mind with matter is inconsistent with the other quoted from his *Matho*, needs no pointing out. In the one case, matter must *necessarily limit and fetter the soul*, whereas in the other, it is possible, though barely possible, that it may *not fetter* it. Upon the most favourable supposition, however, the Christian resurrection is barely *no disadvantage*. But can this be that state towards which all Christians are taught to look with the most eager expectation, when only their joy is to *commence*, and to *be full, looking*, as the apostle Peter says, *for that blessed hope?* One would think that such writers as these had been but little conversant with the New Testament, to the uniform language of which their notions are totally repugnant.

Such have been the preposterous effects of mixing these *heathenish notions* with the principles of our holy religion, which disclaims all connexion with them, and militates against them in every article.

On the other hand, the system of materialism, which revelation uniformly supposes, is clogged with none of these difficulties, or rather absurdities. Man, according to this system, is no more than what we now see of him. His being commences at the time of his conception, or perhaps at an earlier period. The corporeal and mental faculties, inhering

* P. 304. (P.) *Inquiry*, &c.

in the same substance, grow, ripen and decay together; and whenever the system is dissolved, it continues in a state of dissolution, till it shall please that Almighty Being who called it into existence, to restore it to life again.

By the help of the system of materialism, also, the Christian removes the very foundation of many doctrines, which have exceedingly debased and corrupted Christianity; being in fact a heterogeneous mixture of *Pagan notions*, diametrically opposite to those on which the whole *system of revelation* is built. The Christian system provides no reward for the righteous till the general *resurrection of the just*, nor any punishment for the wicked, till the *end of the world*,* at which time, and not before, the angels will be commissioned to *gather out of the kingdom of Christ every thing that offends*. Then only will be the great *harvest*, when the *wheat* (to use the language of our Saviour) *will be gathered into the garner*, and the *chaff will be burned with unquenchable fire*.

The immaterial system, on the contrary, makes it necessary to provide some *receptacle for the souls of the dead*, which being in a state of consciousness, must necessarily be in a state of pleasure or pain, reward or punishment, even antecedent to the day of judgment. Now as there is no hint concerning the *nature* or *use* of such an *intermediate state*, in the Scriptures, the vain imaginations of men have had most ample scope for displaying themselves; and among other gainful absurdities, the priests have taken this advantage to found upon it the doctrines of *purgatory*, and the *worship of the dead*. †

The doctrine of *pre-existence*, or that of all human souls having been lapsed angels, which was the true source of *Gnosticism*, and most of the early corruptions of Christianity, could have no other foundation than the notion of there being something in man quite different from his corporeal organized system; which, therefore, might have existed prior to that system, as well as continue after its dissolution. It was at this time, when *all* souls were supposed to have pre-existed, that the soul of Christ was not only supposed to have pre-existed, together with the souls of other persons,

* See Bishop Law, Mr. Layton, &c. in *Note*, Vol. II. p. 258.

† Dr. Coward having charged *Gregory the Great* with introducing among other "doctrines unheard of before,—Purgatory and Invocation of Saints," adds, "that as *Plato* had taught the good pious fathers of the Church, that the souls of the deceased were immediately after death translated to some place or other, so *Gregory* made it a doctrine highly subservient to secular ends." Dr. C. had before spoken of "those *State Christians*, who have good reason to maintain and support this opinion." See *Second Thoughts*, 1702, pp. 299 and 111.

but, suitable to his rank here, had a proportional superior rank and office assigned to him before he came into the world. Upon this foundation he was first considered as the *δημιουργος* of the Oriental philosophy, or the immediate Maker of the world under the Supreme Being; then as a peculiar *emanation of the Divine essence*; and lastly, as having been from eternity *equal to God himself*. From this it is evident, that the very seeds of this dreadful corruption of Christianity, which has been the fruitful source of many others, could not have been sown, but in this immaterial, and as it may properly be termed, this Heathenish system.

Had the minds of the primitive Christians continued uncontaminated with *the wisdom of this world*, and considered Christ, as his apostles who lived and conversed with him evidently appear to have considered him, viz. as a mere “man approved of God,—by wonders and signs which God did by him,” they would have entertained for him all the sentiments of love and reverence that were due to the *captain of their salvation*, and the *first begotten from the dead*; who, as their *elder brother*, was *gone to prepare a place for them*, in the heavenly mansions, and who would return with a commission from God to raise the dead, and judge the world; but they could never have arrogated for him *Divine honours*, and consequently the worship that has been paid to the Virgin Mary, and other Popish saints, would not have followed; and the influence of these leading opinions, upon the whole mass of corruptions that came in like a deluge afterwards, is easily traced.

SECTION VII.

Considerations more immediately relating to IMMATERIAL SUBSTANCES, and especially to the CONNEXION OF THE SOUL AND BODY.

PART I.

Of the PRESENCE of the Soul with the Body.

THE idea of an *immaterial substance*, as it is defined by metaphysicians, is entirely a modern thing, and is still unknown to the vulgar. The original, and still prevailing idea concerning a *soul* or *spirit*, is that of a kind of attenuated aerial substance, of a more subtle nature than gross bodies, which have weight, and make a sensible resistance when they are pushed against, or struck at. The *form* of it may

be variable, but it is capable, in certain circumstances, of becoming the object of sight. Thus when our Lord appeared to his disciples walking on the sea, and also after his resurrection, they thought it had been a *spirit*; and, therefore, to convince them of their mistake on the latter of these occasions, he bade them handle him; for that a spirit had not flesh and bones, as they might be convinced that he had. He did not observe to them, that a spirit could not be the object of *sight*, any more than of *touch*. Also, whatever expressions might casually drop from any of the ancient philosophers, it is evident to all who consider the whole of their doctrine, that their idea of a spirit was widely different from that which is now contended for.

That a spirit is, strictly speaking, *indivisible*, which is essential to the modern idea of it, is absolutely incompatible with the notion that is known to have run through almost all the systems of the ancients, derived originally from the *East*, *viz.* that all human souls, and all finite intelligences, were originally *portions of the great soul of the universe*; and though detached from it for a time, are finally to be absorbed into it again; when the separate consciousness belonging at present to each of them will be for ever lost. How the idea of a spirit came to be refined into the very *attenuated state* in which we now find it, I shall endeavour to investigate in its proper place; and, in the mean time, shall bestow a few observations upon it, as it appears in the writings of the latest and most celebrated metaphysicians.

A spirit, then, or an *immaterial substance*, in the modern strict use of the term, signifies a substance that has no *extension* of any kind, nor any thing of the *vis inertiae* that belongs to matter. It has neither *length*, *breadth*, nor *thickness*, so that it occupies no portion of space; on which account, the most rigorous metaphysicians say, that it bears no sort of relation to space, any more than sound does to the eye, or light to the ear. In fact, therefore, *spirit* and *space* have nothing to do with one another, and it is even improper to say, that an immaterial being *exists in space*, or that it *resides* in one place more than in another; for, properly speaking, it is *no where*, but has a mode of existence that cannot be expressed by any phraseology appropriated to the modes in which matter exists. Even these spiritual and intellectual beings themselves have no idea of the manner in which they exist, at least while they are confined by gross matter.

It follows also from this view of the subject, that the

Divine mind can only be said to be *omnipresent* by way of figure; for, strictly speaking, this term implies *extension*, of which all immaterial substances are utterly incapable. By the omnipresence of the Deity, therefore, they mean his power of *acting every where*, though he *exists no where*. The mind of any particular person, also, they suppose not to be confined within the body of that person; but that though itself bears no relation whatever to space or place, its exertions and affections are, by the sovereign appointment of his Creator, confined to a particular system of organized matter, wherever that happens to be, and continues so limited in its operations as long as the organization subsists; but, that being dissolved, the immaterial principle has no more to do with the matter that had been thus organized, than with any other matter in the universe. It can neither affect it, nor be affected by it.

Others, however, I believe, considering that, though *mathematical points* occupy no real portion of space, they are yet capable of bearing some relation to it, by being fixed in this or that place, at certain distances from each other, are willing to allow that spirits also may be said to be in one place in preference to another; and, consequently, that they are capable of changing place, and of moving hither and thither, together with the body to which they belong. But this is not the opinion that seems to prevail in general; since it supposes spirit to have, at least, one property in common with matter, whereas a being strictly *immaterial* (which, in terms, implies a negation of all the properties of matter) ought not to have any thing in common with it.

Besides, a mathematical point is, in fact, no *substance* at all, being the mere *limit*, or termination of a body, or the *place* in void space where a body is terminated, or may be supposed to be so. Mere *points*, mere *lines*, or mere *surfaces*, are alike the mere *boundaries of material substances*, and may not improperly be called their *properties*, necessarily entering into the definition of particular bodies, and consequently bear no sort of relation to what is immaterial. And therefore, the *consistent immaterialist* has justly disclaimed this idea.

Indeed, it is evident, that if nothing but immaterial substances, or pure intelligences, had existed, the very idea of *place*, or *space*, could not have occurred to us. And an idea, that an immaterial being could never have acquired without having an idea of body, or matter, cannot belong to *itself*, but to matter only. Consequently, according to the strict

and only consistent system of immateriality, a spirit is properly *no where*, and altogether incapable of *local motion*, though it has an arbitrary connexion with a body that is confined to a particular place, and is capable of moving from one place to another. This, therefore, being the only consistent notion of an immaterial substance, and every thing short of it being mere materialism, it is to the consideration of this idea that I shall here confine myself.

Appearances cannot be said to favour the doctrine of these very abstract metaphysicians. For, certainly, judging by what appears to us, we should naturally say that the soul *accompanies the body*, and is contained in it, and therefore changes place together with the body. On this account, therefore, the most acute immaterialists have taken a good deal of pains to shew that, notwithstanding these appearances, which at first sight are acknowledged to be unfavourable to their system, there is not properly any motion, or change of place, in the soul, let the body to which it belongs rove about ever so much.

“For my part,” says Father Gerdil, as he is quoted by the author of *La Vraye Philosophie*, “if I had no other reason to satisfy me, I should content myself with saying, with the most celebrated philosophers of ancient and modern schools, that one cannot doubt but that *thought* and *volition* are incapable of moving with the body, because they are evidently without extension. But the *soul*, of which they are modifications, is of the same nature with them. The *soul*, therefore, can no more move than the *thought* or the *will*.” To illustrate this paradox, he says, that “the *void space*, in a carriage drawn by horses, does not move with the carriage, because it is *nothing*; and though the soul be a real substance, it bears no more relation to place than if it had been nothing at all.” He adds, in order to explain how the soul can have an idea of extension and of space, when itself bears no relation to either, that “though the soul be incapable of motion, like the body, it doth not fail to contain eminently within itself that quality of matter, and therefore is capable of transferring it upon matter, and of supposing it to belong to matter.” Afterwards, in explaining what is meant by the soul’s willing and acting *in its own body*, he says, that “these expressions, the *soul is in the body*, *thinks in the body*, and *goes out of the body*, signify nothing but that the soul is *united to the body*, that it thinks in a dependence upon that union, and that, after a certain time, the soul will be no longer united with that body; but

that the soul is not placed in the body as the *brain* is in the *skull*, or that it is in the place where the body is."* How unintelligibly are persons reduced to talk, when they quit the road of common sense, forming their systems not from *facts* and *appearances*, but from *imagination*!

The author of *Letters on Materialism*,† addressed to myself, seems to think that he has said something to the purpose, with respect to this difficulty, arising from *the place of spirits*, by considering *space* as nothing more than an *ideal phenomenon arising from the extensive order of co-existing bodies*. As this expression, I own, conveys no clear idea to me, I shall lay before my readers the whole paragraph, because, though I am not able to get any light from it, it is possible that another may.

“To your second objection, that, properly speaking, *your mind is no more in your body, than it is in the moon; because it is incapable of bearing the least relation to space*, I answer, *matter*, indeed, occupies *space*, to which *spirit* has no relation; that is, *matter*, as a compounded substance, bears, in its various parts, a relation to other bodies. *Space*, in itself, is nothing real; it is only an ideal phenomenon arising from the extensive order of co-existing bodies. Take from the creation every body, or, which amounts to the same, every being capable of viewing them, and *space* will no longer subsist.”

Now it appears to me, that it is impossible, even *in idea*, to suppose the annihilation of *space*. Let any person but for a moment suppose the annihilation of all *matter*, which is not difficult, and then consider whether the annihilation of *space* will necessarily follow. I do not mean *in imagination*, like the idea of things tending to fall downwards on the opposite side of the globe of the earth, but *in the nature of things*.

Afterwards this writer considers the presence of the mind with the body, as *attested* by its *action upon it*, so that still the spirit, properly speaking, is *no where*, and has *no motion*, notwithstanding its strict union with, and its constant action upon, a body which is necessarily confined to some particular place, and which it obliges to change its place at pleasure. How these notions strike others I cannot tell; to me nothing can appear more whimsical or extravagant.

* See pp. 271—273 and 275. (*P*). † Rev. Mr. Berington. See p. 215, *Note*.



PART II.

Of the MUTUAL INFLUENCES of the Soul and the Body.

IT is contended for by all metaphysicians, who maintain the doctrine of any *proper immaterial principle*, that *spirit* and *body* can have no *common property*; and when it is asked, How, then, can they *act upon one another*, and how can they be so intimately connected as to be continually and necessarily subject to each other's influence? It is acknowledged to be a *difficulty* and a *mystery* that we cannot comprehend. But had this question been considered with due attention, what has been called a *difficulty* would, I doubt not, have been deemed an *impossibility*, or such a mystery as that of the bread and wine, in the Lord's Supper, becoming the real body and blood of Christ, or that of each of the three persons in the Trinity being equally God, and yet there being no more Gods than one; which, in the eye of common sense, are not properly *difficulties* or *mysteries*, but direct *contradictions*, such as that of a thing *being* and *not being* at the same time.

Let a man torture his imagination as much as he pleases. I will pronounce it to be impossible for him to conceive even the possibility of *mutual action* without some *common property*, by means of which the things that *act* and *re-act* upon each other may have some *connexion*. A substance that is *hard* may act upon, and be acted upon by, another hard substance, or even one that is *soft*, which, in fact, is only relatively *less hard*; but it is certainly impossible that it should affect, or be affected by, a substance that can make *no resistance at all*, and especially a kind of substance that cannot, with any propriety of speech, be said to be even *in the same place* with it. If this be not an *impossibility*, I really do not know what is so.

But admitting that what appears to me to be an absolute impossibility, viz. that substances which have no common property can, nevertheless, affect, and be affected by, each other, to be no more than a difficulty; it is, however, a difficulty of such magnitude, as far to exceed that of conceiving that the principle of sensation may possibly consist with matter; and, therefore, if, of two difficulties, it be most philosophical to take the *least*, we must, of course, abandon the hypothesis of two *heterogeneous and incompatible principles in man*, which is clogged with the greater difficulty

of conception, and admit that of the *uniformity of his nature*, which is only attended with a less difficulty.

The great difficulty that attends the supposition of the union of the soul and body, came in with the Cartesian hypothesis, which goes upon the idea that the essence of mind is *thought*, and the essence of body *extension*, exclusive of every property that had before been supposed to be common to them both, and by which they might influence one another. And it is very amusing to observe the different hypotheses that have been formed to account for the soul receiving ideas by the corporeal senses, and for the motion of the body in consequence of the volition of the soul.

That the body and mind have no physical influence upon one another, Descartes could not but allow. He therefore supposed that the impression of external objects, was only the *occasional*, and not the *efficient cause* of sensation in the mind; that volition also was only the occasional, and not the efficient cause of the motion of the muscles; and that in both these cases the real efficient cause was the immediate agency of the Deity, exerted according to certain rules which he invariably followed. Thus, whenever an object is presented, the Divine Being impresses the mind, and whenever a volition takes place, he produces the corresponding motion in the muscular system.

Malebranche refined upon this hypothesis, supposing that we perceive the ideas of things not only by the *Divine agency*, but *in the Divine mind itself*, all ideas being first in the Divine mind, and there perceived by us. A general view of his system, with the reasons on which it is founded, is thus given by Lord Bolingbroke.

“ His hypothesis in short is this. We cannot perceive any thing that is not intimately united to our souls. Our souls are unextended beings, in this place, though in another he says they have extension—a narrow one indeed; but narrow or broad, it is still extension. Now there being no proportion between the soul and material things, these cannot be united to it, nor consequently be perceived by it. Our souls are indeed united to our bodies; but there is a manner of union necessary to perception, and another, not so, neither of which is explained. God who is a substance, and the only intelligible substance, is intimately united to our souls by his presence. He is the place of spirits, as space is in one sense the place of bodies: and since he must have in himself the ideas of all the beings he has

created, (for, without these ideas, that is without our manner of knowing, this philosopher presumes to affirm that he could not have created them,) we may see these ideas in God, as he is pleased to shew them to us: but the good Father having no where explained how God shews them to us, he leaves us in the same ignorance in which he found us."*

The celebrated mathematician and metaphysician, Leibnitz, was as sensible of the impossibility of all proper connexion, or influence, between matter and spirit, as the Cartesians, but he explained the correspondence there is between them in quite another, though not a more satisfactory manner, forming a system, which has obtained the name of *the pre-established harmony*.† For, admitting the necessary and physical operation of all causes, mental and corporeal, he supposes that the whole train of volitions, from a man's birth to his death, would have taken place in the mind in the same order, if there had been no body connected with it; and, on the other hand, that all the motions and other affections of the body (being properly an automaton) would have been the same, if there had been no soul connected with it; but that it is pre-established by the Divine Being, that the volitions of the one, and the motions of the other, should strictly correspond, just as they would have done, if they had really been *cause* and *effect* to each other.

Neither of these hypotheses having given lasting satisfaction, the defenders of the modern doctrine of immateriality have generally contented themselves with supposing, that there is some *unknown real influence* between the soul and the body, but that the connexion is a *mystery* to us. And this is not the first absurdity and impossibility that has found a convenient shelter under that term.

The learned *Beausobre*‡ acknowledges this difficulty, even with respect to the Deity himself, but he gives us no assistance with respect to the solution of it. "If," says he, "the substance of the first mover be absolutely immaterial, without extension, and without size (*grandeur*), one cannot

* See his Works, 1777, III. pp. 543, 544. (P.)

† "Son *Harmonie Pr  tablie* semble n'ajouter qu'une difficult   de plus    l'opinion de *Descartes* sur l'union du corps et de l'  me," says a biographer of *Leibnitz*. This philosopher died at Hanover in 1716, aged 70. See *Nouv. Dict. Hist.* 1772, IV. pp. 67—71.

‡ "Isaac de *Beausobre*, born at Niort, in Switzerland, of a French *Refugee* family, was a learned *Calvinist* minister. He chiefly resided at Berlin, where he was Chaplain to the King of Prussia. *Beausobre* died in 1638, in his 80th year. See *Nouv. Dict. Hist.* 1772, I. p. 353, and *Gen. Biog.* II. pp. 68, 69.]

conceive how it should give motion to matter, because such a substance can have no hold (*prise*) of them, any more than they have upon it. We must, therefore, have recourse to the Christian system, according to which, God acts upon matter by an act of his will only.* But if the substance of a spirit cannot act upon matter, how can the *mere volition*, which is the mere act of a spirit, affect it?

Mr. Baxter, who ascribes so much to the agency of the Deity, and so little to matter, is, as might be expected, peculiarly embarrassed with this difficulty. According to him, all the properties of matter, as attraction, repulsion and cohesion, are the immediate agency of the Divine Being. Consequently, as we perceive material things by means of these their *powers*, it but too plainly follows, that, in fact, matter is wholly superfluous; for if it exists, all its operations and effects are resolvable into the pure unaided operation of the Deity. Such a philosopher cannot but be puzzled to answer Bishop Berkeley, who supposed that the Divine Being himself presented the ideas of all things to our minds, and that nothing material exists. The following appears to me to be a very poor attempt to maintain the real use of matter to impress the mind.

“Those philosophers,” says he, “who allow the objects of our ideas to exist, affirm, I think, without necessity, that the Sovereign Mind produces the ideas of them in us, in so far, I mean, as the objects themselves may do this, or otherwise than by co-operation. Matter I know cannot act of itself, as it acts only by resistance. But if the resistance between the matter of our bodies, and other matter, be enough to excite the idea of their resistance in our minds, it would be unnecessary to suppose God to excite that idea, and the resistance itself to have no effect. And if we do not allow the matter of our bodies affects our minds directly, and by itself, the union between them may seem to be, in a great measure, to no purpose.”†

* Vol. I. p. 483. (*P.*) “Si la Substance du *Prémier Moteur* est absolument immatérielle, sans étendue, et sans grandeur, on ne comprend pas comment il a pu donner le mouvement à la Matière, parcequ’une telle Substance pénétrant tous les Corps, il est inconcevable qu’elle puisse les mouvoir. Elle n’a point de prise sur eux, comme ils n’en ont point sur elle. Il faut en venir au *Système Chrétien*, selon lequel Dieu n’agit sur la Matière que par un acte de sa Volonté.” *Beausobre* adds, “*Système*, qui n’a point été connu d’*Aristote*, et qui est fondé sur le principe que Dieu a créé la Matière même.” *Histoire Critique* de Maniché et du Manichéisme. Par M. De *Beausobre*. Amst. 1734, l. p. 483. Mr. Gibbon describes this work as “a Treasure of Ancient Philosophy and Theology.” *Decline*, &c. Ch. 47, Note.

† Vol. II. p. 333. (*P.*)

What does this amount to, but that, since matter *does* exist, it must be of some use, though Mr. Baxter's general hypothesis, agreeably to which he here asserts that *matter cannot act of itself*, leaves so very little to it, that it might very well have been spared. Pity that so mischievous a thing, as he every where represents matter to be, should have been introduced at all, when, without the aid of superior power, it could not do even that mischief.

Mr. Baxter seems to have thought, that the connexion between the soul and the body subsisted only during a state of *vigilance*; for that, though during sleep, the soul, as he says, "is *always active and percipient*, and is never without some real perception, it most evidently ceases to act and perceive by the body."* It is, therefore, in fact, in an unembodied state. It is pity, that we have no evidence of what passes in that state, but that, in the moment of the re-union of the soul to the body, on awaking from sleep, all that passed in this intermediate state is forgotten.

Whatever passes in *dreams*, this philosopher supposes, not to be any thing that the soul is concerned in, but the work of other intellectual agents, which occupy the sensory the moment that the soul abandons it.† If we ask, why the soul thus abandons the sensory, he says, it is on account of the "*expense of animal spirits*, necessary to keep the former impressions patent, and to produce new ones, and that the fatigue of continuing to do this is intolerable." But as it is not the *soul* that is fatigued, but the *body* only, is there not the same expense of animal spirits, whether the proper soul of the man, or some other spirit, be at work in the sensory? The same *quantity of thought* must be attended with the same expense of animal spirits.

The author of *La Vraye Philosophie* has a very singular manner of helping this great difficulty concerning the soul acting upon the body. I shall only quote the passage without making any remark upon it. "Without doubt," says he, "it is not by *thought* that the soul moves the body, for as it is not by thought that the soul enriches corporeal bodies with colours and extension, neither is it by thought that it acts upon matter, and puts it in motion. It does both these things, and many others of a similar nature, by its own *energy*. The Supreme Being, in creating it, willed that it should have, in an eminent manner, the *properties* of matter, without having the *imperfections* of it."‡

* Vol. II. p. 11. (P.)

† See Biog. Brit. II. p. 25, Note B, *ad fin.*

‡ P. 277. (P.)

Others think to provide for the necessary mutual action and re-action between soul and body, by imagining that there may be something like common properties between them, though by this means they evidently destroy the distinction between these two substances. This is remarkably the case with the author of *Letters on Materialism*.

“You tell us,” says he, “that *matter and spirit are always described as having not one common property, by means of which they can affect, or act upon each other.*—This may be true in the opinion of those philosophers, who consider all matter as *passive, and inert*, void of every species of *force, action or energy*. But probably such *negative attributes* can scarcely constitute the nature of any being. In every sentiment, indeed, the properties of these two substances must, *in part*, at least, essentially differ, because their natures are ever said to be *dissimilar*; yet it does not hence follow, that they may not be endowed with powers whereby mutually to affect and act upon each other. A being of a superior order may act on an inferior one, placed higher on the scale. It has acquired nobler properties, but it is not therefore deprived of such *inferior qualities* as are not unalliable with the more exalted species. Particularly, this must be the case where the superior being constitutes a part of the same general system. Thus will the soul be able to act on matter, and consequently on its own body, which experience likewise seems to confirm.

“Why may not matter also act upon spirit, at least the most *exalted and refined part of matter*, in a manner, perhaps, inexplicable, but analogous to its inferior nature and powers? Thus reciprocally will the body act upon the soul. For this nothing seems more requisite than that matter, in its component elements, should be possessed of an *active force*, justly proportioned to their order and rank of being. It must reside in the elements, and these must be *simple*, because no force could ever inhere in a substance ever divisible; and were not the *elements* active, their *compounds* never could be, no more than a percipient brain could arise from impercipient particles. The material elements then, I conceive to be *simple and active*, active in various degrees, according to their scale of being, or the part they are by Infinite Wisdom destined to fill. The human body, a compound of these elements, and the *brain* particularly, must be conceived as an instrument mounted in the most exact accord of parts to parts, and as endowed with the greatest *energetic powers* of which body is susceptible. It is thus

rendered a fit habitation for a substance simple and highly active, as is the soul.

“The soul as a superior being, must have additionally other superior attributes, some of which may be roused into action by the impulse of an inferior agent, the body, whilst the more eminent, (though not, from the pre-established laws of union independent in their operations,) are, however, out of the reach of any immediate and direct bodily action. Thus will the various mental powers be progressively brought into action, and man will feel, will perceive, will think, and will reason, just as the respective operative causes exert their influence.

“In the system of *occasional causes* (wherein all matter is supposed to be passive and lifeless, and wherein even the soul itself, though said to be active, never *acts*,) the Deity is introduced as the only mover and real Agent, but is represented, as ever determined to act by the view of the different states in which he himself has placed the external beings. The doctrine of *physical influence* is, in my opinion, the only philosophical notion. Here the two substances mutually *act* and *re-act* upon each other.”*

I do not imagine that the more acute immaterialists will think themselves under any obligation to this defender of their principles, either for giving spirit *such inferior qualities as are not unalliable with the more exalted species of matter*, or for enduing matter with that *active power*, which is generally thought peculiar to *spirit*; because, in fact, this hypothesis entirely confounds the two substances, and lays a foundation for the grossest materialism. For the most *exalted and refined part of matter* cannot be deemed to differ essentially from the *grossest matter*. For, difference in *size* is all that the terms *exalted* and *refined* can possibly signify when applied to matter. An immaterial soul, therefore, must be wholly incapable of action and re-action with the most exalted and refined, as well as with the grossest corporeal system. A soul, capable of this mutual action with body, must have something gross in itself, and therefore must be degraded from holding that very high and distinguished rank in the scale of being, which has been assigned to it by those who consider it as *infinitely superior to matter*.

This writer also says, that the *active force* which he ascribes to matter, must reside in the simple *elements* of it, because, as he says, “no force could ever inhere in a sub-

* *Letters*, p. 37, &c. (P.)

stance ever divisible, and were not the elements active their compounds never could be so." But did not this writer know, that it is even demonstrable that *matter is infinitely divisible*, and that, therefore, according to his own concession, no active force *can* ever inhere in it? This writer, therefore, acknowledging, as he does, the necessity of a *physical influence* between the body and the mind, must necessarily abandon the notion of *two distinct principles*, and adopt that of the *uniform composition of the whole man*.

The vulgar, who consider *spirit* as a *thin aërial substance*, would be exceedingly puzzled if they were to endeavour to realize the modern idea of a proper *immaterial being*; since, to them, it would seem to have nothing *positive* in its nature, but to be only a *negation of properties*, though disguised under the positive appellation of *spirit*. To them it must appear to be the idea of *nothing at all*, and to be incapable of supporting any properties.

Metaphysicians, however, affirm, that we have as clear an idea of spirit, as we have of matter, each being equally the unknown support of known properties, *matter* of extension and solidity, and *spirit* of sensation and thought. But still, since the *substance* is confessedly *unknown* to us, it must also be unknown to us what *properties* it is capable of supporting; and, therefore, unless there be a real inconsistency in the properties themselves, those which have hitherto been ascribed to both substances may belong to either of them.

For this reason, Mr. Locke, who maintains the immateriality of the soul, and yet asserts that, for any thing we know to the contrary, matter may have the property of thought superadded to it,* ought to have concluded, that this is really the case, since, according to the rules of philosophizing, we ought not to multiply causes without necessity, which in this case he does not pretend to.

I shall conclude this Section with a quotation from the author of *Reflections on the Existence of the Soul, and of the Existence of God*, as represented in the *Examen du Fatalisme*. "If," says he, "the operations ascribed to the mind may result from the powers of matter, why should we suppose a being that is useless, and which solves no difficulty? It is easy to see that the properties of matter do not exclude those of intelligence, but it cannot be imagined how a being, which has no property besides intelligence, can make use of

* See pp. 37, 181, and the Note on S. xx. p. iv. *infra*.

matter. In reality, how can this substance which bears no relation to matter, be sensible of it, or perceive it? In order to see things, it is necessary that they make an impression upon us, that there be some relation between us and them; but what can be this relation?"* I shall only observe upon this passage, that we can never leave the road of sound philosophy, without giving advantage to atheists and unbelievers.

SECTION VIII.†

Of Spirits having Extension.

SEVERAL of the moderns finding themselves embarrassed with the idea of a soul, as being without any extension or relation to space, have admitted these properties to belong to spirits. But they do not seem to have considered how inconsistent it is with their general doctrine, and the arguments by which it is supported, to admit thus much, or the peculiar difficulties with which this scheme is clogged. These, therefore, I shall proceed to represent.

1. The chief reason why the principle of thought has been supposed to be incompatible with matter, is, that there is no *conceivable connexion* between *thought* and *solidity*, that the two ideas are altogether different and *dissimilar*. But is there any more conceivable connexion between thought and mere *extension*? Are ideas, according to the opinion of the persons who hold this doctrine, extended things? Is the *judgment* extended, is the will *extended*, or have the *passions* extension? How, then, do they require an extended substance in which to inhere? If there be some unknown reason why they *do* require an extended *substratum*, may not this substance have *solidity* added to its extension; the idea of solidity not being more foreign to the idea of thought, than that of extension, nor more dissimilar to it?

2. The essence of the soul, it is said, cannot be matter, because it would then be *divisible*; but is not every thing that is extended, divisible? It is not the solidity of bodies that makes them capable of division so properly as their extension. It is this property that makes division possible; and then all that is necessary to actual division is *discerptibility*, or the possible separation of one part of its substance from another. For wherever there is exten-

* *Examen du Fatalisme*, I. p. 390. (P.)

† Added to the 2d. Ed. except the first paragraph, from the *Illustrations*.

sion, there must be conceivable parts, viz. a half, a third, a fourth, &c. But till the substance of which the soul (exclusive of its power of thinking) consists be more known to us, so that we can subject it to a rigorous examination, it is impossible to say whether it be more or less discernible than any species of matter, for all that we know of it is, that it is *extended*, and that it *thinks*. The firmness of its texture is a thing of which we have no knowledge at all; and if it be any thing more than *mere space*, it must have that which may be called *texture*, or *consistence*, solid or fluid, elastic or non-elastic, &c. &c.: consequently, it may, for any thing we know, be as corruptible and perishable as the body. The boasted *unity of consciousness*, and *simplicity of perception and thought*, can be no security against division and dissolution, unless they inhere in a substance naturally incapable of division, and consequently of dissolution.

3. As divisibility may always be predicated of any substance that is extended, and not infinite, I wish the advocates of this doctrine of extended spirit, would consider a little what would be the probable consequence of an actual division of it. Supposing the substance of a human soul to be divided into two equal parts, (which to Divine power must, at least, be possible,) would the power of thinking be necessarily destroyed, or would the result be *two spirits*, of inferior powers, as well as of smaller size? If so, would each of them retain the consciousness of the whole undivided soul, or would the stock of ideas be equally divided between them?

4. As every created being must *exist* before it can *act*, I wish the advocates of this doctrine would consider what idea they can form of the extended substance of a spirit before it has acquired any ideas at all, and consequently before it has begun to think. In what will it differ from mere space? Whatever this state be, in what does it differ from the state of the soul whenever it ceases to think, as in a deep sleep, a swoon, or the state between death and the resurrection?

5. I would also submit it to the consideration of the partisans of *extended spiritualism*, what *size* or *shape* they would give to the human soul, (for if it be extended, size and shape it must have,) and whether some inconvenience may not arise to their system in the discussion of the question. If nothing can act but where it is, I should think that the soul must have the size and form of the brain, if not of the whole nervous system. For there is no region

within the brain of less extent than the medullary part of it' that can be imagined to be the *sensorium*, or the immediate seat of sensation; and as the nerves consist of the same substance with the medullary part of the brain, and are properly a production, or part of it, I do not see why the soul should be confined to the size of the brain only, exclusive of the nerves; and then, as the nerves are in every part of the body, the soul would, in fact, be of the same form and size with the body to which it belongs, though with more interstices.

6. It is also a matter of some curiosity to the speculatist, to consider whether the size and form of these extended souls be invariable, or whether, as we suppose the body to undergo some change at the resurrection, in order to adapt it to its new mode of existence, the soul may not undergo a proportionable change, and be transformed together with it.

7. We are apt to impose upon ourselves, and to confound our understandings, by the use of *general terms*. To gain clear perceptions of things we must inspect them more closely, in order to discover what particular and more *definite ideas* are necessarily comprised in the more general ones. Thus, while we content ourselves with saying, that man is a compound being, consisting of two substances, the one *corporeal*, and the other *spiritual*, the one both extended and solid, and the other extended indeed, but destitute of solidity; and that an intimate union subsists between them, so that they always *accompany* and *affect* one another (an impression upon the body causing a sensation in the mind, and a volition of the mind causing a motion of the body) we are satisfied. The hypothesis seems to correspond to the *first view* of the phenomena; and though we cannot help being staggered, when we consider this intimate union of two such *heterogeneous substances*, we still acquiesce in it, as an union effected by Almighty power; and we are likewise repelled from a rigorous examination of it by the idea, however ill-founded, that our prospects of a future life are materially affected by it.

But a future life being secured to us by the promises of the gospel, upon *other and better principles*, we need not be afraid to consider what this supposed union of body and soul really implies, and it appears to me to imply that the soul, having *locality* and *extension*, must have *solidity* also.

That the mind should move the body, and, at the same time, *move itself* along with the body, we may think a

tolerably easy supposition ; but what shall we say to the case of the body being moved during sleep, or a swoon, to which removal the mind does not at all contribute ? It will hardly be said that, in this case, the soul is first of all left behind, in the place from which the body was taken, and that it afterwards *voluntarily* joins its former companion. And, if not, the motion of the mind must, in all cases, *necessarily* accompany the motion of the living body, or, in other words, the mind must be *involuntarily dragged* along with it. But can this motion be communicated from *body* to *mind* without real *impulse*, implying a *vis inertiae*, and *solidity*, without which, it should seem, that the one cannot lay hold of the other ?

8. It will also, I think, be difficult to account for the separation of the soul from the body after death, unless the spiritual substance be supposed to be a proper constituent part of the *solid mass*, which, like fixed air in bodies, is set loose when the rest of the mass is dissolved by putrefaction, or otherwise. If putrefaction, or total dissolution, be the physical cause of this separation, is there not a good foundation for the practice of the Egyptians, who preserved the bodies of their friends as long as they possibly could, probably with a view of retaining their souls in them, or near them ?

If the soul be really inseparable from the body, which is probably the opinion of those who maintain that, during the death of the body, the soul is in a state of insensibility until the resurrection, what part of the body does it accompany ? If it be indiscernible, it must be wholly in some one place ; and as all the constituent parts of every member of the body are completely dissolved and dispersed, it must, in fact, accompany some one of the *ultimate particles* ; and which of them can that be ?

If the extended spirit does *not* accompany any particle of the dissolved body, and all souls be preserved, during their dormant state, in some *general repository*, (whether in the sun, the earth, or some part of the intermediate space,) in what manner will the re-union of the souls, and their respective bodies, be effected at the resurrection ? Will it be by any thing like what is called *elective attraction* between them ; or will it be effected by a new and express *fiat* of the Deity ?

These objections do not much, if at all, affect the doctrine of *spirit bearing no relation to space*, or any speculation concerning the Divine essence, which fills all space.

9. Many other queries will necessarily obtrude themselves on any person who shall begin to speculate on the nature of extended spiritual substances, which it will be impossible to dismiss without some degree of attention; and it appears to me that, let the advocates for this doctrine answer them in whatever manner they please, they must occasion some degree of embarrassment, so as to leave a suspicion of the doctrine from which they arise, as wanting a sufficient foundation in probability and truth; such as, What is the origin, or commencement, of the extended spirit? Is every soul a separate creation; or, are souls propagated from each other like bodies? * Does it grow in size with the growth of the body and brain? Are these extended spirits mutually penetrable to each other? There can be no doubt but that they must occupy a portion of the same universal space that is already occupied by the Divine essence. Is the essence of these extended spirits similar to that of the Deity, and will no impediment arise from this necessary mutual penetration?

Many more observations might be made on this notion of extended spirit, which appears to me not to have been sufficiently considered by those who hold it. They have concluded, or rather, have taken it for granted, that there is in man a soul distinct from his body, but they revolt at the idea of this soul having no extension, or relation to space, and therefore admit that it has these properties; but, being driven by mere necessity to admit thus much, they are unwilling to consider the subject any farther, and shut their eyes on all the concomitants and consequences of their concessions; though, if they would attend to them, they would find them such as would probably make them revolt at the whole system. Their arguments for a separate soul from the topics of thought being dissimilar to matter, from the unity of consciousness, indiscerptibility, &c. properly belong to the advocates for refined spiritualism, and are imper-

* This doctrine of *Traduction*, was maintained by a learned physician of the 17th century, in a work entitled "Man's Dignity and Perfection Vindicated, being some serious Thoughts on the commonly received Error, touching the *Infusion* of the Soul of Man—wherein it is rationally, philosophically and theologically demonstrated that the Soul of Man is *ex Traduce*. By Wm. Ramesey. 18mo. 1661." The author was physician to Charles II. Dr. Donne, at an earlier period, was perplexed on these questions concerning the Soul. He says, "they which follow the opinion of *infusion* from God—can very hardly defend the doctrine of Original Sin. The soul is forced to take this infection and comes not into the body of her own disposition." See "*Letters written by John Donne, sometime Deane of St. Paul's, London.*" 4to. 1654, p. 17.

tinently and ineffectually alleged by those, who, admitting a real extension, and consequently real size and form in the soul, in vain imagine, that they are advocates for the doctrine of proper immateriality. In fact, they are themselves *semi-materialists*.

How easy is it to get rid of all the embarrassment attending the doctrine of a soul, in every view of it, by admitting, agreeably to all the phenomena, that the power of thinking belongs to the *brain* of a man, as that of walking to his feet, or that of speaking to his tongue; that, therefore, man, who is *one being*, is composed of *one kind of substance*, made of *the dust of the earth*; that when he dies, he, of course, ceases to think; but when his *sleeping dust* shall be re-animated at the resurrection, his power of thinking, and his consciousness, will be restored to him?

This system gives a real value to the doctrine of *a resurrection from the dead*, which is peculiar to revelation, on which alone the sacred writers build all our hope of a future life, and it explains the uniform language of the Scriptures, which speak of one day of judgment for all mankind, and represent all the rewards of virtue, and all the punishments of vice, as taking place at that awful day, and not before. This doctrine of a resurrection was laughed at by the conceited Athenians, and will always be the subject of ridicule to persons of a similar turn of mind; but it is abundantly confirmed to us by the well-attested resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the promises of the gospel, established on all the miraculous events by which the promulgation of Christianity was attended.

SECTION IX.

Of the VEHICLE of the Soul.

MANY modern metaphysicians, finding some difficulty in uniting together things so discrepant in their nature, as a *pure immaterial substance*, and such *gross matter* as that of which the human body and brain are composed, have imagined, that this connexion may be better cemented by means of some *intermediate* material substance, of a more refined and subtle nature than that which is the object of the senses of sight or touch. Upon the dissolution of the body by death, they suppose that this subtle *vehicle* of the

soul is set loose from its connexion with it, and flies off, unperceived by any of the senses, together with the immaterial soul, from which it is inseparable, into the intermediate state.

This, in fact, is nothing more than taking the *εἰδωλον* of the ancients, or the popular *ghost* of all countries, which was all the thinking principle that they had any idea of, and making it a kind of *body* to something of which the ancients and the vulgar had no idea. But this modern vehicle of the soul is altogether a creature of imagination and hypothesis, and in reality without explaining any one phenomenon, or removing one real difficulty. For so long as the matter of which this vehicle consists, has what are supposed to be the essential properties of all matter, viz. *solid extent*, its union with a truly immaterial substance must be just as difficult to conceive, as if it had been the subject of all our corporeal senses. To the vulgar, indeed, the *attenuation* of matter may make it seem to approach to the nature of *spirit*; but the philosopher knows that, in fact, no attenuation of matter brings it at all nearer to the nature of a substance that has no common property with matter.

Mr. Wollaston, however, who is certainly a very respectable writer, and treats pretty largely of this subject of a vehicle for the soul, not attending to these obvious considerations, seems to consider the immaterial soul as a substance capable of the most intimate union with this subtle material vehicle. I shall present my reader with this writer's ideas on the subject, and subjoin some remarks upon it. I might quote what many others have advanced, but there is no end of pursuing such mere creatures of imagination, and the farther discussion of the subject would be inexcusable trifling.

“The human soul,” says Mr. Wollaston, “is a cogitative substance, clothed in a material vehicle, or rather united to it, and as it were inseparably mixed (I had almost said incorporated) with it. These act in conjunction, that which affects the one, affecting the other. The soul is detained in the body (the head or brain) by some sympathy or attraction between this material vehicle and it, till the habitation is spoiled, and this mutual tendency interrupted (and perhaps turned into an aversion that makes it fly off,) by some hurt or disease, or by the decays and ruins of old age, or the like, happening to the body; and in the *interim*, by means of this vehicle, motions and impressions are communicated to and fro.”

Again, he says, “ If we should suppose the soul to be a being by nature made to inform some body; and that it cannot exist and act in a state of total separation from all body—that body which is so necessary to it, may be some fine vehicle, that dwells with it in the brain, and goes off with it at death ;—when it shall, in its proper vehicle, be let go, and take its flight into the open fields of heaven, it will then be bare to the immediate impressions of objects. And why should not those impressions which affected the nerves that moved, and affected the vehicle and soul in it, affect the vehicle immediately, when they are immediately made upon it, without the interposition of the nerves ? The hand which feels an object at the end of a staff, may certainly be allowed to feel the same much better by immediate contact without the staff.” *

On this I would observe, that by whatever considerations it appears that a vehicle is necessary to the soul, the body must at least be equally necessary to the vehicle. For, it by no means follows, that because external objects can affect the vehicle *through the body*, that therefore they would affect it at all, and much less better, without its assistance. It would then follow, that because the auditory nerves are affected with sounds by means of the external and internal ear, that therefore sounds would be heard better without the ear, the vibrations of the air acting immediately upon the nerves themselves; and that because the brain is affected with the several sensations, by means of the nerves, that it would perceive every thing to much more advantage if it were exposed to the influence of all those things to which the nerves are exposed. Whereas these are all contrary to fact.

On the contrary, there is the greatest reason to believe, that nothing is provided for us as a *means*, or *instrument* of sensation, but what was naturally proper, and even necessary for the purpose; and consequently that, if these means were withheld, the *end* could not be attained. Whereas, therefore, the only means by which we receive our sensations are the organs of sense, the nerves and the brain, we ought to conclude, that without bodily organs, nerves and brain, we could have no sensations or ideas.

There is something curious in Mr. Wollaston’s notion concerning the *place of the soul*, as determined by the specific gravity of the gross body, or of the vehicle to which it is

* *Religion of Nature*, 7th Ed. pp. 363, 364, 370, 374, 375. (P.)

connected, copied, as it should seem, from Plato or Cicero, who give a similar account of the height to which the soul ascends after death, according as it is more or less weighed down by its vicious tendency to earthly things.

“That general law,” says Wollaston, “to which bodies are subjected, makes it sink in this fluid of air, so much lighter than itself, keeps it down, and so determines the seat of it, and of the soul in it, to be upon the surface of this earth, where, or in whose neighbourhood, it was first produced. But then, when the soul shall be disengaged from the gross matter which now encloses and encumbers it, and either become naked spirit, or be only veiled in its own fine and obsequious vehicle, it must at the same time be either freed from the laws of bodies, and fall under some other, which will carry it to some proper mansion or state, or at least, by the old ones, be capable of mounting upwards, in proportion to the volatility of its vehicle, and of emerging out of these regions into some medium more suitable, and (if the philosopher may say so) equilibrious.”*

This has the appearance of being written in ridicule of the *vehicular system*, but it was meant to be a just exposition and defence of it. I would observe also, that this writer, taking it for granted that all these vehicles are specifically lighter than the atmosphere that surrounds the earth, and therefore must ascend in it, makes no provision for the *descent* of any unembodied spirit into any of the *lower regions*, where most of the moderns dispose of the souls of the wicked, and where all the ancients placed the receptacle of all souls without distinction.

Even Dr. Hartley, who ascribes so much to matter, and so little to any thing immaterial in man, (nothing but the faculty of simple *perception*,) yet supposes, that there is something *intermediate* between the soul and the gross body, which he distinguishes by the name of the *infinitesimal elementary body*.† But, great as is my admiration of Dr. Hartley, it is very far from carrying me to adopt every thing in him. His language, in this instance, conveys no clear ideas to my mind, and I consider both his *intermediate body* and *immaterial soul* as an encumbrance upon his system, which, in every other respect, is most admirably simple.

I do not find that any thing has been said of the state of the vehicle of the soul during sleep. Does the vehicle require rest as well as the body and brain; and if the soul

* *Religion of Nature*, p. 401. (P.) † *Obs. I.* p. 34.

think during sleep, where is the repository of the ideas on which it is employed? Are they contained in the vehicle, or the soul itself?

Indeed, every thing relating to sleep, is a very puzzling phenomenon, on the supposition of the distinction between the soul and the body, especially the little evidence that can be pretended of the soul being employed at all in a state of really sound sleep, exclusive of dreaming. And surely, if there be a soul distinct from the body, and it be sensible of all the changes that take place in the corporeal system to which it is attached, why does it not perceive that state of the body which is termed *sleep*; and why does it not *contemplate* the state of the body and brain during sleep, which might afford matter enough for reasoning and reflection? If no *new ideas* could be transmitted to it at that time, it might employ itself upon the stock which it had acquired before, if they really had inhered in it, and belonged to it, taking the opportunity of ruminating upon its *old* ideas, when it was so circumstanced that it could acquire no *new* ones.

All this we should naturally expect if the soul was a substance really distinct from the body, and if the ideas properly *belonged* to this substance, so that it was capable of carrying them all away with it when the body was reduced to dust. The soul, during the sleep of the body, might be expected to approach to the state in which it would be when the body was dead, *death* being often compared to a more sound *sleep*. For if it be capable of thinking and feeling when the powers of the body shall entirely *cease*, it *might* be capable of the same kind of sensation and action when those powers are only *suspended*.

SECTION X.

OBJECTIONS to the System of Materialism considered.

MOST of the objections that have been made to the possibility of the powers of sensation and thought belonging to matter, are entirely founded on a mistaken notion of matter, as being necessarily *inert* and *impenetrable*, and not a thing possessed of no other powers than those of *attraction* and *repulsion*, and such as may be consistent with them. With such objections as these I have properly no concern, because they do not affect my peculiar system. Some objections, however, which are founded on the *popular notion of matter*, it may be worth while to consider; because, while they remain unnoticed, they may impede the reception of any

system that bears the name of *materialism*, how different soever it may be from any thing that has hitherto been so denominated. I shall, therefore, briefly reply to every objection that can be thought *considerable*, either in itself, or on account of the person who has proposed it.

I. *From the Difficulty of conceiving how Thought can arise from Matter.*

It is said, we can have no conception how sensation or thought can arise from matter, they being things so very different from it, and bearing no sort of resemblance to any thing like *figure* or *motion*; which is all that can result from any modification of matter, or any operation upon it.

But this is an argument which derives all its force from our *ignorance*. *Different* as are the properties of sensation and thought, from such as are usually ascribed to matter, they may, nevertheless, inhere in the same substance, unless we can shew them to be absolutely *incompatible* with one another. There is no apparent resemblance between the ideas of *sight* and those of *hearing* or *smelling*, &c., and yet they all exist in the same mind, which is possessed of the very different senses and faculties appropriated to each of them. Besides, this argument, from our not being able to *conceive* how a thing can be, equally affects the immaterial system; for we have no more conception how the powers of sensation and thought can inhere in an *immaterial* than in a *material* substance. For, in fact, we have no distinct idea either of the *properties* or of the *substance* of mind or spirit. Of the latter, we profess to know nothing, but that it is not matter; and even of the property of *perception*, it seems to be as impossible that we should fully comprehend the nature of it, as that the eye should see itself.

Besides, they who maintain the intimate union of substances so discrepant in their natures as *matter* and *immaterial spirit*, of which they certainly cannot pretend to have any conception, do, with a very ill grace, urge any objection against the system of materialism, derived from our ignorance of the *manner* in which a principle of thought may be super-added to matter.

I would observe, that by the *principle of thought*, I mean nothing more than the power of *simple perception*, or our consciousness of the presence and effect of sensations and ideas. For I shall, in these Disquisitions, take it for granted, that this one property of the mind being admitted, all the

particular phenomena of sensation and ideas respecting their *retention, association, &c.* and the various faculties of the mind, to which those affections of our sensations and ideas give rise, as *memory, judgment, volition, the passions, &c.* will admit of a satisfactory illustration on the principles of *vibration*, which is an affection of a material substance. I, therefore, admit of no argument for the *spirituality* of the soul, from the consideration of the *exquisiteness, subtlety, or complexness* of the mental powers, on which much stress has been laid by some, there being in matter a capacity for affections as subtle and complex as any thing that we can affirm concerning those that have hitherto been called *mental affections*. I consider *Hartley's Theory of the Mind* as a *practical answer* to all objections of this kind.

II. *From abstract Ideas.*

“Matter,” says Mr. Wollaston, “by itself, can never entertain abstracted and general ideas, such as many in our minds are. For could it reflect upon what passes within itself, it could possibly find there nothing but material and particular impressions. Abstractions and metaphysical ideas could not be printed upon it.”*

But Mr. Locke, and others, have observed, that all actual ideas are, in fact, *particular*, and that abstraction is nothing more than leaving out of a number of resembling ideas, what is peculiar to each, and considering only what is common to them all.

III. *From the Influence of Reasons.*

Mr. Wollaston argues, that the mind cannot be material, because it is influenced by *reasons*. “When I begin to move myself,” says he, “I do it for some reason, and with respect to some end.” But, “who can imagine matter to be moved by arguments, or ever placed syllogisms and demonstrations among levers and pullies?—Do we not see, in conversation, how a pleasant thing said makes people break out into laughter, a rude thing into passion, and so on? These affections cannot be the physical effects of the words spoken, because then they would have the same effect, whether they were understood or not.—It is, therefore, the *sense* of the words, which is an immaterial thing, that by passing through the understanding, and causing that which is the subject of the intellectual faculties to influence the

* *Religion, &c.* pp. 357, 358. (P.)

body, produces these motions in the spirits, blood and muscles." *

I answer that, since it is a fact, that *reasons*, whatever they be, do ultimately move matter, there is certainly much less difficulty in conceiving that they may do this, in consequence of their being the affection of some material substance, than upon the hypothesis of their belonging to a substance that has no common property with matter. It is acknowledged, that syllogisms and demonstrations are not levers and pullies, but neither are the effects of gun-powder, in removing the heaviest bodies, produced by levers and pullies, and yet they are produced by a material cause. To say that *reasons* and *ideas* are not things material, or the affections of a material substance, is to take for granted the very thing to be proved.

IV. *From the Unity of Consciousness.*

It is asserted, that the soul of man cannot be material and divisible, because the *principle of consciousness*, which comprehends the whole of the thinking power, is necessarily simple and indivisible. But before this can be admitted as any argument, it should be strictly defined what *unity of consciousness* means. I profess, that those who have hitherto written about it, have given me no clear ideas upon the subject. The only meaning that I can annex to the words *unity of consciousness*, is a feeling or perception of the *unity of my nature, or being*; but all that can be inferred from this is, that I am only *one person, one sentient and thinking being*, and not two persons, or two sentient or thinking beings; which is no more an argument that this one sentient being cannot be divided, than that a *sphere*, being one thing, is a proof that it likewise consists of indivisible materials. It is true, that it is impossible to divide a sphere so as to make it two spheres, but still the *matter* of which it consists is, strictly speaking, divisible, and the matter of it may be so disunited that it shall entirely cease to be a sphere. So, though that *system of intelligence*, which we call the *soul of a man*, cannot be divided into two systems of intelligence; it may be so divided, or dissolved, as to become no system of intelligence at all. If any person can define *unity of consciousness* in a manner more favourable to the proof of the immateriality of the soul, I shall be glad to hear it, and to attend to it.

* *Religion, &c.* pp. 354, 355. (P.)

V. *From a separate Consciousness not belonging to every Particle of the Brain.*

It is said to be a decisive argument against materialism, that the *consciousness of existence* cannot be annexed to the whole *brain*, as a *system*, while the individual *particles* of which it consists are separately unconscious; since the whole brain, being a collection of parts, cannot possess any thing but what is derived from them.*

But surely there may be a separate *unity of the whole nervous system*, as well as of *one atom*; and if the perception that we call *consciousness*, or that of any other *complex idea*, necessarily consists in, or depends upon, a very *complex vibration*, it cannot possibly belong to a single *atom*, but must belong to a *vibrating system* of some extent.

A certain *quantity of nervous system* is necessary to such complex ideas and affections as belong to the human mind; and the idea of *self*, or the feeling that corresponds to the pronoun *I* (which is what some may mean by consciousness), is not essentially different from other *complex ideas*, that of our *country*, for instance. This is a term by which we denote a part of the world subject to that form of government, by the laws of which we ourselves are bound, as distinguished from other countries, subject to other political systems of government; and the term *self* denotes that substance which is the seat of that particular set of sensations and ideas, of which those that are then recollected make a part, as distinguished from other substances which are the seat of similar sets of sensations and ideas. But it may be necessary to consider this objection, with respect to the faculty of simple *perception*, exclusive of the general feeling of *consciousness*.

For the same reason that “*activity and perceptivity cannot arise from joining together dead and inert parts,*” which is the language of Mr. Baxter, no *powers* whatever could be affirmed of any mass of matter, because matter being infinitely divisible, it is impossible that the *ultimate parts* of it can be possessed of any powers. And there is no more reason in nature, why perception may not belong to a *system of matter*, as such, and not to the *component parts of it*, than that *life* should be the property of an entire animal system, and not of the separate parts of it. It might also be said, that no *harmony* could result from a harpsichord, because the single notes, separately taken, can make no harmony.

* See Letters on Materialism, p. 67. (P).

Mr. Baxter, however, says, that "if an active and perceptive substance have parts, these parts must of necessity be active and perceptive."*

This argument has been much hackneyed, and much confided in by metaphysicians; but, for my part, I cannot perceive the least force in it. Unless we had a clearer idea, than it appears to me that any person can pretend to have, of the nature of *perception*, it must be impossible to say, *a priori*, whether a single particle, or a system of matter, be the proper seat of it. But judging from *appearances*, which alone ought to determine the judgment of philosophers, an *organized system*, which requires a considerable *mass of matter*, is requisite for this purpose. Also, judging by observation, a mass of matter, duly organized and endued with *life*, which depends upon the due circulation of the fluids, and a proper tone of the solid parts, must necessarily have *sensation* and *perception*. To judge of the *perceptive power*, without any regard to *facts* and appearances, is merely giving scope to our imaginations, without laying them under any restraint; and the consequence of building systems in this manner is but too obvious. It is high time to abandon these random hypotheses, and to form our conclusions with respect to the faculties of the *mind*, as well as the properties and powers of *matter*, by an attentive observation of *facts*, and cautious inferences from them.

VI. *From the Comparison of Ideas, &c.*

It is said, there can be no *comparison of ideas*, and consequently no *judgment*, or *perception of harmony* or *proportion*, which depends upon comparison, on the system of materialism; for that, if the ideas to be compared be VIBRATIONS in the brain, they must be perceived by a different substance, inspecting, as it were, and considering that state of the brain.†

But if the brain itself be the percipient power, as well as the subject of these vibrations, it must both feel the effect of every particular impression that is made upon it, and also all that can result from the combination of ever so many impressions at the same time; and as things that *agree*, and things that *disagree*, cannot impress the brain in the same manner, there is certainly as much foundation for a percep-

* Essay on the Soul, p. 236. (*P.*) *Inquiry*.

† See Letters on Materialism, p. 63. (*P.*)

tion of the difference between *truth* and *falsehood*, as upon the hypothesis of a superintending mind. For the mind, it is evident, has no ideas but what result from the state of the brain, as the author quoted above very expressly allows. Consequently, if there be no impression upon the brain, there can be no perception in the mind; so that, upon any hypothesis that is consistent with known facts, there can be no state of mind to which there is not a correspondent state of the brain; and, therefore, if the brain itself *can* be the seat of feeling, or of consciousness, its feeling or consciousness may be just as *various* and *extensive* as that of the independent mind itself could be. It is impossible there should be any difference in this case, unless the mind could have sensations and ideas independent of the state of the brain, which every observation proves to be impossible.

It is a very gross mistake of the system of materialism to suppose, with the author of the *Letters on Materialism*, that the vibrations of the brain are themselves the perceptions. For it is easy to form an idea of there being vibrations, without any perceptions accompanying them. But it is supposed that the brain, besides its *vibrating power*, has super-added to it a *percipient* or *sentient power*, likewise, there being no reason that we know why this power may not belong to it. And this once admitted, all that we know concerning the human mind will be found in the material nervous system; and this percipient power may as well belong to one *system* as to one *atom*.

VII. *From the Nature of Attention.*

It has been said, that *attention* is a state of mind that cannot be the effect of vibration.* But as *simple attention* to any idea is nothing more than the simple *perception* of it, so a *continued attention* to it is nothing more than a *continued perception* of it; which is the necessary consequence either of the constant presence of the object which excites it, or of the presence of other associated ideas, in circumstances in which it must necessarily make the greatest figure, and strike the mind the most.

I shall here introduce some more of Mr. Wollaston's arguments to prove, that the body and the mind must be different substances, though I think them unworthy of him. My replies will be very short, and sometimes *ad hominem*.

* See *Letters on Materialism*, p. 147. (P.)

VIII. *From the Difference between the Ideas and the Mind employed about them.*

“As to material images themselves, which are usually supposed to be impressed upon the brain (or some part of it) and stock the *phantasy* and *memory*, that which peruses the impressions and traces there (or any where) must be something distinct from the *brain*, or *that* upon which these impressions are made. Otherwise it must contemplate itself, and be both *reader* and *book*.”* But what is the distinction between the reader and the book, in an unembodied spirit, which certainly must have a repository for its ideas, as well as be provided with a principle of intelligence to make use of them? Will not this argument affect the simplicity and indivisibility of such a spirit, to say nothing of superior intelligences and of the Divine Mind?

IX. *From the Expression, MY BODY, &c.*

“As a man peruses and considers his own body, doth it not undeniably appear to be something different from the *considerer*, and when he uses this expression, *my body*, or *the body of me*, may it not properly be demanded, who is meant by *me*, or what *my* relates to?—A man being supposed a person consisting of two parts, soul and body, the whole person may say of this, or that part of him, *the soul of me*, or *the body of me*. But if he were either all soul, or all body, and nothing else, he could not then speak in this manner.”†

According to this merely *verbal argument*, there ought to be something in man besides *all the parts* of which he consists. When a man says, *I devote my soul and body*, what is it that makes the devotement? It cannot be the things devoted. Besides, in Mr. Wollaston’s own phrase, it ought, in strictness, to be the *body* only that says *my soul*. Nothing surely can be inferred from such phraseology as this, which, after all, is only derived from vulgar apprehensions.

X. *From the different Interests in Man.*

“It is plain there are two different *interests* in men, on the one side reason, on the other, passion, which, being

* *Religion, &c.* p. 358. (P.) † *Ibid.* pp. 349, 350. (P.)

many times directly opposite, must belong to different subjects. There are upon many occasions contests, and as it were, wars between the mind and the body, so far are they from being the same thing.”*

I answer, the passions themselves are more evidently at variance than passion and reason, and, therefore, by the same argument, ought to be referred to different substances in the human constitution. If Mr. Wollaston meant to refer the *passions* to the body, there will be some danger lest *desire, will* and other faculties, always acknowledged to be *mental*, should go with them; and so, before he is aware of it, the whole man will be material, there being nothing left to belong to, or constitute the immaterial soul.

XI. *From the Mind supporting the Body.*

“ There is, we may perceive, something within us which *supports* the body (*keeps it up*), directs its motion for the better preservation of it, when any hurts or evils befall it, finds out the means of its cure, and the like, without which it would fall to the ground, and undergo the fate of common matter. The body, therefore, must be considered as being under the direction and tuition of some other thing, which is (or should be) the governor of it, and consequently, upon this account, must be concluded to be different from it.”†

I answer, we also say, that *reason* controuls and directs the *passions*, influences the *will*, and makes use of the *memory*, that those and all the other faculties of the mind are subservient to reason, &c. But does it therefore follow that they belong to a different substance?

XII. *From the Self-moving Power of the Soul.*

The soul is represented by Mr. Baxter, and others, as *essentially active*, and possessed of a *self-moving power*, in opposition to *matter*, which is necessarily *inert* and *passive*.

But if we ask on what authority these positions are advanced, it is impossible they should produce a single *appearance* in favour of them. The soul, in its present state, and we have nothing else by which to judge of its powers, has not a single idea but what it receives by means of the organs of sense; and till it has got *ideas*, it is impossible that any of its *powers*, active or passive, could have

* *Religion*, &c. p. 350. (P.) † *Ibid.* pp. 350, 351. (P.)

the least employment ; so that they could not appear even to *exist*. Sensations and ideas comprehend all the objects of thought ; and all the exertions or emotions of the soul, as far as we can observe, always succeed sensations or ideas ; and, to all appearance, are as much *occasioned* and *produced* by them, as any effect in nature can be said to be produced by its proper cause ; the one invariably following the other, according to a certain established law.

In fact, a *ball* acted upon by a foreign mechanical impulse, may just as well be said to have a self-moving power as the soul of man ; sensations and ideas being as properly an *impelling force* respecting the mind (since they always precede, and regulate both the judgment and the will) as the stroke of a rod, &c. is an impelling force with respect to the ball. Nothing can prove a self-moving power in the soul, but a clear case of the decision of the judgment, a determination of the will, or some other exertion of the mental faculties, *without any preceding sensations or ideas* ; or at least, without such as usually precede such judgments, determinations, or exertions. But while those sensations and ideas, which cannot be denied to have a real *influence* upon the mind, always precede mental determinations, &c., it is impossible not to conclude, according to the established rules of philosophizing, that those sensations and ideas are the proper *moving powers* of the soul ; and that without them it would have been incapable of any motion or determination whatever. And this, if we judge at all from *observation* and *experience*, we must conclude to be actually the case.

XIII. *From the unwearied Nature of the thinking Principle.*

Mr. Baxter likewise says, that “ the consideration of the indefeasibleness, or unweariedness of the principle of thought in us, should perfectly satisfy us of the immateriality of our thinking part. We feel our bodies every now and then sinking down under their own infirmities ; but the thing that thinks in us would never give over, if the body could keep up with it. It is busy all the day with the body, and all the night without the body, and all the day with the body again ; and thus in a constant circle, without respite or intermission, that we can perceive by our strictest inquiry. For the body no sooner sinks down in weariness and slumber, than this thing within us enters upon other scenes of action, and hears and sees things worth inquiring

into, and this without a subserviency of its organs, which are then disabled from their function.”*

This is altogether a misrepresentation of the fact. The *brain*, indeed, is a thing so far distinct from the rest of the system, as that it may be but little affected by several disorders under which the rest of the system may labour; as the *legs* may be sound while the *arms* are diseased, or rather as the *bones* may continue sound, while the *muscular flesh* is disordered, &c. In a case of this kind, where the brain is not itself immediately affected, as the thinking faculty depends upon the brain, it may be vigorous, when the rest of the body is very languid. But that the soul enters upon new scenes of action, without the help of the body in sleep, is destitute of any one fact or observation to support it. We are, according to all appearance, just as much fatigued with *thinking* as with *walking*; and to say, that it is the *body* only that is fatigued, in this case, and not the *mind itself*, is absolutely *gratis dictum*. There is just the same reason to conclude, that the *thinking powers* are exhausted, in the one case, as that the *walking powers* are exhausted in the other. That we think at all, in perfectly sound sleep, is by no means probable. On the contrary, according to appearances, the thinking powers are refreshed by rest in sleep, exactly as the muscular strength is recruited by the same means.

XIV. *From Absence of Mind.*

It is said by Mr. Baxter, that “it is altogether inconsistent with the materiality of the thing that thinks in us, that we are sometimes so wholly occupied in the contemplation of some absent objects, or some purely ideal thing, that we are quite impercipient of objects round us, and which at present act upon our senses.”† Among other instances, he afterwards‡, mentions the constant *pressure of our own bodies*, occasioned by gravitation, whether we walk, sit, or lie.

But nothing is requisite to solve the difficulty in these cases, but the supposition, that whatever be the effect of any sensation or idea upon the brain, the impression may be so strong as to overpower all other impressions. This we know is actually the case with the *eye*. Let a man look

* Essay on the Human Soul, p. 433. (P.) *Inquiry.*

† Ibid. p. 428. (P.)

‡ Ibid. p. 430. (P.)

attentively upon any very bright object, and immediately afterwards turn his eyes upon whatever other objects he pleases, and he either will not see them at all, or they will all appear to be of the same colour; so that, in this violent affection of the eye, fainter impressions are not sensibly perceived, though they cannot but be made upon the eye in those circumstances, as well as others. Now the *brain* is of the very same substance with the *retina* and *optic nerves*, and therefore must be subject to a similar affection.

This writer explains these cases by supposing, that the mind “*voluntarily* employs itself, while it is thus inattentive to things *present*, in the earnest consideration of some things that are *absent*.” But *volition* is not at all concerned in the case; for nothing can be more evident, than that this *absence of mind* is altogether an involuntary thing. It is not *choice* that either leads to it, or prolongs it; for this would imply that the mind had been *aware* of other objects having solicited its attention, and that it had peremptorily refused to give any attention to them. Whereas, at the close of a reverie of this kind, the mind is always unconscious of any foreign objects having obtruded themselves upon it at all, just as in the case of sound sleep.

XV. *From the Corruptibility of Matter.*

The greatest cause of that aversion which we feel to the supposition of the soul being material, is our apprehension that it will then be liable to *corruption*, which we imagine it cannot be if it be immaterial. But for any thing that we know, neither of these inferences are just, and therefore no advantage whatever is, in fact, gained by the modern hypothesis. All things material are not liable to corruption, if by corruption be meant *dissolution*, except in circumstances to which they are not naturally exposed. It is only very *compound bodies* that are properly liable to corruption, and only *vegetable* and *animal substances* ever become properly *putrid* and *offensive*, which is the real source of the objection.

It is possible, however, that even a human body may be wholly exempt from corruption, though those we have at present are not, as is evident from the account that the apostle Paul gives of the bodies with which we shall rise from the dead; when from *earthly*, they will become *spiritual*; from *corruptible*, *incorruptible*; and from *mortal*, *immortal*.

Besides, how does it follow, that an immaterial substance cannot be liable to decay or dissolution, as well as a material one? In fact, all the reason that any person could ever have for imagining this, must have been that an immaterial substance, being, in all respects, the reverse of a material one, must be *incorruptible*, because the former is *corruptible*. But till we know something *positive* concerning this supposed immaterial substance, and not merely its *not being matter*, it is impossible to pronounce whether it may not be liable to change, and be dissolved, as well as a material substance. Necessary *immortality*, is an attribute that cannot be demonstrated except of God only; and he who made all things, material or immaterial, may have subjected them to whatever laws he pleases, and may have made the one as much subject to change and decay as the other, for any thing that we know to the contrary: so that all our flattering notions of the *simplicity* and *incorruptibility* of immaterial substances are mere fancy and chimera, unsupported by any *evidence* whatever. The soul has been supposed to be necessarily incorruptible, because it is *indivisible*, but that argument I presume was sufficiently answered, when it was shewn that ideas which have *parts*, as most of our ideas manifestly have, cannot exist in a soul that has *no parts*; so that the subject of thought in man cannot be that simple and indivisible, and consequently not that *indiscernible* thing that it has been imagined to be.

SECTION XI.*

The Objection from CONSCIOUSNESS more particularly considered.

SINCE, in all metaphysical subjects, there is a perpetual appeal made to *consciousness*, or *internal feeling*, that is, to what we certainly and intuitively know by reflecting on what passes within our own minds, and I have hitherto contented myself with noticing the particular instances in which I apprehended some mistake had been made with respect to it, as they occurred in the course of my argument; I shall here give a more general view of the subject, in order to acquaint my reader what things they are that, I apprehend, we *can* be conscious of, and especially to caution him against confounding them with those things of which we are not properly conscious, but which we only *infer* from them.

* Added to the 2d Edition from the *Illustrations*.

When we shut our eyes on the external world, and contemplate what we find within ourselves, we first perceive the images or the ideas of the objects by which our senses have been impressed. Of these we are properly conscious. They are what we immediately *observe*, and are not *deductions* from any prior observations.

In the next place, we know by intuition, or are conscious, that these ideas appear, and re-appear, and that they are variously connected with each other, which is the foundation of *memory* or *recollection*. We also see, that our ideas are variously *combined* and *divided*, and can perceive the other relations that they bear to each other, which is the foundation of *judgment*, and consequently of *reasoning*. And lastly, we perceive, that various bodily motions depend upon ideas, and trains of ideas, from which arises what is called a *voluntary power* over our actions.

These particulars, I apprehend, comprise all that we are properly conscious of; and with respect to these, it is hardly possible we can be mistaken. But every thing that we pretend to know, that is really more than these, must be by way of *inference* from them; and in drawing these inferences or conclusions, we are liable to mistakes, as well as in other inferences. In fact, there is, perhaps, no subject whatever with respect to which we have more need of caution, from the danger we are in of imagining that our knowledge of things relating to ourselves is *in the first instance*, when, in reality, it is in the *second*, or perhaps the *third* or *fourth*.

If then, as I have observed, all that we are really conscious of be our *ideas*, and the various *affections of our ideas*, which, when reduced to general heads, we call the *powers of thought*, as *memory*, *judgment* and *will*, all our knowledge of the *subject of thought* within us, or what we call *ourselves*, must be by way of *inference*. What we *feel*, and what we *do*, we may be said to know by intuition; but what we *are*, we know only by deduction or inference from intuitive observations. It, therefore, it be asserted, that the subject of thought is something that is *simple*, *indivisible*, *immaterial*, or *naturally immortal*, it can only be by way of conclusion from given premises. Consequently, it is a decision for which no man's word is to be taken. We may *fancy* that it is something that we feel, or are conscious of, but, from the nature of the thing, it can only be that a man *reasons* himself into that belief, and therefore he may, with-

out having been aware of it, have imposed upon himself by some fallacy in the argument.

Feeling and *thinking* are allowed to be *properties*; and though all that we can know of any thing are its properties, we agree to say, that all properties inhere in, or belong to, some *subject* or *substance*; but what this substance *is*, farther than its being possessed of those very properties by which it is known to us, it is impossible for us to say, except we can prove that those known properties necessarily imply others. If, therefore, any person say he is conscious that his mind (by which we mean the subject of thought) is *simple*, or *indivisible*, and if he speak properly, he can only mean, that he is *one thinking person*, or *being*, and not *several*, which will be universally acknowledged. But if he means any thing more than this, as that the substance to which the property of thinking belongs is incapable of division, either having no extension, or parts, or that those parts cannot be removed from each other, I do not admit his assertion, without hearing what *reasons* he has to advance for it; being sensible, that in this he goes beyond a proper consciousness. I may think it more probable, that every thing that exists must have extension, and that (except space, and the Divine essence, which fills all space) whatever is extended may be divided, though that division might be attended with the loss of properties peculiar to the undivided substance.

Much farther must a man go beyond the bounds of proper *consciousness*, into those of *reasoning*, to say that the subject of his thinking powers is *immaterial*, or something different from the matter of which his body, and especially his brain, consists. For admitting all that he can know by *experience*, or *intuition*, I may think it more probable, that all the powers or properties of man inhere in *one kind* of substance; and since we are agreed, that man consists, in part at least, of matter, I may conclude, that he is wholly material, and may refuse to give up this opinion, till I be shewn, that the properties necessarily belonging to matter, and those of feeling and thinking, are incompatible. And before this can be determined, the *reasons for* and *against* it must be attended to. It is a question that cannot be decided by *simple feeling*.

Less still can it be determined by consciousness, that the subject of thought is *naturally immortal*, so that a man will continue to think and act after he has ceased to breathe

and move. We are certainly conscious of the same things with respect to ourselves, but what one man may think to be very clear on this subject, another may think to be very doubtful, or exceedingly improbable, drawing different *conclusions* from the same premises.

Again, that man is an *agent*, meaning by it, that he has a power of *beginning motion*, independently of any mechanical laws to which the Author of his nature has subjected him, is a thing that is so far from being evident from consciousness, that, if we attend properly to what we really do feel, we shall, as I conceive, be satisfied that we have no such power. What we really do feel, or may be sensible of, if we attend to our feelings, is, that we never come to any resolution, form any deliberate purpose, or determine upon any thing whatever, without some *motive*, arising from the state of our minds and the ideas present to them; and, therefore, we ought to conclude that we have no power of resolving or determining upon any thing, without some motive. Consequently, in the proper philosophical language, motives ought to be denominated the *causes* of all our *determinations*, and therefore of all our *actions*.

All that men generally mean by a *consciousness of freedom*, is a consciousness of their having a power to do what they previously will, or please. This is allowed, and that it is a thing of which we are properly conscious. But to will without a motive, or contrary to the influence of all motives presented to the mind, is a thing of which no man *can* be conscious. Nay, every just observation concerning ourselves, or others, appears to me very clearly to lead to the opposite conclusion, viz. that our *wills*, as well as our *judgments*, are determined by the *appearances of things* presented to us; and, therefore, that the determinations of both are equally guided by certain invariable *laws*; and, consequently, that every determination of the will, or judgment, is just what the Being who made us subject to those laws, and who always had, and still has, the absolute disposal of us, must have intended that they should be. If, however, this conclusion be denied, it must be controverted by *argument*, and the question must not be decided by *consciousness*, or any pretended *feeling* of the contrary.

SECTION XII.

Of the Objection to the System of Materialism derived from the Consideration of the DIVINE ESSENCE.

It will be said, that if the principle of thought in *man* may be a property of a material substance, the *Divine Being* himself may be material also; whereas, it is now almost universally believed to be the doctrine of revelation, that the Deity is, in the strictest sense of the word, an *immaterial substance*, incapable of local presence; though it will be shewn in its proper place that the sacred writers say nothing about such a substance.

Considering how much this subject is above all human comprehension, it is no wonder that the most opposite opinions should have been maintained with respect to it. But this consideration, at the same time that it ought to check our boldness, ought, likewise, to have taught us mutual candour and indulgence.

I am fully aware how difficult it is to express myself with clearness on a subject so extremely obscure, and how hazardous it is to advance the very little that any man can say concerning it. But I shall not, on this account, decline speaking freely and fully to every difficulty that either has been urged against the system of the materiality of man, or that has occurred to myself with respect to it; and the objections which arise from the consideration of the Divine essence, are of such particular consequence, that I shall treat of them in this separate Section. I only beg those who are friends to freedom of thought and inquiry, to attend to the few considerations that I shall offer on this very difficult subject.

In the first place, it must be confessed, with awful reverence, that we know but little of *ourselves*, and therefore much less of our *Maker*, even with respect to his *attributes*. We know but little of the *works* of God, and therefore certainly much less of his *essence*.

In fact, we have no proper idea of any *essence* whatever. Our ascribing impenetrability to matter might make us imagine that we had some kind of idea of *its* substance, though this was fallacious; but now that, by a rigid attention to the phenomena and a strict adherence to the laws of philosophizing, we have been obliged to deny that matter has any such property, but, besides extension, merely *powers* of attraction and

repulsion, it will hardly be pretended, that we have any proper idea of the substance even of matter, considered as divested of all its properties. The term substance, or essence, therefore, is, in fact, nothing more than a help to *expression*, as we may say, but not at all to *conception*.

We cannot speak of attraction or repulsion, for example, but as powers belonging to, and residing in some *thing, substance* or *essence*, but our ideas do not go beyond these powers; and when we attempt to form any thing of an idea of the substance of matter, exclusive of the *powers* which it *has*, and exclusive of the *impenetrability* which it *has not*, all ideas vanish from the mind, and nothing, absolutely nothing, is left for an object of contemplation. If it be still called a *substance*, it is, however, as immaterial a one as any person can wish for. In reality, the term *immateriality* never did, or could suggest any idea whatever. That the term substance and essence are of no use but as modes of expression, is evident from our speaking of the *substance* or *essence of things*, as if they themselves were only properties.

If then our ideas concerning matter do not go beyond the powers of which it is possessed, much less can our ideas go beyond powers, properties or attributes, with respect to the Divine Being; and if we confine our definition of God to these, it is not possible that we can make any mistake, or suffer by our misconceptions. Now the powers and properties of the Divine mind, as clearly deduced from the works of God, are not only so infinitely superior to those of the human mind, when there is some analogy between them, but so essentially different from them in other respects, that whatever term we make use of to denote the one, it must be improperly applied to the other.

In two circumstances that we do know, and probably in many others of which we have no knowledge at all, the human and divine nature, finite and infinite intelligence, most essentially differ. The first is, that our attention is necessarily confined to one thing, whereas, he who made and continually supports all things, must equally attend to all things at the same time, which is a most astonishing, but necessary attribute of the one supreme God, of which we can form no conception; and, consequently, in this respect, no finite mind or nature can be compared with the Divine.

Again, the Deity not only attends to every thing, but must be capable of either *producing* or *annihilating* any thing. For, since all that we know of bodies, are their powers, and the Divine Being changes those powers at plea-

sure, it is evident that he can take them all away, and consequently annihilate the very substance; for without powers, substance is nothing. And since he can communicate powers, it is evident that he can produce substance. So that, in this respect also, as the Divine *powers*, so the Divine *nature* must be essentially different from ours; and, consequently, no common term, except such comprehensive terms as *being, nature, &c.*, can be properly used to express them both.

Again, as the Divine nature has properties incompatible with all created and finite natures, so, though there must be some common property in all beings that have any action or influence upon one another, there is no evidence of the Divine nature being possessed of the properties of other substances in such a *manner* as to be entitled to the same appellation. For example, the Divine essence cannot be the object of any of our senses, as every thing that we call *matter* is. For though the Divine Being, in order to his *acting* every where, must *be* every where, we are not sensible of his presence by our sight, hearing, or feeling, &c.

There is, therefore, upon the whole, manifold reason to conclude, that the Divine nature or essence, besides being simply unknown to us, as every nature or essence is, has properties most essentially different from every thing else; and, therefore, we shall certainly deceive ourselves if we call things so different from one another by any common name.

Upon the whole, it is plain, that no proof of the materiality of man can be extended, by any just analogy, to a proof or evidence of a similar materiality of the Divine nature; for the properties or powers being different, the substance or essence (if it be any convenience to us to use such terms at all) must be different also.

If by the term *immaterial*, we simply mean to denote a substance that has properties and powers essentially different from those of created matter, it is plain that I have no objection to the term; and, in this sense, I do believe it is, in fact, used by the generality of mankind. But if, with modern metaphysicians, we intend to denote by it a substance that has no property whatever in common with matter, and that even bears no relation to space, I must deny that any such substance exists; because, according to such a definition, the Divine Being is necessarily cut off from all communication with, and all action or influence upon his own creation.

But let us make use of what terms we please to express the Divine nature, or his mode of existence, we are not able to come any nearer to an adequate conception concerning them. God is, and ever must remain, the *incomprehensible*, the object of our most profound reverence and awful adoration. Compared with him, all other beings are as *nothing*, and *less than nothing*. *He filleth all in all, and he is all in all.*

I would observe, however, and I think it but justice to those who may happen to see this subject in a different light from that in which I have here represented it, that, should any person, on account of the very few circumstances in which the Divine nature resembles other natures, think proper to apply the term material to both, the hypothesis advanced in this treatise concerning the nature of matter which excludes impenetrability or solidity from being a property of it (by which, as we may say, the *reproach of matter* is wiped off,) makes this to be a very different kind of materialism from that grosser sort, which, however, has been maintained by many pious Christians, and was certainly the real belief of most of the early fathers.

It is only on account of the notion that matter is necessarily *inert*, and absolutely incapable of intelligence, thought or action, that it has been deemed dangerous to ascribe it either to a finite, or to the Infinite Mind; but when this reproach is wiped away the danger vanishes of course. It is the powers of supreme intelligence, omnipotence, unbounded goodness, and universal providence, that we reverence in the Deity; and whatever be the essence to which we believe these powers belong, it must appear equally respectable to us, whether we call it material or immaterial, because it is not the *substance*, of which we have no idea at all, but the *properties* that are the object of our contemplation and regard.

All that we can pretend to know of God, is his infinite wisdom, power and goodness. We see and feel the effects and influence of these every moment of our lives; but it is impossible we should see or feel the *substance* to which these powers belong; and, therefore, all that we can conceive, or pronounce concerning it, must be merely hypothetical; and provided that every person is fully satisfied that his own ideas of the Divine essence are consistent with the *known attributes of divinity*, they must necessarily be equally safe, and equally innocent. We are all agreed with respect to every thing that *concerns us*, viz. the *divine works*, and the *divine attributes*;

and we differ only with respect to an opinion which, circumstanced as this is, cannot possibly affect us.

It is said, that matter can only *be acted upon*, and is necessarily incapable of *acting*, or *beginning action*. This conclusion we have been led to form, by observing, that every motion in matter, with which we are acquainted, was preceded by some other motion; which we therefore consider, and properly enough, as the *cause* of the subsequent motion. But, for the very same reason, we might conclude, that what we call *spirit*, or *mind*, is equally incapable of beginning action or motion; because every idea, every thought, and every determination of the mind of man, is preceded, and, strictly speaking, *caused* by some other idea of the mind, or sensation of the body; and, therefore, judging by what we know of ourselves, *mind* ought to be concluded to be as incapable of beginning motion as the *body* itself. As far as we know from experience, both are equally passive, the one being absolutely governed by intellectual laws and influences, and the other by corporeal ones.

Of the *beginning of motion, or action*, we must sit down with acknowledging, that we have, in reality, no conception at all; and the difficulty is by no means removed, or in the smallest degree lessened, by shifting it from *matter* to *mind*. Mr. Locke very justly observes, that "it is as hard to conceive self-motion in a created immaterial, as in a material being, consider it how you will."* And certainly the difficulty of our conception is not lessened by transferring it from a created to an uncreated being.

We know there must be a *first cause* of all things, because things do actually exist, and could never have existed without a cause, and all *secondary causes* necessarily lead us to a *primary one*. But of the nature of the *existence* of this primary cause, concerning which we know nothing but by its *effects*, we cannot have any conception. We are absolutely confounded, bewildered and lost, when we attempt to speculate concerning it, and it is no wonder that this should be the case. We have no *data* to go upon, and no force of mind to support us in it. All we can say is, that this speculation, attended as it is with insuperable difficulties, is attended with just the same, and no greater difficulty, on the idea of the mind being material or immaterial. And the system of materialism has unquestionably this advantage, that it is entirely free from another difficulty, viz. *how an*

* Essay, II. p. 147. (P.) 2d Letter, Works, I. p. 591.

immaterial substance can act upon matter; a difficulty which, in my idea, amounts to an absolute *impossibility*, as those substances have hitherto been defined.

As to the difficulty arising from the Divine material essence penetrating other matter, it has no place at all in the hypothesis advanced from M. Boscovich and Mr. Michell; and certainly this idea is much more consonant to the idea which the sacred writers give us of the omnipresence of the Divine Being, and of his *filling all in all*, than that of a being who bears no relation to space, and therefore cannot properly be said to *exist any where*; which is the doctrine of the rigid immaterialists.

In the Scriptures, the Divine Being is said to be a *spirit*; but all that is there meant by spirit, is an *invisible power*. The divine works are visible and astonishing, but *himself no man has seen, or can see*.

That such an idea as many have, or affect to have, of the strict immateriality of the Divine nature, as not existing in space, is not an idea of much importance, at least, may with certainty be concluded, from its not being suggested to us in the Scriptures, and especially in the Old Testament. All that we are there taught concerning the nature of God, is, that he made all things, that he sees and knows all things, that he is present in all places, and that he superintends and governs all things; also, that he had no beginning, that he can have no end, and that he is incapable of any change. Farther than this we are not taught.

On the contrary, it appears to me, as will be seen in its proper place, that the idea which the Scriptures give us of the Divine nature, is that of a Being, properly speaking, *every where present*, constantly supporting, and, at pleasure, controuling the laws of nature, but not the object of any of our senses; and that, out of condescension, as it were, to the weakness of human apprehension, he chose, in the early ages of the world, to signify his peculiar presence by some *visible symbol*, as that of a supernatural bright cloud, or some other appearance, which could not but impress their minds with the idea of a real local presence. He is also generally represented as residing in the heavens, and from thence inspecting and governing the world, and especially the affairs of men. This, indeed, is not a philosophically *just*, but it is an *easy* and a very *innocent* manner of conceiving concerning God.*

* The remainder of this Section, and the XIIIth, were added to the 2d Ed. from the *Illustrations*.

It has been said, that, notwithstanding I decline the term, I virtually make the Deity to be a material being. But it will be found, by the candid and attentive, that I have not, in reality, any idea of the Divine essence that is at all different from that of those philosophers and divines who maintain the *proper omnipresence* or *ubiquity* of the Divine Being, which necessarily implies a real extension, and that he has a power of acting upon matter.

I will take this opportunity of saying farther, that, upon no system whatever, is the great Author of Nature more distinct from his productions, or his presence with them, and agency upon them, more necessary. In fact, the system now held forth to the public, taken in its full extent, makes the Divine Being to be of as much importance in the system, as the apostle makes him, when he says, *In him we live, and move, and have our being*. The contemplation of it impresses the mind with sentiments of the deepest reverence and humility, and it inculcates a degree of devotedness to God, both active and passive, that no other philosophical system can inspire. Consequently, the obligation to all those virtues that are more immediately derived from that great vital spring and principle of all virtue, *devotion*, those which give a superiority to the world, a fearless integrity, and a noble independence of mind in the practice of our duty, is more strongly felt, and therefore may be supposed to take a deeper root in the mind, than upon any other system whatever. In short, it is that philosophy which alone suits the doctrine of the *Scriptures*, though the writers of them were not philosophers, but had an instruction infinitely superior to that of any philosophical school. Every other system of philosophy is discordant with the *Scriptures*, and, as far as it lays any hold upon the mind, tends to counteract their influence.

SECTION XIII.

Of the Connexion between Sensation and Organization.

I HAVE been asked, whether I consider the powers of sensation and thought as *necessarily resulting* from the organization of the brain, or as something independent of organization, but *superadded* and *communicated* to the system afterwards; having expressed myself doubtfully, and perhaps variously, on the subject.*

* In the *Essay* prefixed to my edition of Hartley, I expressed myself with absolute uncertainty in this respect. "I rather think, that the whole man is of some

I answer, that my idea *now* is, that sensation and thought do necessarily result from the organization of the brain when the powers of mere *life* are given to the system. For I can easily conceive a perfect man to be formed without life, that is, without respiration, or the circulation of the blood, or whatever else it be in which life more properly consists, and consequently without every thing necessarily depending upon life; but I cannot imagine that a human body, completely organized, and having life, would want sensation and thought. This I suppose to follow *of course*, as much as the circulation of the blood follows respiration.

As to the *manner* in which the power of perception results from organization and life, I own I have no idea at all; but the *fact* of this connexion does not appear to me to be, on that account, the less certain. Sensation and thought do always accompany such an organization; and having never known them to be separated, we have no reason to suppose that they *can* be separated. When, therefore, God had made man of the *dust of the earth*, nothing was wanting to make him all that he is, viz. a *living soul*, but simply the *breath of life*.

In all other cases we deem it sufficient to say, that certain circumstances are the causes, and the *necessary causes*, of certain appearances, if the appearances always accompany the circumstances. We are not, for example, in the least able to conceive how it is that a magnet attracts iron; but, having observed that it never fails to do it, we conclude that, though we do not see the *proximate cause* or *how* the attraction is effected, the magnet nevertheless *has* that power, and must cease to be a magnet before it can lose it; so that our reasoning with respect to the result of sensation from organization is exactly similar to our reasoning concerning the attraction of iron by magnetism.

Also, for the very same reason that it is said, that it is not the organized body that feels and thinks, but an *immaterial substance* residing in the body, and that will remain when the body is destroyed, we might say, that it is not the material magnet that attracts, but a peculiar immaterial substance within it that produces the effect, and that will remain when the material magnet is destroyed. And, for the same reason, we may imagine *distinct immaterial substances* for

uniform composition, and that the property of perception, as well as the other powers that are termed mental, is the result (whether necessary or not) of such an organical structure as that of the brain." (P.) See p. 182, and Note *.

every operation in nature, the proximate cause of which we are not able to perceive.

The manner in which the association of ideas is formed, or in which motives influence the mind, was equally unknown; but the association of ideas was, nevertheless, known to be a *fact*, and the influence of motives was not, on that account, denied. But now that Dr. Hartley has shewn us what ideas probably are, we see much farther into the *mechanism of the mind*. We see *how* one idea is connected with another, and *the manner* in which motives (which are only trains of ideas) produce their effect. Now, we are not more (or not much more) ignorant how sensation results from organization, than we were how the motion of the hand results from a volition, or how a volition is produced by a motive, which are now no longer such very difficult problems. It is not impossible but that, in time, we may see *how* it is that sensation results from organization.

SECTION XIV.

Of the Principles of HUMAN NATURE according to the Scriptures.

HAD man consisted of *two parts*, so essentially different from each other as *matter* and *spirit* are now represented to be, and had the immaterial been the principal part, and the material system only subservient to it, it might have been expected that there would have been some express mention of it, or declaration concerning it (this being a thing of so much consequence to us) in the *Scriptures*, which contain the history of the creation, mortality, and resurrection of man. And yet there is not only a most remarkable silence on the subject of the immateriality of the human soul in these sacred books, even where we should most naturally have expected some account of it, but many things are there advanced, which unavoidably lead us to form a different conclusion; and nothing can be found in those books to countenance the vulgar opinion, except a few passages ill translated, or ill understood, standing in manifest contradiction to the uniform tenour of the rest.

The history of the creation of man is succinctly delivered in Gen. ii. 7: “ And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” We see here, that the

whole man (for nothing is said of his *body* in particular,) was made of the dust of the ground. No part of him is said to have had a higher or different original; and surely so very important a circumstance as that of an *immaterial principle*, which could not be from the *dust*, would not have been omitted, if there had been any such thing in the composition.

When the whole man was completely formed, and not before, we are next informed, that God made this man, who was *lifeless* at first, to *breathe* and *live*. For it evidently follows from the text, that nothing but the circumstance of *breathing*, made the difference between the *unanimated earth* and the *living soul*. It is not said that when one constituent part of the man was made, another necessary constituent part, of a very different nature, was superadded to it, and that these two, united, constituted the man; but only that that substance which was formed of *the dust of the earth* became a *living soul*, that is, became *alive*, by being made to *breathe*.

That no stress is to be laid upon the word נפש, which we translate *soul*, (though it would be most of all absurd to suppose, as we must have done, from a fair construction of this passage, that the *dust of the earth* could be converted into an *immaterial soul*;) is evident from the use of the same term in other places, in which it is used as synonymous to *man*, *the whole man*, and in some manifestly signifies nothing more than the *corporeal*, or *mortal part of man*.

Gen. xlv. 26: "All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins." The immaterial principle certainly could not come from his loins.

Ezek. xviii. 4: "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Ib. xiii. 19: "To slay the souls that should not die, and to save the souls alive that should not live." Ps. vii. 1, 2: "Save me,—lest he tear my soul,—rending it in pieces." In all these passages, it is most evident, that the word *soul* is synonymous to *man*, and that it refers more immediately to his *body*; so that by *man becoming a living soul*, nothing can be understood besides his being *made alive*; and the passage suggests no hint of any thing but the property of *life* being superadded to that corporeal system which was entirely formed of the dust of the earth, in order to make a complete living man.

Sometimes the word that is here rendered *soul*, is used to express the *dead body* itself, and is so translated by us; as Lev. xxi. 1, 11, "There shall none be defiled for the dead

among his people,—neither shall he go in to any dead body, nor defile himself for his father or for his mother.” Ib. xix. 28: “Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead.” Numb. xix. 13: “Whoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead.” In this passage the periphrasis is very remarkable; and if, in this passage, the word נפש should be rendered *soul*, it must be translated thus, *Whosoever touches the dead soul of a man who shall die*. See also Hagg. ii. 13.

In other passages, where the same word is by us rendered *soul*, there would have been much more propriety in translating it *life*, which does not denote a *substance*, but a *property*.

P's. lxxxix. 48: “Shall he deliver his soul [life] from the hand of the grave?” Job xxxiii. 30: “To bring back his soul [life] from the pit.” Gen. xxxv. 18: “And it came to pass as her soul, [her life] was in departing, for she died.” 1 Kings xvii. 22: “And the soul [the life] of the child came in unto him again.”

The same observation may be made with respect to the corresponding word in the Greek, ψυχη, in the New Testament; as in Luke xii. 20: “Thou fool, this night thy soul [thy life] shall be required of thee;” that is, this night *thou shalt die*.

Besides, whatever principles we may be led to ascribe to *man* from this account of his formation in Gen. ii. 7, the very same we ought to ascribe to the *brutes*; because the very same words are used in the account of them by the same writer, both in the Hebrew and in the Septuagint, though they are differently rendered in our translation. For Gen. i. 24, we read, “And God said, let the earth bring forth the living creature, [נפש חיה] [living soul]; and again, Gen. ii. 19: “And whatsoever Adam called every living creature [living soul], that was the name thereof.” For this observation I am indebted to an ingenious and worthy friend, and I think it valuable and decisive in the case.

Let us now proceed to the account which the Scriptures give us of the *mortality of man*, to see whether we can find in any passage relating to this subject some trace of an immortal soul.

Death is first threatened to man in these terms, Gen. ii. 17, “Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” Here is no exception made of any part of the man that was not to die. The natural construction

of the sentence imports, that whenever the decree should take place, whatever was alive belonging to man would wholly cease to live, and become *lifeless earth*, as it had been originally.

The same inference may be made from the account of the actual *sentence of death* passed upon Adam, after his transgression. Gen. iii. 19: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken. For dust thou [not thy body only] art, and unto dust shalt thou return." If, in this, there be any allusion to an immaterial and immortal part in man, it is wonderfully concealed; for nothing appears upon the face of the passage but that, as the *whole man* had been *lifeless earth*, he would become lifeless earth again. Every other construction is an express contradiction both to the words and the spirit of the sentence. For what would have signified the death of the *body*, to Adam, if there still remained an *inextinguishable principle of life*? And especially if, as the immaterialists in general suppose, he would afterwards have enjoyed a *better life* than he could have had in conjunction with the body, which could only be a clog to it, and obstruct its exercise and enjoyment?

Besides, according to the common hypothesis, all the punishment that is mentioned in this sentence, is inflicted upon the mere *passive instrument* of the soul, whilst the *real criminal* was suffered to escape.

In general, to interpret what the Scriptures say of the *mortality of man*, which is the uniform language both of the Old and New Testament on this subject, of the *mortality of the body only*, which is a part of the man that is of the least value, and wholly insignificant, when compared with the other part of his constitution, *the mind*, is exactly of a piece with the Trinitarian interpretation of those passages in the gospels, which represent Christ as *inferior to his Father*, of his *human nature only*; supposing the evangelists to have neglected the consideration of his *superior divine nature*;* though, if there had been any such thing, it was more especially requisite that it should have been particularly attended to in those very passages.

When the wickedness of men was so great, that God was resolved to destroy them from the face of the earth by a flood, he says, Gen. vi. 3, "My spirit shall not always strive

*See Vol. II. pp. 396, 397, and the *Note*.

with man, for that he also is flesh," (בשר). Here is no mention of any other superior principle.

When this flood took place, and almost the whole race of mankind was destroyed by it, there is still no mention made of their immaterial souls, or what became of them. We only read, Gen. vii. 22, 23, "All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was on the dry land, died. And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth."

Another occasion on which we might naturally expect some account of the immaterial principle in man, if there had been any such thing, is where an account is given of the *deaths of remarkable persons*. And yet, though we have in the Scriptures very circumstantial accounts of the deaths of several eminent persons, with respect to none of them is there the least hint dropped, that the *body only* was dead, but, that the *immaterial soul* was altogether unaffected by what had happened to its gross companion. This sentiment, which is capable of a vast variety of expression, never fails to occur upon similar occasions with us; and for the same reasons, could not have failed to occur to the sacred writers, if they had had any idea of such a thing.*

Particular mention is made of the deaths of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Aaron, Moses, David, and many others; but all that is said upon any of these occasions is, either that the dying person was *gathered to his people*, or that he *slept with his fathers*. Now, certainly *sleep* does not give us the idea of a person's being *alive and active*, and especially of his entering upon a *new mode of being*, in which he should be more alive, more active, and more vigorous, than he had ever been before.

In the account of the death of Joseph, it is said, Gen. l. 26, "They embalmed him, and he was put into a coffin in Egypt." It is not said that there was any part of him that was *not embalmed*, and that could not be put into a coffin. Our different notions dictate a very different language. Upon our grave-stones we never see inscribed, *Here lies such a person*, but always, here lies the *body*, or *the remains*, or *what was mortal* of such a person. Such an influence have *ideas* upon *language* and *customs*; and the same would

* See Vol. II. p. 356, *ad fin.* p. 357, and *Note*.

they have had upon the language and customs of those ancient times, if the ideas and notions had then existed.

We have accounts in the Scriptures of several persons having been recalled from death, and having come to life again; as of the dead man, who was raised to life by the touch of the prophet's bones; of two children by Elijah and Elisha; of Jairus's daughter, the young man at Nain, and of Lazarus by our Saviour; of other persons by the apostles, and more especially of the death and resurrection of our Lord himself. Yet, upon none of these occasions, is there the least mention made of the *immaterial soul*, which, upon the common hypothesis, must have been in a state of happiness or misery, and have been recalled from thence to its old habitation. This looks as if, in the apprehension of the sacred writers, there was no such a thing as a separate soul to be recalled; but that on the contrary, the case was simply this, viz. that the *life*, which is no more than a *property*, had been lost, and was restored again. This too would be considered as an *advantage*; whereas it has the appearance of cruelty and injustice, in the case of a good man, as of Lazarus, who had been dead four days, to recall him from a state of unmixed happiness, to the troubles and miseries of this life, and subject him, once more, to the pains of death.

If there be an immaterial soul in man, and especially if the body be a clog to its operations and enjoyments, it was no favour to Enoch or Elijah to remove them to another life, with such an encumbrance; and the general resurrection, as I have observed before, which we are taught to regard as *the great object of Christian hope*, is not merely *superfluous*, but even *undesirable*, since virtue would naturally have had a much more complete reward without the body.

It is so evidently the doctrine of the Scriptures that the state of retribution does not take place till after the general resurrection, that it is now adopted by great numbers, who, nevertheless, cannot be brought to give up the notion of an immaterial soul. But I wish they would consider what notion they really have of an immaterial soul passing thousands of years without a single idea or sensation. In my opinion it approaches very nearly to its being *no substance at all*, just as matter must entirely vanish, when we take away its property of *extension*.

If, together with the opinion of the entire cessation of thought, they will maintain the real *existence* of the soul, it must be for the sake of the *hypothesis* only, and for no real

use whatever. They who maintain that, without a resurrection, there is a sufficient reward for virtue, and a state of punishment for vice, taking place immediately after death, have a *solid reason* for contending for an immaterial principle, unaffected by the catastrophe to which the body is subject. But I can see no reason in the world why any *Christian*, who, as such, necessarily believes the doctrine of a resurrection (this being the proper fundamental article of his faith), should be so zealous for it; and, indeed, why he should not be rather *jealous* of such a notion, as interfering with his *proper system*, superseding it, and making it *superfluous*, and really *undesirable*. The doctrine of a separate soul most evidently embarrasses the true Christian system, which takes no sort of notice of it, and is uniform and consistent without it. In the Scriptures, the Heathens are represented to be *without hope*, and all mankind as *perishing* at death, if there be no *resurrection of the dead*.

Persons who attend to the Scriptures cannot avoid concluding, that the *operations* of the soul depend upon the body, and that between death and the resurrection there will be a *suspension* of all its powers. And it is obvious to remark, that if this be the fact, there must be a sufficient *natural reason* why it should be so; and, therefore, there is fair ground to presume, that the soul cannot be that *independent being* that has been imagined.

According to the Christian system, the body is necessary to all the *perceptions* and *exertions* of the mind: and if this be the case, what *evidence* can there be, that the mind is not dependent upon the body for its *existence* also; that is, what evidence can there be, that the faculty of thinking does not inhere in the body itself, and that there is no such thing as a *soul* separate from it? A philosopher, on seeing these appearances, would more naturally conclude, that the body appeared to have greater powers than he imagined it could have had, than that an immaterial spirit could be so necessarily dependent upon a gross body, as not to be able to perceive or think without it. This appears to me, on the first face of things, to be by much the more natural conclusion, exclusive of the obligation that all philosophers are under, not to admit more *causes* than are absolutely *necessary*.

But the most extraordinary assertion that I have yet met with, relating to the subject, is, that the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul is necessary to be established, before any regard can be paid to the scripture doc-

trine of a resurrection. For it is said, “that if the soul be not naturally capable of surviving the body, or if death is unavoidably its *destruction*, then the resurrection must be the resurrection of what was *not in being*, the resurrection of *nothing*.” It is true, that a *property*, such as I consider the *power of thinking* to be, cannot exist without its *substance*, which is an organized system. But if this property of thinking necessarily attends the property of *life*, nothing can be requisite to the restoration of all the powers of the man but the restoration of the body (no particle of which can be lost) to a state of life.

If we search the Scriptures for passages more particularly expressive of the *state of man at death*, we find in them not only no trace of *sense, thought, or enjoyment*, but, on the contrary, such declarations as expressly exclude it; as Ps. vi. 5, “In death there is no remembrance of thee. In the grave who shall give thee thanks?” spoken by David when he was praying for recovery from sickness. Ps. cxv. 17, “The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence;” and Ps. cxlvi. 4, “His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish.”

Job, speaking of man as utterly insensible in death, expresses himself so very fully and distinctly, that it is not possible to mistake his meaning. Job xiv. 7: “There is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground, yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dieth, and wasteth away, yea man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up, so man lieth down, and riseth not till the heavens be no more. They shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.”

Nothing can be more evident, than that Job considered man as altogether insensible in death, and that he had no notion of his *body* being one thing, and *himself*, the *sentient principle*, another. But I cannot help concluding, that in the verses immediately following those quoted above, he expresses his belief of a resurrection to a future life. Ver. 13, “O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret until thy wrath be past; that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me. If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed

time will I wait [in the *grave*, as it seems to me] till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."

It is still more evident, from that celebrated passage in the 19th chapter of this book, that all the hope that Job had of a future life, was founded on his belief of a *resurrection*, and not on a state of *separation from the body*, of which he does not appear to have had an idea.

Job xix. 25: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me."*

Solomon evidently considers the whole of man as equally mortal with brutes. After having said, Eccl. iii. 17, "God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time there for every purpose, and for every work;" he adds, ver. 18, "I said in my heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. For that which befall-eth the sons of men befall-eth beasts; even one thing befall-eth them. As the one dieth, so dieth the other. Yea they have all one breath. So that a man hath no pre-eminence over a beast; for all is vanity. All go unto one place. All are of the dust, and all turn to dust again."

Some consider this passage as put into the mouth of a person who objects against religion, or as an objection which had occurred to the writer himself; but I see no appearance of any such thing; and the doctrine is perfectly agreeable to the uniform tenour of the Scriptures. After the passage quoted above, he adds, "Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?" But if this passage be interpreted in a sense consistent with what goes before, it can only mean that, notwithstanding the difference in the *form* and *posture* of a man and a beast, in consequence of which the *breath* of man goes *upwards*, and that of a beast goes *downwards*, there is no difference between them when they die. Accordingly, in the very next verse, he says of man, "Who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?" evidently considering him as in a state of insensibility and perfect ignorance. Besides, *upwards* and *downwards* in this place may not

* See Vol. II. p. 343, and the Note.

relate to the *breath*, or any thing represented by the breath, but to the *posture of the body in walking*, man walking with his head upwards, and the beast with his head looking downwards.

This writer, indeed, speaking of death, uses this expression, Eccl. xii. 7, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." But, as it is contrary to the whole tenour of the Scriptures, to suppose that the souls of departed men are in heaven, *with God and Christ*, where they are said not to be till after the resurrection, the meaning of this passage can only be, that God, who gave *life*, will take it away, the word *spirit* denoting nothing more than *breath* or *life*. By the same kind of figure, *our lives* are said, Col. iii. 3, after death, to be "hid with Christ in God," and that "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall *we* also appear with him in glory." From which it is evident, that, notwithstanding the *lives* of good men are, figuratively speaking, said to be *with God*, they are not to *appear*, or be manifested, till the appearance, or second coming of Christ; so that the *spirit*, or *life*, *going to God*, and *remaining with him*, does not imply any state of perception or enjoyment.

Our Saviour, indeed, seems to use the term *soul* as expressive of something distinct from the body; but if he did (which, however, is not certain), he might do it in compliance with the prevailing opinion of the times, in the same manner as he applies the term *possessed of dæmons* to *madmen*, and even speaks to madmen, as if they were actuated by evil spirits, though he certainly did not believe the existence of such dæmons. He says, however, Matt. x. 28: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear Him, which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

But when we consider that, according to the uniform tenour of the Scriptures, and especially our Saviour's own discourses and parables, there is no punishment in hell till after the resurrection, it will be evident, that his meaning could only be that men have power over us only in *this life*, but God in *the life to come*; meaning by the *soul*, the *life*, and in this place, the *future and better life* of man in opposition to the *present*. Also, when the Apostle Paul, 1 Thess. v. 23, says, "I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;" he only uses these terms as denoting, in the philosophy of his time (which had spread even among the Jews) all that con-

stituted a *complete man*, without hinting at the possibility of any *separation* of the several parts.

Had the sacred writers really believed the existence of the soul, as a principle in the human constitution, naturally distinct from, and independent of the body, it cannot but be supposed, that they would have made some *use* of it in their arguments for a future life. But it is remarkable that we find no such argument in all the New Testament.

St. Paul, though he writes largely upon the subject, and to Greeks, by whom the doctrines of Plato were respected, lays the whole stress of his argument upon *the promise of God by Jesus Christ*, confirmed to us by his resurrection from the dead. According to him, who must certainly be allowed to have understood Christianity, and who would not slightly undervalue any *proper* support of its doctrines, *if Christ be not raised, our faith is vain, and they who are asleep in Christ, that is, they who have died in the profession of Christianity, are perished*. But how could they have been said to have *perished*, or how could he conclude, as he does, that upon the supposition of there being no resurrection of the dead, we may safely neglect all the duties of morality, adopting the Epicurean maxim, *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die*, if the soul survive the body, enjoying all its thinking faculties, and consequently be the proper subject of moral retribution? Indeed, what occasion could there be for a resurrection, or general judgment, upon that hypothesis?

Two passages in the book of Revelation may also be interpreted in a manner equally favourable to this doctrine. We read, Rev. vi. 9, &c., “I saw—the souls of them that were slain for the word of God,” &c. But it is not uncommon for the sacred writers to personify things without life. We also read, chap. xx. 4, 5, “I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, &c., and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” It is plain, therefore, that he saw them not as *unembodied souls*, but as *living men*, after a real resurrection, and, therefore, he did not see the rest of the dead souls at all; for being *dead*, they had no *souls* or *lives*.

I shall conclude this Section with some observations of Mr. Hallet: “And from hence, likewise, we see why the Scriptures never speak of the *natural immortality of the soul*, as many divines have done. I remember the great Tillotson takes notice of the fact, and wonders at it. The reason which

he assigns for the silence of the Scripture on this head, is, that the doctrine of the *natural* immortality of the soul is taught so plainly by the light of nature, that every man's reason can easily discover it, and so a revelation need not mention it, but might take it for granted. Whereas, it now appears, that the true reason why the Scriptures do not teach it is, because it is not true."

With respect to the importance of the opinion, he says, "It is of no consequence in the whole world to any purpose of religion, whether the soul of man be material or immaterial. All that religion is concerned to do, is, to prove that that which now thinks in us shall continue to think, and to be capable of happiness or misery for ever. This religion proves from the express promises and threatenings of the gospel. But religion is not concerned to determine of what *nature* this thinking immortal substance is. For my part, I judge it to be immaterial; but if a man should think that the soul is mere matter, endowed with the power of thought, he would not thereby overturn any article in religion that is of the least consequence to promote the *ends* of religion. For while a man thinks that his soul is matter, he necessarily thinks that God, who made matter capable of thinking, and endowed the matter of his soul in particular with the power of thought, is capable, by the same almighty power, of preserving the matter of his soul capable of thinking for ever. And when he shall have proved, that it is the *will of God*, that that thing which now thinks in him shall continue to think for ever, he has proved the immortality of the soul, even upon his supposition of its being material, in the only way in which we who apprehend it to be immaterial are capable of proving its *actual immortality*. For this can only be proved by shewing, that it is the will of God that it shall be immortal." *

To what is advanced in this Section, I beg my reader to add what is observed in the third volume of my *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*, concerning the doctrine of an *intermediate state*; † every argument against this doctrine tending to prove that there is no *separate soul* in man, but that his percipient and thinking powers are nothing more than the necessary result of the *life* of the body.

* Hallet's *Discourses*, I. pp. 377, and 214, 215. (P.)

† See Vol. II. pp. 354—364.

SECTION XV.

Of the DIVINE ESSENCE, according to the Scriptures.

HAD the Deity been an immaterial substance, in the modern strict metaphysical sense of the word, (for in the common sense of it, as signifying a Being that has properties and powers, not only infinitely *superior* to, but most essentially *different* from every thing that we call *matter*, it has been seen that I do not object to it,) and had this idea of God been of real consequence, either to his own honour, or to the virtue and happiness of mankind, it might have been expected that it would have been strongly and frequently inculcated in the Scriptures, as we find the doctrine of the *unity of his nature*, of his almighty *power*, his perfect *knowledge*, and his unbounded *goodness* to be. But if we look into the Scriptures, we find a very striking difference in this case.

The Scriptures abound with the strongest assertions, and the most solemn declarations concerning the unity of God, and concerning his power, wisdom and goodness; but though we find in them that his attributes are displayed every where, and that nothing can confine their operations, we meet with nothing at all determinate with respect to the *Divine essence*. Nay, till we come to the times of David, and the later prophets, the Divine Being is represented in such a manner, that we can hardly help imagining, that the patriarchs must have conceived of him as a being of some unknown form, though surrounded by an insupportable splendour, so as to be invisible to mortal eyes.

Now, had even this opinion been a *dangerous one* (though it is not philosophically just), there would certainly have been something said to guard us against it, and prevent our entertaining a notion so dishonourable to God, and so injurious to ourselves. But it is remarkable that nothing of this kind does occur.

We often find the *presence of the Lord* mentioned, as if there was upon earth some place where he particularly *resided*, or which he *frequented*. One instance of this we have in the Antediluvian history. Cain says, Gen. iv. 14, "Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth, and from thy face shall I be hid." Again, ver. 16, "And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord."

At the building of the tower of Babel, we read, Gen. xi. 5,

“And the Lord came down to see the city, and the tower which the children of men builded.” This is an expression which I can hardly think would have been used by David or Isaiah, who represent the Divine Being with much more dignity, as *sitting on the circle of the heavens, and from thence beholding all the inhabitants of the earth*. But the other representation is more adapted, as we may say, to the *infantile* state of the world.

To Moses God seems to have appeared in the symbol of a *dense bright cloud*; but his first appearance to him in the bush, was in a *flame of fire*. It is said, Exod. iii. 2, that “the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush.” But it appears from the conversation afterwards, that it was no angel, but *God himself*, who spake to him, the *fire* being, perhaps, called the *angel* of God, because it was the emblem of his presence, or was that by which he chose to manifest himself. For it is said, ver. 4—6, “And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said,—I am the God of thy fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,” &c. When Moses asked his name, he says, I AM THAT I AM; a name peculiarly characteristic of the true God, denoting, as is generally thought, his *necessary existence*.

The visible appearance which represented the Divine presence to the Israelites, in the wilderness, was a *cloud* by day, and *fire* by night. Exod. xiii. 21: “And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light.” Through this pillar it is said, xiv. 24, that “the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians, and troubled *them*.”

But, in general, the Divine Being appeared unto Moses in a *dense bright cloud*. Exod. xix. 9: “And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever.”

After the history of the golden calf, there is another account of an appearance of God to Moses, and many others with him, which has something in it very peculiar. Exod. xxiv. 9—11: “Then went up Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, and they saw the God of Israel. And there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in its clearness. And upon the nobles of the children of Israel he laid not his hand; also they saw God,

and did eat and drink.” Whether this was only the same appearance of a bright cloud, or of fire, from which the Divine Being had before spoken to Moses, or something farther, does not distinctly appear. In the Septuagint it is only said, and *they saw the place where the God of Israel stood*; and it appears from Maimonides, that the more intelligent Jews did not consider this, or any other similar passage, as importing that God had any *form*, or was really the *object of sight*,* but only some symbol of the more immediate presence of God.

It should seem that Moses imagined there was some other more *proper form of God* concealed within the cloud, from which he had usually spoken to him, for he expresses an earnest wish to have a nearer view of the majesty of God. Immediately after it is said, Exod. xxxiii. 11, that “the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend.” We are informed, ver. 18, that he desired that God would *shew him his glory*. In answer to which it is said, ver. 20, “Thou canst not see my face; for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, Behold there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock, and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by; and I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen.”

If our modern metaphysicians would attend a little to such passages of scripture as these, and consider what must have been the sentiments of the writers, and of those who were present at the scenes described in them, (though I readily acknowledge that such representations as these were used by way of accommodation to the low and imperfect conceptions of the Jews, or the passages may admit an interpretation different from the literal sense of them,) they would not be so much alarmed as they now are, or affect to be, at every thing like *materiality* ascribed even to the Divine Being, and much less to human minds. It is the *attributes*, the *powers*, and the *character* of the Deity that alone concerns us, and not his *essence*, or *substance*.

The circumstances which attended the giving of the law,

* See his *More Nevochim*. (P.) “Omnia ista intelligenda sunt de apprehensione intellectûs: nullo modo verò de visione corporali.” *Pars 1, Cap. iv. 1629*, à J. Buxtorfo, *Fil. 1. p. 7*. Moses Maimonides, a very learned Rabbi of the 12th century, was born at Cordova. He became chief physician to the Sultan of Egypt, where he died in 1209, aged 70.

which were very awful, and calculated to impress the mind in the strongest manner, could not leave upon it the idea of an *immaterial being*, but of a being capable of local presence, though of no known form. Exod. xix. 16—20: “And it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud, so that all the people that were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. And the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mount, and the Lord called Moses up to the top of the mount, and Moses went up.”

Again, it is not said that an *angel*, but that *God himself* spake all the words of the ten commandments. Exod. xx. 1, 2: “And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage,” &c. The two tables of stone, containing the same commandments, are also said to have been “written with the finger of God.” Exod. xxxi. 8.

An *audible voice* is certainly calculated to give us the idea of a locally present being, and this is frequently represented as proceeding immediately from God, when he reveals his will to the prophets. It was not only to Moses that he thus spake *face to face*, but to Samuel when he was a child. 1 Sam. iii. 4: “The Lord called Samuel, and he answered, Here am I.”

In the New Testament, also, an audible voice proceeded three several times from the Divine Majesty, to bear testimony to the mission of Christ. The first time at his baptism, Matt. iii. 17: “And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Again, on the mount of Transfiguration, Matt. xvii. 5; “Behold a bright cloud overshadowed them; and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” And lastly, in the Temple, in the week of crucifixion, John xii. 28, Jesus says, “Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice

from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

The Israelites justly considered the true God as standing in a peculiar relation to themselves, and as the Divine Being had promised to *dwell among them*, it was natural for them to take it in too literal a sense. Exod. xxix. 45, 46: "And I will dwell amongst the children of Israel, and will be their God, and they shall know that I am the Lord their God, that brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, that I may dwell amongst them. I am the Lord their God." On this account, Jonah might imagine, that he could flee from the presence of God by leaving the land of Canaan, in which he dwelt. Jonah i. 3: "But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish, from the presence of the Lord." But the subsequent events in the history of that prophet convinced him, that God was equally present in all places.

Seeing God, in vision, is by no means uncommon with the ancient prophets. Isa. vi. 1—8: "In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw also the Lord [אֲדֹנָי] sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Then said I, Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of Hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me—and said, Lo—thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I, send me."

Micaiah says, 1 Kings xxii. 19, 20, "I saw the Lord [יְהוָה] sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him, on his right hand and on his left. And the Lord said, Who shall persuade Ahab?" &c.

Dan. vii. 9—13: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool. His throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him. Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousands stood before him—I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him," &c.

Amos ix. 1: "I saw the Lord [אֲדֹנָי] standing upon the altar, and he said," &c.

Hab. iii. 2—6: "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid—God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise, and his brightness was as the light. He had horns (or *bright beams*, as it is rendered in the margin) coming out of his hands.—He stood and measured the earth."

This language is not unknown to the New Testament. Rev. iv. 2—11: "Immediately I was in the spirit; and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne; and he that sat was, to look upon, like a jasper, and a sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.—And the four *living creatures*—rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those *living creatures* give glory, and honour, and thanks, to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne; saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Many passages in the books of Scripture, and especially in the Psalms, give us the most exalted ideas of the *universal power and presence* of God. But still this is so far from suggesting the idea of proper *immateriality*, which bears no relation to space, that they naturally give us the idea of a Being that is locally present every where, but invisible, and penetrating all things.

Solomon says, in his prayer at the dedication of the temple, 1 Kings viii. 27, "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house that I have builded!" Isa. lxvi. 1: "Thus saith the Lord, The Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my foot-stool. Where is the house that ye build unto me, and where is the place of my rest?" Jer. xxiii. 23, 24: "Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him?—Do I not fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?" To the same purpose is that sublime passage in Psalm cxxxix. 7—10: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there. If I make my bed in *the grave*, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings

of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

Job says, ch. xxiii. 3—9, "Oh that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat.—Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him. He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him."

When the Divine Being is expressly said to be *invisible*, no words are ever added to suggest to us, that it is because he is *immaterial*; but we are rather given to understand, that we cannot see God on account of the *splendour* that surrounds him. This will be seen in some of the passages quoted above; and the idea suits very well with the following passage of St. Paul, 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16: "The King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting, Amen." The apostle John also says, John i. 18, "No man hath seen God at any time;" but he says nothing of the reason of it.

When our Saviour says, John iv. 24, "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," there is no reference whatever to the *immateriality* of the Divine nature, but only to his *intelligence* and *moral perfections*; and, therefore, requiring *truth in the inward part*, or a spiritual, as opposed to a corporeal homage; and this very passage is alleged, by some of the Fathers, as an argument for the corporeity of the Divine nature.

When the Divine Being compares himself with *idols*, which is frequent in Isaiah, Jeremiah and other prophets, on which occasion they are said to be *wood and stone*, incapable of *motion, knowledge* or *sense*, it is never said, by way of contrast, as might naturally be expected in this connexion, that the true God is altogether *immaterial*, and incapable of local presence. On the contrary, we find nothing on these occasions but declarations concerning the Divine *power* and *knowledge*, especially with respect to *future events*, on which subject the true God more especially challenges the false ones.

I think I may conclude this Section with observing, that our modern metaphysical notions concerning the strict immateriality of the Divine Being were certainly not drawn from the Scriptures. In those sacred books we read of nothing

but the infinite *power, wisdom* and *goodness* of God; and, to impress our minds with the more awful ideas of him, he is generally represented as residing in heaven, and surrounded with a splendour through which no mortal eye can pierce. But he is so far from being said to be what we now call immaterial, that every description of him, even in the New Testament, gives us an idea of something *filling* and *penetrating all things*, and therefore of no form, or known mode of existence.

For my part, I do not see how this notion of immateriality, in the strict metaphysical sense of the word, is at all calculated to heighten our veneration for the Divine Being. And though, as is no wonder, we are utterly confounded when we attempt to form any conception of a being properly *pervading* and *supporting all things*, we are still more confounded when we endeavour to conceive of a being that has *no extension, no common property with matter, and no relation to space*. Also, by the help of these principles, which I have been endeavouring to establish, we get rid of two difficulties, which appear to me to be absolutely insuperable upon the common hypothesis, viz. how an immaterial being, not existing in space, can *create*, or act upon, matter; when, according to the definition of the terms, they are absolutely incapable of bearing any relation to each other.

SECTION XVI.

Of the Arguments for the BEING and PERFECTIONS of GOD, on the System of Materialism.

NOTWITHSTANDING the opinion of the *materiality of man* has, in reality, nothing at all to do with the doctrine concerning *God*, yet, as it has often been charged with *leading to Atheism*, I shall shew, in this Section, that our practical knowledge of God stands independent of any conception whatever concerning even the *Divine essence*; from whence it will clearly follow, *a fortiori*, that it must certainly be altogether independent of any opinion concerning *human nature*.

The arguments for the being and attributes of a God stand precisely upon the same footing on the system of materiality or immateriality. Considering, however, the prejudices that may arise on this subject, it may not be amiss to review some of the arguments, as laid down in my *Institutes of Natural Religion*, where I made such a distribution of the

subject, as I hope will make the discussion of it more easy than it had been before.*

By a *God*, I mean an *intelligent first cause*. This being proved, I consider what other properties or attributes are necessarily connected with the idea of a first cause, and afterwards those which the examination of the works of God leads us to ascribe to him. Lastly, the divine goodness being the only *moral quality* that we directly discover, I consider how it is necessarily branched out into the different modifications of *justice, mercy, veracity, &c.*

In the proof of an intelligent cause of all things, it is impossible that the consideration of the *divine essence* can be at all concerned. For the same reason that the *table* on which I write, or the *watch* that lies before me, must have had a maker, *myself*, and the *world* I live in, must have had a maker too: and a *design, a fitness of parts to each other, and to an end*, are no less obvious in the one case than in the other. I have, therefore, the very same reason to conclude, that an intelligent mind produced the one, as the other (meaning by the word *mind* the subject of intelligence); and my idea of the *degree* of intelligence requisite for each of these productions, rises in proportion to the number of particulars necessary to be attended to in each, and the completeness with which they are adapted to the ends which they manifestly subserve. Judging by this obvious rule, I necessarily conclude, that the intelligence of the being that made myself and the world, must infinitely exceed that of the person who made the table or the watch.

This simple argument for the being of a God, or an intelligent maker of all things, notwithstanding Dr. Oswald, out of his great zeal for religion, has mustered up all his logic to invalidate it, I consider as *irrefragable*, whether we be able to proceed any farther in the inquiry or not.

Again, for the same reason that the *maker* of the *table*, or of the *watch*, must be different from the table, or the watch, it is equally manifest that the maker of *myself*, of the *world*, and of the *universe* (meaning by it all the worlds that we suppose to exist), must be a being different from myself, the world, or the universe; which is a sufficient answer to the reasoning of Spinoza, who, making the *universe itself* to be God, did, in fact, deny that there was any God. I am not acquainted with any arguments more conclusive than these; that is, supposing a God to exist, it is not in nature possible

* See Vol. II pp. 1—24.

that there could have been more or stronger evidence of it than we find. This argument is, in fact, the foundation of all our practical and useful knowledge concerning God, and in this the consideration of materiality or immateriality has certainly no concern.

The argument also against an *eternal succession of finite beings*, of *men*, for instance, none of which had any more knowledge or ability than another, is the very same on both the hypotheses, here being an effect without any adequate cause; since this *succession of men* must have required, at least, as much intelligence and power as the production of a *single man*, that is, an intelligence and power infinitely exceeding that of any man, and consequently that of any one in this supposed succession of men.

Also the conception of a being who had *no cause* is attended with just the same, and no greater difficulty on the supposition of this primary cause of all things being *material*, or *immaterial*. The *beginning of motion in matter*, or the *beginning of thought in mind*, is, in this view, the very same thing; because, judging by ourselves (from whence we get all the *data* that we have for forming any judgment in the case at all) every thought is as much caused by something in the body, or the mind, preceding it, and influencing the mind, by certain invariable laws, as every motion of the body. We have no experience of any thing that can help us to form any judgment at all concerning the *original beginning of motion*, or *primary activity*, in any respect. To say that an immaterial being is capable of this, but that a material one is incapable of it, is merely deceiving ourselves, and concealing our ignorance and total want of conception, in *words* only, without any ideas adequate to the subject.

A first cause, therefore, being proved in a manner quite independent of any consideration of materiality or immateriality, it follows that the *eternity* and *unchangeableness* of the first cause stands upon the very same grounds upon either hypothesis, being derived simply from the consideration of an uncaused being.

If, from the consideration of these necessary attributes of a *first cause*, we proceed to the consideration of *the works of God*, we find innumerable things exactly similar to such as would unavoidably lead us to the ideas of *power*, *wisdom* and *goodness* in man; and therefore we are necessarily led to ascribe wisdom, power and goodness to this first cause.

But to what kind of *essence* these attributes belong, material or immaterial, the effects themselves give us no information.

Lastly, the philosopher admits the belief of *one God*, in opposition to a multiplicity of Gods, on account of the *unity of design* apparent in the universe; and because it is contrary to the rules of philosophizing to suppose more causes than are necessary to explain effects. In this great argument, therefore, materiality or immateriality are equally unconcerned.

And in the same manner it might be shewn, that the argument for a *Divine Providence* suffers no injury whatever by this hypothesis. If nothing was *made*, it is equally certain that nothing can *happen*, or *come to pass*, without a design; and there can be no reason whatever why this should not extend to the smallest things, and the most seemingly inconsiderable events, as well as to things of greater magnitude, and events of greater apparent moment. Besides, the smallest things, and the most trifling circumstances, may have the most important influences; and therefore they could not be neglected in the comprehensive plan of Divine Providence, without an inattention to things of the greatest consequence that might depend upon them. So that, in a truly philosophical view, there is nothing exaggerated in our Saviour's saying, that *Even a sparrow falls not to the ground without the will, the knowledge and design of our heavenly Father*, and that *the very hairs of our heads are numbered*.

If, after this candid, explicit, and I hope clear and satisfactory view of the subject, any person will tax my opinions, according to which the Divine essence is nothing that was ever called matter, but something essentially different from it (though I have shewn that the belief of all his attributes and providence is compatible with *any* opinion concerning his essence) with *atheism*, I shall tax him with great *stupidity*, or *malignity*. In my own idea, I have all the foundation that the nature of things admits of for a firm belief in a first, eternal, unchangeable and intelligent cause of all things; and I have all the proof that can be given of his almighty power, infinite goodness, and constant providence. And this system of *natural religion* affords all the foundation that can be had in support of *revealed religion*, the history of which is contained in the books of Scripture, which I most cordially and thankfully receive; and the

truth of which I have endeavoured, in the best manner I have been able, to prove, in the second volume of my *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*.*

That the hypothesis even of the *materiality of the Divine nature* is not a dangerous one, is even demonstrable from this single consideration, that it is, in fact, the idea that all the vulgar actually do form of God, whenever they think of him at all. For a substance, properly *immaterial*, cannot give us any *proper idea* whatever, and some idea or other we cannot avoid having whenever we think of a being possessed of the attributes that we ascribe to God. It is necessarily either the idea of a being of some particular, though perhaps variable, form, or else infinitely diffused, and not the object of our senses. If, therefore, this idea could do harm, almost all mankind must have received that harm; and, notwithstanding all our laboured refinements, the evil is, with respect to the bulk of mankind at least, naturally irremediable. But no harm whatever has come from it, nor is any to be apprehended.

To shew that I am not singular in my idea of the perfect innocence of any method of expressing the Divine essence, I shall close this Section with the testimony of some of the most pious and respectable writers of the last and present age, and who cannot be suspected of any undue prejudice, because they did not embrace the system they plead in favour of. The writers I shall produce are Ramsay, Cudworth and Beausobre.

“True atheism consists in denying, that there is a Supreme Intelligence which has produced the world by his power, and governs it by his wisdom.”†

“All corporealists must not be condemned for atheists, but only those of them who assert that there is no conscious, intellectual nature presiding over the whole universe.”‡

“I am well persuaded, that God is a *pure intelligence*; but the more I reflect on the subject, the more disposed I find myself to treat the contrary opinion with indulgence. The ablest Cartesians acknowledge, that we have no idea of a spiritual substance. We only know by experience that it thinks, but we do not know what is the *nature* of the being,

* See Part II. in Vol. II. pp. 65—230.

† Ramsay, p. 274. (P.) “Le véritable Athéisme consiste à nier qu’il y ait une Intelligence Souveraine qui ait produit le monde par sa puissance, et qui le gouverne par sa sagesse.” *Discours sur la Mythologie*, annexed to *Les Voyages De Cyrus*, 1762, p. 274.

‡ Cudworth I. p. 186. (P.) *Intellectual System*. B. I. Ch. II. Sect. xxx. *ad fin.* Ed. 2, by Birch, 1743.

whose modifications are thoughts. We do not know what is the *foundation*, the *subject*, in which the thoughts inhere. Secondly, whatever be the error of believing God to be corporeal, religion suffers nothing by it. Adoration, the love of God, and obedience to his sovereign will, remain entire. He is not less the *most holy*, the *most high*, the *almighty*, and the *immortal*.—Were Tertullian, Melito, &c., who believed God to be corporeal, on that account, the less good Christians? Lastly, what ought at least to moderate the rage of those who are always ready to dart their anathemas, is, that the wisest of the Fathers acknowledge not only that the Divine nature is inexplicable, but that we cannot speak of it without making use of expressions which agree to corporeal substances only.”*

SECTION XVII.

Observations on PERSONAL IDENTITY with respect to the future State of Man.

THE opinion of the mortality of the thinking part of man is thought by some to be unfavourable to morality and religion, but without the least reason, as they who urge this objection at present, must be unacquainted with the sentiments of Christian divines upon the subject in ancient and present times. The excellent bishop of Carlisle has sufficiently proved the insensibility of the soul from death to the resurrection (which has the same practical consequences), to be the doctrine of the Scriptures, and the learned archdeacon Blackburne has traced the corruption of it from the earliest ages.†

* Beausobre, Vol. I. p. 485. (P.) “Je suis très—persuadé, que Dieu est une Intelligence pure; mais plus je fais de réflexion sur ce sujet, et plus je me trouve disposé à traiter avec indulgence l'opinion contraire. Car premièrement, les plus habiles Cartesiens conviennent, que nous n'avons point d'idée de la substance spirituelle. Nous savons seulement par expérience qu'elle pense, mais nous ne savons point quelle est la nature de l'Être, dont les modifications sont des pensées: Nous ne connoissons point quel est le fond, le sujet, au quel les pensées sont inhérentes. Secondement, quelle que soit l'erreur de croire Dieu corporel, la Religion n'en souffre point: L'adoration, l'amour de Dieu, l'obéissance à ses ordres souverains, demeurent dans leur entier. Il n'est pas moins le *Très-Saint*, le *Très-Grand*, le *Tout-Puissant*, l'*Immortel*. Celui qui croit que la Nature Divine est une Lumière étendue, la croit-il moins une *Nature parfaitement sainte, très-pure, invisible*? Tertullian, Meliton, &c. qui croyoient Dieu corporel, en furent-ils moins bons Chrétiens? Enfin ce qui doit au moins rappeler à la modération ces esprits fiers toujours prêts à lancer des Anathèmes, c'est, que les plus savans et les plus éloquens des Pères, reconnoissent, non seulement que la Nature Divine est inexplicable, mais qu'on ne peut en parler sans se servir d'expressions qui ne conviennent qu'aux substances corporelles.” *Histoire*, I. p. 485. See also *Bayle*, Art. *Simonide*.

† See Vol. II. p. 258, and Blackburne's *Historical View*, *passim*.

In fact, the common opinion of the soul of man surviving the body was (as will be shewn) introduced into Christianity from the Oriental and Greek philosophy, which in many respects exceedingly altered and debased the true Christian system. This notion is one of the main bulwarks of Popery; it was discarded by Luther,* and many other reformers in England and abroad; and it was wisely left out in the last correction of the Articles of the Church of England,† though incautiously retained in the burial service. Now, can it be supposed, that the apostles, the primitive fathers, and modern reformers, should all adopt an opinion unfavourable to morality?

It was objected to the primitive Christians, as it may be at present, that if all our hopes of a future life rest upon the doctrine of a *resurrection*, we place it upon a foundation that is very precarious. It is even said that a proper resurrection is not only in the highest degree improbable, but actually impossible; since, after death, the body putrifies, and the parts that composed it are dispersed, and form other bodies, which have an equal claim to the same resurrection. And where, they say, can be the propriety of rewards and punishments, if the man that rises again be not identically *the same* with the man that acted and died?

Now, though it is my own opinion, that we shall be *identically the same beings* after the resurrection that we are at present, I shall, for the sake of those who may entertain a different opinion, speculate a little upon their hypothesis; to shew that it is not inconsistent with a state of future rewards and punishments, and that it supplies motives sufficient for the regulation of our conduct here, with a view to it. And, metaphysical as the subject necessarily is, I do not despair of satisfying those who will give a due attention to it, that the propriety of rewards and punishments, with our hopes and fears derived from them, do not at all depend upon such a kind of identity as the objection that I have stated supposes.

If I may be allowed, for the sake of distinction, to introduce a new term, I would say, that *the identity of the man*, is different from the *identity of the person*; and it is the latter, and not the former, that we ought to consider in a disquisition of this kind. The distinction I have men-

* See Vol. II. p. 60. and Hist. View, pp. 19—15, and Appendix.

† "In consideration, as it should seem, that by allowing *separate* souls to have sense, feeling and perception, the doctrines of Purgatory and Invocation would very naturally follow." *Hist. View*, pp. 34 and 36.

tioned may appear a paradox, but, in fact, similar distinctions are not uncommon, and they may illustrate one another.

Ask any person to shew you the *river Thames*, and he will point to water flowing in a certain channel, and you will find that he does not consider the *banks*, or the *bed* of the river, to be any part of it. And yet, though the water be continually and visibly changing so as not to be the same any one day with the preceding, the use of language proves, that there is a sense in which it may be called, to every real purpose, the *same river* that it was a thousand years ago. So also the *Nile*, the *Euphrates*, and the *Tiber*, have an identity *as rivers* independently of the *water*, of which alone they consist. In the same manner *forests*, which consist of *trees* growing in certain places, preserve their identity, though all the trees of which they consist decay, and others grow up in their places.

In like manner, though every person should be satisfied of what I believe is not true, that in the course of nutrition, digestion and egestion, every particle of the body, and even of the brain (and it should be taken for granted, that the whole man consisted of nothing else) was entirely changed, and that this change, though gradual and insensible, could be demonstrated to take place completely in the course of a year, we should, I doubt not, still retain the idea of a real *identity*, and such a one as would be the proper foundation for approbation, or self-reproach, with respect to the past, and for hope and fear with respect to the future. A man would claim his wife; and a woman her husband, after more than a year's absence; debts of a year's standing would not be considered as cancelled, and the villain who had absconded for a year would not escape punishment.

In fact, the universal and firm belief of this hypothesis would make no change whatever in our present conduct, or in our sense of *obligation*, respecting the duties of life, and the propriety of rewards and punishments; and consequently all hopes and fears, and expectations of every kind, would operate exactly as before. For, notwithstanding the complete change of the *man*, there would be no change of what I should call the *person*.

Now, if the water of a river, the trees of a forest, or the particles that constitute the man, should change *every moment*, and we were all acquainted with it, it would make no more difference in our conduct, than if the same change had been considered as taking place more slowly. Supposing that this change should constantly take place during

sleep, our behaviour to each other in the morning would still be regulated by a regard to the transactions of the preceding day. In this case, were any person fully persuaded that every particle of which he consisted should be changed, he would, nevertheless, consider himself as being the *same person* to-morrow that he was yesterday, and the same twenty years hence that he was twenty years ago; and, I doubt not, he would feel himself concerned as for a *future self*, and regulate his conduct accordingly.

As far as the idea of identity is requisite, as a foundation for rewards and punishments, the *sameness and continuity of consciousness* seems to be the only circumstance attended to by us. If we knew that a person had, by disease or old age, lost all remembrance of his past actions, we should, in most cases, immediately see that there would be an impropriety in punishing him for his previous offences, as it would answer no *end* of punishment, to himself or others. In the case, however, of *notorious criminality*, the association of a man's crime, with every thing belonging to him, is so strong and so extensive, that we wreak our vengeance upon the dead body, the children, the habitation, and every thing that had been connected with the criminal; and likewise in the case of *distinguished merit*, we extend our gratitude and benevolence to all the remains and connexions of the hero and the friend. But as men habituate themselves to reflection, they lay aside this *indiscriminate vengeance*, and confine it to the person of the criminal, and to the state in which he retains the remembrance of his crimes. Every thing farther is deemed barbarous and useless.

Admitting, therefore, that the man consists wholly of *matter*, as much as the *river* does of *water*, or the *forest* of *trees*, and that this matter should be wholly changed in the interval between death and the resurrection; yet, if, after this state, we shall all know one another again, and converse together as before, we shall be, to all intents and purposes, the *same persons*. Our *personal identity* will be sufficiently preserved, and the expectation of it at present will have a proper influence on our conduct.

To consider the matter philosophically, what peculiar excellence is there in those particles of matter which compose my body, more than those which compose the table on which I write; and consequently, what *rational motive* can I have for preferring, or attaching myself to the one more than to the other? If I knew that they were instantly, and without any painful sensation to myself, to change places,

I do not think that it would give me any concern. As to those who are incapable of reflecting in this manner, as they cannot understand the *objection*, there is no occasion to make them understand the *answer*.

However, notwithstanding I give this solution of the difficulty, for the satisfaction of sceptical and metaphysical persons, I myself believe the doctrine of the *resurrection of the dead* in another, and more literal sense. Death, with its concomitant putrefaction, and dispersion of parts, is only a *decomposition*; and whatever is *decomposed* may be *re-composed* by the Being who first composed it; and I doubt not but that, in the proper sense of the word, *the same body* that dies shall rise again, not with every thing that is *adventitious* and *extraneous* (as all that we receive by nutrition), but with the same *stamina*, or those particles that really belonged to the *germ* of the organical body. And there can be no proof that these particles are ever properly destroyed, or interchanged. This opinion was advanced by Dr. Watts,* and no man can say that it is unphilosophical.

That excellent philosopher, Mr. Bonnet, supposes (and advances a variety of arguments from new and curious experiments on the reproduction of the parts of animals to prove) that all the *germs* of future plants, organical bodies of all kinds, and the reproducible parts of them, were really contained in the first germ; and though the consideration confounds us when we contemplate it, we are not more confounded than in the contemplation of other views of the system of which we make a part; and the thing is no more incompatible with our idea of the omnipotence of its Author. Those who laugh at the mere mention of such a thing, have certainly a small share of *natural science*, which indeed generally accompanies conceit and dogmatism.

This idea of the doctrine of the resurrection is perfectly agreeable to the light in which St. Paul represents it, (though I should not condemn his comparison, if it should be found not to be so complete,) when he compares it to the revival of a *seed* that has been sown in the earth, and become seemingly *dead*. For the *germ* does not die, and in our future transformation we may be as different from what we are in our present state, as the *plant* is from the *seed*, or the *butterfly* from the *egg*, and yet be essentially the same.

* "We may allow without any difficulty, that so many of the same particles of any man's body which were buried may go to constitute the new raised body, as justly to denominate it the same body." *Phil. Essays*, VIII. Watts's Works, 1800, VI. p. 557.

Dr. Hartley also, and others, suppose that strictly speaking, there will be nothing more *miraculous* in our resurrection to a future life, than there was in our *birth*, to the present ; for that, in the circumstances in which the world will be at the general consummation of all things, these *germs* as we may call them, may naturally and necessarily revive, according to some fixed, but to us, unknown laws of nature.*

There have even been unbelievers in revelation, who have seen nothing to object to in this supposition.

“ Let us not,” says the author of *Man a Machine*, “ pretend to say, that every machine or animal, is entirely annihilated after death, nor that they put on another form, since we are quite in the dark as to this point. To affirm an immortal machine to be a chimera, a fiction of our brain, appears to be as absurd as it would seem in caterpillars, when they see the dead bodies of their kind, bitterly to lament the fate of their species, which would seem to them to be utterly destroyed. The soul of these insects is too narrow and confined to be able to comprehend the transformation of their nature. Never did any one of the acutest amongst them entertain the least notion that he would become a butterfly. It is the very same case with us. What do we know of our future destiny more than we do of our original ?” †

I shall close this Section with some observations respecting a *term* I made use of when I gave to the public the first hint of the sentiment maintained in this treatise, which was in my edition of *Dr. Hartley's Theory*. It was that, according to appearances, *the whole man becomes extinct at death*. This was thought to be rather incautious by some of my friends, and my enemies eagerly caught at it, as thinking I had given them a great advantage over me ; ‡ and yet I still think the

* “ Analogy seems to intimate, that the resurrection will be effected by means strictly natural. And thus every man may rise in his own order.” *Obs.* Pt. II. Prop. XC.

† “ Ne disons point que toute machine, ou tout animal, périt tout-à-fait, ou prend une autre forme, après la mort ; car nous n'en savons absolument rien. Mais assurez qu'une machine immortelle est une chimère, ou un être de raison, c'est faire un raisonnement aussi absurde que celui que feroient des chenilles, qui, voyant les dépouilles de leurs semblables, déplorent le sort de leur espèce qui leur sembleroit s'anéantir l'âme de ces insectes (car chaque animal a la sienne) est trop bornée pour comprendre les métamorphoses de la nature. Jamais un seul de plus rusés d'entr'eux n'eût imaginé qu'il dût devenir papillon. Il en est de même de nous. Que savons nous plus de notre destinée que de notre origine ?” This author adds, “ Soumettons nous donc à une ignorance invincible, de laquelle notre bonheur dépend.” *L'Homme Machine*, “ Œuvres, Philosophiques de M. De la Mettrie.” Berlin, 1774, I. p. 354. *L'Homme Machine*, “ was burnt in Holland in 1748,” and “ translated and published in London, in 1750.” See Judge Cooper, *Mem. of Priestley*, 8vo. p. 309.

‡ See p. 182, and Note*.

term very proper, and that to object to this application, betrays an ignorance even of the real meaning of that English word.

Some of them seem to have supposed, that by *the extinction of the whole man*, I mean the absolute *annihilation* of him, so that when a man dies, whatever it was that constituted him, *ceases to exist*. But then I must have supposed, that the moment a man is dead he absolutely *vanishes away*, so that his friends can find nothing of him left to carry to the grave. Mr. Hallet, treating of this subject, uses an expression much more nearly approaching to the idea of *annihilation*, when he says, "It looks as if the whole man *was gone*,"* and I do not know that the expression was ever objected to.

Nor does the word *extinction*, as it is generally understood, imply any such thing as *annihilation*. When we say, that a *candle is extinguished*, which is using the word in its primary and most proper sense, we surely do not mean that it is annihilated, and therefore, that there is nothing left to light again. Even the *particles of light* which it has emitted we only suppose to be *dispersed*, and therefore to be capable of being *collected* again. As, therefore, a candle, though extinguished is capable of being lighted again, so, though a man may be said, figuratively speaking, *to become extinct at death*, and his capacity for thinking cease, it may only be for a time: for no particle of that which ever constituted the man is lost. And, as I observed before, whatever is *decomposed* may certainly be *recomposed*, by the same almighty power that first composed it, with whatever change in its constitution, advantageous or disadvantageous, he shall think proper; and then the powers of thinking, and whatever depended upon them, will return of course, and the man will be in the most proper sense, *the same being that he was before*.

This is precisely the Apostle Paul's idea of *the resurrection of the dead*, as the only foundation for a future life; and it is to this to which I mean to adhere, exclusive of all the additional, vain supports, which either the *Oriental*, or *Platonic* philosophy has been thought to afford to this great doctrine of *pure revelation*. I have, however, been represented as having, by this view of the subject, furnished a stronger argument against revelation than any that infidelity has hitherto discovered, and the atheists of the age have

* See the quotation, p. 245, *ad fin.*

been described as *triumphing* in my concessions; when, whatever triumph atheists may derive from *my* concessions and my writings, the very same they may derive from the writings of *St. Paul* himself, which is certainly much more to their purpose.

Farther, though I have been charged with being an abetter of *atheism*, it has been, by persons who have urged against my opinion, the hackneyed objection that all unbelievers of ancient and modern times have made against the doctrine of *any resurrection*, viz. from the consideration of the matter that once composed the human body entering, afterwards, into the composition of plants, animals, &c., not considering that this objection equally affects the doctrine of *St. Paul*, and that of all Christians who maintain what may, by any possible construction of the words be called *a resurrection of the dead*; which certainly requires that it is something that dies, and is put into the grave (and an *immaterial soul* is never supposed to die at all), that must *revive* and *rise again* out of it.

SECTION XVIII.

Of the Origin of the Popular Opinions concerning the Soul.

THOUGH *truth* be a thing altogether independent of the *opinions of men*, yet when any erroneous doctrine has prevailed long in the world, and has had a very general spread, we are apt to suspect that it must have come from some sufficient authority, unless we be able to trace the rise and progress of it, and can assign some plausible reason for its general reception. On this account I shall enter into a pretty large historical detail concerning the system that I have, in this treatise, called in question; and I hope to be able to shew, that it can by no means boast so respectable an origin as many are willing to ascribe to it. On the contrary, I hope to make it appear, that it has arisen from nothing but mere superstition, and the vain imaginations of men, flattering themselves with a higher origin than they had any proper claim to, though the precise date of the system may be of too remote antiquity to be ascertained with absolute certainty at this day.

The notion of the soul of man being a substance distinct from the body, has been shewn, and I hope to satisfaction, not to have been known to the writers of the Scriptures, and especially those of the Old Testament. According to the uniform system of revelation, all our hopes of a future life

are built upon another, and I may say an opposite foundation, viz. that of the *resurrection* of something belonging to us that *dies*, and is buried, that is, the *body*, which is always considered as *the man*. This doctrine is manifestly superfluous on the idea of the soul being a substance so distinct from the body as to be unaffected by its death, and able to subsist, and even to be more free and happy, without the body. This opinion, therefore, not having been known to the *Jews*, and being repugnant to the scheme of *revelation*, must have had its source in *heathenism*; but with respect to the *date* of its appearance, and the *manner of its introduction*, there is room for conjecture and speculation.

As far as we are able to collect any thing concerning the history of this opinion, it is evidently not the growth of Greece or Rome, but was received by the philosophers of those countries either from Egypt, or the countries more to the East. The Greeks in general refer it to the Egyptians, but Pausanias gives it to the Chaldeans, or the Indians. I own, however, (though every thing relating to so very obscure a subject must be in a great measure conjectural,) that I am inclined to ascribe it to the Egyptians; thinking, with Mr. Toland, that it might possibly have been suggested by some of their known customs respecting the dead, whom they preserved with great care, and disposed of with a solemnity unknown to other nations; though it might have arisen among them from other causes without the help of those peculiar customs.

The authority of Herodotus, the oldest Greek historian, and who had himself travelled into Egypt, is very express to this purpose. He says, that “the Egyptians were the first who maintained that the soul of man is immortal; that when the body dies it enters into that of some other animal; and when it has transmigrated through all terrestrial, marine and flying animals, it returns to the body of a man again. This revolution is completed in three thousand years.” He adds, that “several Greeks, whose names he would not mention, had published that doctrine as their own.”*

Mr. Toland’s hypothesis is as follows, and I think I should do wrong to omit the mention of it. My reader may judge of the probability of it for himself. Of the Egyptians, he says, “the funeral rites and their historical method of preserving the memory of deserving persons, seem, in all probability, to have been the occasional causes of this belief.

* Ed. Steph. p. 157. (P.) *Enterpe*, cxxiii. See *Beloe*, II. p. 36.

Their way of burying was by embalming the dead bodies, which they deposited in subterranean grots, where they continued entire for thousands of years; so that before any notion of separate or immortal souls, the common language was, that *such a one was under ground*, that *he was carried over the river Acherusia by Charon* (the title of the public ferryman for this purpose), and *laid happily to rest in the Elysian fields*, which were the common burying-place near Memphis." *

This hypothesis is rendered more probable by an observation of Cicero's. He says, "the bodies falling to the ground, and being buried there, it was imagined that the deceased passed the rest of their life under ground." Among other absurdities flowing from this notion, he says, that "though the bodies were buried, they still imagined them to be *apud inferos*;" and "whereas they could not conceive the mind to exist of itself, they gave it a form or figure." †

I think, however, that the notion of there being something in man distinct from his body, and the cause of his feeling, thinking, willing, and his other mental operations and affections, might very well occur in those rude ages without such a step as this; though no doubt the custom above-mentioned would much contribute to it. Nothing is more common than to observe how very ready all illiterate persons are to ascribe the cause of any difficult appearance to an *invisible agent*, distinct from the subject on which the operation is exerted. This led the Jews (after the Heathens) to the idea of madmen being possessed of *dæmons*; and it is peculiarly remarkable, how very ready mankind have always been to ascribe the unknown cause of extraordinary appearances to something to which they can give the name *spirit*, after this term had been once applied in a similar manner. Thus, that which struck an animal dead over fermenting liquor, was first called the *gas*, or *spirit of the liquor*, while the fermented liquor itself also, being possessed of very active powers, was thought to contain *another kind of spirit*; and many times do we hear

* Letters to Serena, 1704, p. 45. (P.) Serena was the accomplished Queen of Prussia, *Sophia Charlotte*, sister of Geo. I. She died at Hanover in 1705. See her Grandson, Fred. III. *Mem. pour servir à l'Hist. de Brandenburgh*, 1751, Pt. 1, p. 31; Biog. Brit. Ed. 1, Art. *Toland*; Towers's *Fred. III. Ed. 2, l. p. 96*, and *Mon. Repos. VIII. p. 579*.

† Tusculan Questions, Ed. Glas. p. 37. (P.) "In terram enim cadentibus corporibus, hisque *humo* tectis,—sub terra censebat reliquam vitam agi mortuorum.—Tantum que valuit error—nt corpora cremata cum scirent, tamen ea fieri apud inferos fingerent.—Animos enim per se ipsos viventis non poterant mente complecti; formam aliquam figuramque querebant." L. i, S. xvi. *Cantab. 1733, l. pp. 36, 37*.

ignorant persons, on seeing a remarkable experiment in philosophy, especially if *air* or any *invisible fluid* be concerned in it, perfectly satisfied with saying, that is the *spirit of it*. Now, though the idea of a spirit, as a distinct substance from the body, did not perhaps immediately occur in all these cases, their conceptions might afford a foundation for such an hypothesis.

It would be most natural, however, at first, to ascribe the cause of thought to something that made a *visible* difference between a living and a dead man; and *breathing* being the most obvious difference of this kind, those powers would be ascribed to his *breath*; and accordingly we find, that in the Hebrew, Greek and Latin languages, the name of the *soul* is the same with that of *breath*. From whence we may safely infer, that originally it was considered as nothing else, and hence the custom of receiving the *parting breath* of dying persons, as if to catch their departing souls. And though, to appearance, the breath of a man mixes with the rest of the air, yet, the nature of air being very little known, it was not at all extraordinary that it should have been considered as not *really* mixing with the atmosphere, but as ascending by its levity to the higher regions above the clouds. And men having got this idea, the notion of its having *come down from above the clouds*, where God was supposed to reside, would naturally enough follow.

But living bodies differ from dead ones by their *warmth*, as well as by the circumstance of breathing. Hence might come the idea of the principle of life and thought being a kind of *vital fire*; and, as flame always ascends, men would, of course, imagine that the soul of man, when set loose from the body, would ascend to the *region of fire*, which was supposed to be above the atmosphere. From these leading ideas, it could not be difficult for the imagination of speculative men to make out a complete system of *pre-existence* and *transmigration*; and there being so much of *fancy* in it, it is still less to be wondered at, that it should have been diversified so much as we find it to have been in different countries, and different schools of philosophy.

Diseases and other evils having their seat in the *body*, the *matter* of which it is composed might easily be conceived to be the source of those and all other evils; a disordered mind being, in many cases, the evident effect of a disordered body; and they who were disposed to believe in a benevolent Deity, would by this means easily make out to themselves a reason

for the *origin of evil*, without reflecting any blame upon God on that account. They would ascribe it to the *untractable nature of matter*.

Lastly, what could be more natural to account for the ethereal soul being confined to such a body or clog, as the supposition of its being a punishment for offences committed in a pre-existent state?

But the notion of a proper *immaterial being*, without all *extension or relation to place*, did not appear till of late years in comparison; what the ancients meant by an immaterial substance being nothing more than an *attenuated matter*, like *air, ether, fire, or light*, considered as fluids, beyond which their idea of *incorporeity* did not go. Psellus says, that the ancient Heathens, both Greeks and others, called only the grosser bodies, *τα παχύτερα των σωματων* corporeal.*

Indeed, the vulgar notion of a *soul or spirit*, wherever it has been found to exist, has been the same in all ages; and in this respect, even the learned of ancient times are only to be considered as the vulgar. We gather from Homer, that the belief of his time was, that the ghost bore the shape of, and exactly resembled the deceased person to whom it had belonged; that it wandered upon the earth, near the place where the body lay, till it was buried, at which time it was admitted to the shades below. In both these states it was possessed of the entire consciousness, and retained the friendships and enmities of the man. But in the case of deified persons, it was supposed that, besides this ghost, there was something more ethereal or divine belonging to them, like *another better self*, that ascended to the upper regions, and was associated with the immortal gods.

All the Pagans of the East, says Loubere (quoted by Mr. Locke), do truly believe, that "there remains something of a man after his death, which subsists independently and separately from his body. But they give extension and figure to that which remains, and attribute to it all the same members, all the same substances, both solid and liquid, which bodies are composed of. They only suppose, that the souls are of a matter subtle enough to escape being seen or handled." †

When it had been imagined, that the vital and thinking powers of man resided in a distinct principle or substance, it would be natural to ascribe such a principle to every thing

* Le Clerc's Index Philologicus, *Materia*. (P.)

† *Essay* II. p. 162. (P.) "Second Reply," *ad fin.* Works, I. p. 602, from *Loubere's Travels*, Pt. iii. Ch. xix.

that had *motion*, and especially a regular motion, and that had any remarkable *influences*, good or bad, particularly to such resplendent bodies as the *sun*, *moon*, *stars* and *planets*. Accordingly, we find it to be one of the oldest opinions in heathen antiquity, that those heavenly bodies were animated as well as men. This opinion was even held by Origen, and other philosophizing Christians.

Mr. Toland, however, conjectures that another Egyptian custom might facilitate the introduction of this system. "Among other methods," he says, "they had of perpetuating events, the surest of all was to impose the names of memorable persons and things on the constellations, as the only *eternal monuments*, not subject to the violence of men or brutes, nor to the injury of time or weather. This custom was derived from them to other nations, who changed, indeed, the names, but gave new ones to the stars for the same end.—But the unconsidering vulgar, hearing the learned constantly talk of certain persons, *in the stars*, believed them at last to be really there, and that all the others were *under ground*."* One may add, that this might possibly give rise to the notion of a *twofold soul*, one that went under ground, and another that went to the stars.

Upon the whole, Mr. Toland's conjecture appears to me not to be destitute of probability. How far the Egyptians really carried their notions concerning the state of human souls, before or after death, doth not distinctly appear, because we have no Egyptian writings. But it is probable, that their ideas never ripened into such a system as was afterwards found in the East, on account of their empire and civil polity having been too soon overturned, and the country having undergone such a number of revolutions. Accordingly we find, that those who introduced as much of this system as was received in Greece did, in general, travel into the East for it.

SECTION XIX.

A View of the Different Opinions that have been held concerning the DIVINE ESSENCE, especially with a View to the Doctrine of Immateriality.

I HAVE considered the doctrine of proper *immateriality* both by the light of nature and also of the Scriptures, without finding any foundation for it in either. I shall now

* Letters to Serena, pp. 45, 46. (P.)

endeavour to trace what have been the notions that men in different ages and systems of philosophy, have entertained with respect to it, having little doubt but that it will appear, to the satisfaction of all unprejudiced persons, that the strict metaphysical notion of immateriality is really a *modern thing*, being unknown to all the wise ancients, whether Heathens or Christians; and therefore, that the rejection of it ought not to give any alarm to the serious Christian. It is no article in his faith that I am oppugning, but really an *upstart thing*, and a *nonentity*.

I shall begin with an account of opinions concerning the *supreme mind*, the parent and source of all intelligence, and afterwards consider the doctrines relating to the *human soul*. In this historical detail I shall also occasionally mention a few other circumstances, which may serve to shew the derivation of all the philosophical opinions concerning God from the same source.

It will throw considerable light upon this subject, to reflect, that it was a maxim with all the ancients, even till the time of the later Christian fathers and schoolmen, though I believe it to be false in itself, that nothing could be made out of nothing. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. In fact, the idea of *creation*, in the modern sense of the word, never occurred to them, they always meaning by it only a *forming*, or *new modelling* of things; and in this sense their maxim was true, for a carpenter must be provided with *wood* before he can make any instrument of wood. The ancients, therefore, in general, supposed that two distinct things or *principles*, had been from eternity, viz. *matter* and *spirit*, or *God*; and since inferior intelligences could not, in their opinion, be made from nothing, any more than gross bodies, the universal opinion was, that they were *emanations from the supreme mind*. And, as they generally considered the Divine Being as a *fire* or *light*, they explained the production of minds by the lighting of one candle at another, or by some other comparison of the same nature.

Now, since these are ideas that are known to have run through all the systems of the ancients, it is evident, that, in whatever terms they might express themselves, they could not, in reality, consider the Divine Being as strictly speaking, *without extension*, *indivisible*, or *indiscernible*, which is essential to proper immateriality. In fact, by such terms as *spiritual*, *incorporeal*, &c., as was observed before, they could only mean a more subtle and refined kind of matter, such as air, flame, light, &c. Also, wherever the

notion of the *absorption of all souls into the Deity*, or soul of the universe, prevailed, it is evident that the soul could not be considered in the light in which modern metaphysicians consider it; and this is known to have been a notion universally prevalent in the East, and in Greece.

“The Indian philosophers,” says Beausobre, “think that the Deity has a luminous body, invisible at present, because it is concealed behind another, either the heavens, or the world; but, that it will be revealed (i. e. become visible) some time.”* The Magi and Chaldeans also say, that God in his body resembles light, and in his mind *truth*. But truth is only a *property*, and no *substance* whatever. According to the same author, the first production of this great intellectual light, or fire, was the *υπερκοσμικον φως*, the supramundane light, which is defined to be *an infinite, incorporeal and lucid space, the happy seat of intellectual natures*.† Of this it is not easy to form an idea; but it may receive some little illustration from a notion of the Cabalists, who say, that all spirits were made out of the *Holy Ghost*, or spirit of God, which was made first.

The Cabalists, indeed, say that all creatures are emanations from the eternal Being, and that the attributes of the Deity being infinite, may produce an infinity of effects. It is extended when this substance composes spirits, and contracted when it makes matter;‡ so that it is evident they could have no notion of any thing properly immaterial. This doctrine of the Cabalists exists in the East, and probably came from thence.

The divine fire, the Magi say, was distributed to all creatures, and before all to the *prima mens*, as the oracles of Zoroaster teach, and then to other eternal and incorporeal natures, in which class are included innumerable inferior gods, angels, good demons, and the souls of men.

To come to the Greek philosophy, we find that Pythagoras, after the Magi, says, that “God, in his body resembles light, and in his soul truth. He is the universal spirit, that penetrates and diffuses itself through all nature.”|| Heraclitus defines God to be “that most subtile and most

* Vol. I. p. 467. (P.) “Ces philosophes Indiens vouloient dire, que la Divinité est revêtue d'un corps lumineux, lequel ne s'apperçoit pas à présent, parce qu'il est caché sous un autre, qui est ou le ciel, ou le monde; mais qu'elle se fera voir quelque jour.” L. iii. Ch. i. S. ii.

† Th. Stanleii Hist. Phil. Orientalis, per J. Clericum, Amst. 1690, pp. 25, 26. (P.)

‡ Basnage, III. p. 93. (P.)

|| Ramsay, p. 257. (P.) “Par son corps, il ressemble à la lumière et par son âme à la vérité. Il est l'esprit universel qui pénètre, et qui se répand par-toute la nature.” *Discours*.

swift substance, τὸ λεπτότατον καὶ τὸ τάχιζον, which permeates and passes through the whole universe, by which all things that are made, are made.* This is certainly no proper description of immateriality. Democritus also said, that God was of the form of fire, ἐμπυροειδῆ.†

Austin says, that he learned of the philosophers the incorporeality of God; but “it is not easy,” says Beausobre, “to determine what they meant by the *incorporeality of God.*”‡ In their language it did not exclude *extension*, or *body*, in a philosophical sense. Xenophanes, for example, believed that God was one, and eternal; but by this he only meant, that he was not material, organized, and like a man. The *ασωμάτα*, or the *incorporeal* of the Greeks, he adds, means nothing more than a subtle body; for example, like the air, as Origen has shewed in his *Principles*. Among the Latins, Austin imagined that there was a *spiritual matter*, out of which God made souls,|| which agrees with the notion above-mentioned of the Jewish Cabalists.

As to Plato, the same writer says, “I cannot say precisely what was his idea of the spirituality of God. The manner in which he expresses the formation of souls implies, that his *indivisible substance* is not absolutely without extension. He supposed that God took of both substances, the divisible and the indivisible, and, mixing them together, made a third, which is a soul. But this mixing of two substances, and the reciprocal action of the one upon the other, cannot be conceived, if the one be extended, and the other be absolutely without extension.”§ Besides, Plato speaks of God as *δια πασῶν ἰοῦσα*, pervading all things, and he derives the word *δικαίον*, which is applied to God from *δια ἰοῦ*, *passing through*, which does not suggest the idea of a proper immaterial being.

“God, angels and demons, say Porphyry and Jamblichus, are made of matter, but have no relation to what is corporeal.”¶

According to Cudworth, *Aristotle* defines incorporeal substances very properly, and says that God is such a substance; ** but if he did not make mind a mere *property*, he could only

* Cudworth, p. 505. (P.) B. i. Ch. iv. S. xxxii.

† Plutarch De Placitis Philosophorum, Lib. i. (P.)

‡ Vol. 1. p. 482. (P.) “Quant à *Platon*, je ne saurois dire précisément, quelle idée il eut de la spiritualité de Dieu.” L. iii. Ch. ii. S. vi.

|| Ibid. (P.) § Ibid. (P.)

¶ Encyclopedie, article *Immaterialisme*. (P.) “Dieu, les anges et les génies, disent Porphyre et Jamblique, sont faits de la matière; mais ils n’ont aucun rapport avec ce qui est corporel.” Fol. 1765, VIII. p. 570.

** P. 19. (P.) B. i. Ch. i. S. xx. *ad inît.*

mean that it was something of a subtle nature that eluded our senses.

The opinion of the Stoics concerning God, had nothing of incorporeal in it, but many circumstances which shew it to have been derived from the Oriental philosophy, as were other particulars of their doctrine. The following account of it is given by the accurate Mrs. Carter.

“They,” the Stoics, “plainly speak of the world as God, or of God as the soul of the world, which they call his substance, and I do not,” she says, “recollect any proof that they believed him to exist in the extramundane space. Yet they held the world to be finite and corruptible, and that, at certain periods, it was to undergo successive conflagrations, and then all beings were to be resorbed into God, and again reproduced by him. The Stoics sometimes define God to be an intelligent fiery spirit, without form, but passing into whatever things it pleases, and assimilating itself to all, sometimes active operative fire.” They moreover, “expressly speak of God as corporeal, which is objected to them by Plutarch. Indeed they defined all essence to be body.—They held the eternity of matter as a passive principle, but that it was reduced into form by God, and that the world was made, and is continually governed by him. They imagined the whole universe to be peopled with gods, genii and demons, and among other inferior divinities reckoned the sun, moon and stars, which they conceived to be animated and intelligent, or inhabited by particular deities, as the body is by the soul, who presided over them, and directed their motions.”*

The doctrine of the early Christian heretics, who are known to have derived their opinions from the East, may help to throw some light upon those ancient tenets, as they may be presumed to be very nearly the same. The Valentinians and Manicheans said that God was an eternal, intelligent and pure light, without any mixture of darkness, as we learn from Beausobre.† He elsewhere observes, that this is the language of the Magi, the Cabalists, and many of the Greek philosophers.‡ It appears by another circumstance, that they did not consider the Divine essence as so far incorporeal as to be *invisible*, for they maintained, that the luminous substance that was seen by the apostles on the

* Introduction to her Translation of Epictetus, pp. 7—10. (P.) 4th Ed. 1807, S. xiii. xiv. xv. xviii. I. pp. 10, 12, 13, 15.

† Vol. I. p. 466. (P.) “Une lumière qui existe par elle-même, qui n’admet rien d’étranger, nul mélange, nulle composition.” L. iii. Ch. i. Sect. ii.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 468. (P.) *Ibid.* *ad fin.*

Mount of Transfiguration was God.* Also though the Manicheans said, that God was indivisible and simple, they supposed, that he had real extension, and was even bounded by the regions of darkness, with which the Divine essence did not mix. Austin, while he was a Manichean, thought that God was corporeal and “extended, dispersed through the world, and into infinite space; because,” as he observes, “he could form no idea of a substance that had neither place nor extension.”† From these circumstances we may learn in what sense to understand other philosophers and divines of those early ages, when they speak of the *simplicity, spirituality* and *indivisibility* of the Divine essence.

I now proceed to give some account of the opinions of some of the *Christian Fathers* on this subject, which, I doubt not, will greatly surprise those of my readers who are not much acquainted with Christian antiquity. It is, however, almost wholly taken from that learned and excellent critic Beausobre. “The ablest and most orthodox Christian Fathers,” he says, “always say that God is a *light*, and a *sublime light*,‡ and that all the celestial powers which surround the Deity are *lights of a second order, rays of the first light*.” This is the general style of the Fathers before and after the council of Nice. “The *word* (they say) is a light that is come into the world, proceeding from the self-existent light. It is God born of God, it is an emanation of *light from light*.”§

“The Christians,” says the same writer, “who were always unanimous with respect to the *unity* of God, were by no means so with respect to his *nature*. The Scriptures not being explicit on the subject, each adopted what he thought the most probable opinion, or that of the philosophical school in which he had been educated. Thus an Epicurean who embraced Christianity was inclined to clothe the Deity with a *human form*, a Platonist said that God was *incorporeal*, and a Pythagorean that he was an *intelligent light* or *fire*. Another imagined, that the essence of God was

* Beausobre, Vol. I. p. 470. (P.) “Un grand nombre de pères Grecs ont crû, que les disciples du Seigneur virent sa divinité sur la montagne.” L. iii. Ch. i. S. iv. *ad fin.*

† Ibid. 473. (P.) “Il la croyoit repandue soit dans le monde, soit hors du monde dans des espaces infinis, parce qu’il ne pouvoit concevoir une substance, qui n’eût ni lieu, ni extension.” L. iii. Ch. i. S. vii. *ad fin.*

‡ Ibid. 468. (P.) “Les plus habiles et les plus orthodoxes disent constamment, que Dieu est une lumière, et une lumière très sublime.” L. iii. Ch. i. S. iii. *ad init.*

§ Ibid. 469. (P.) “Le Verbe, disent-ils, est la lumière, qui est venue dans le monde, et qui rejaillit de cette lumière, la quelle existe par elle-même. Il est Dieu né de Dieu, c’est une lumière qui émane d’une lumière.” L. iii. Ch. i. S. iii.

corporeal, but subtle, and ethereal, penetrating all bodies. Another, with Aristotle, that it had nothing in it of the elements that composed this world, but believed it to be of a *fifth nature*.”

“In general,” says my author, “the idea of a substance absolutely *incorporeal* was not a common idea with Christians at the beginning. When I,” he adds, “consider with what confidence Tertullian, who thought that God was *corporeal* and *figured* [*corporel et figure*] speaks of his opinion, it makes me suspect that it must have been the general opinion of the Latin Church. *Who can deny*,” says he, “*that God is a body, though he is a spirit? Every spirit is a body, and has a form proper to it.** Melito, so much boasted of for his virtues and knowledge, composed a treatise to prove *that God is corporeal*.” †

“The incorporeality of the Fathers did not exclude *visibility*, nor in consequence all sort of corporeality.” ‡ For there would be a manifest contradiction in saying, that corporeal eyes can see a being that has absolutely no extension. Those bishops also, who composed the Council of Constantinople, which decreed that there is an emanation from the Divine essence of an *uncreated light*, which is, as it were, his garment, and which appeared at the transfiguration of Christ, must have believed God to have been a luminous substance; “for it is impossible that a visible, and consequently a corporeal light, should be an emanation from a pure spirit.” §

On the mention of this subject, it may not be amiss to observe, that there was a famous dispute among the Greeks of the fourteenth century, whether the light which surrounded Christ at his transfiguration was created or uncreated. Gregorius Palamas, a famous monk of Mount Athos, maintained that it was uncreated, and Barlaam maintained the contrary opinion. It was objected to Palamas, that an uncreated light could not be seen by mortal eyes. But Leo Allatius attempted to remove this difficulty, by saying, that if mortal eyes “were fortified by a Divine virtue, they might see the Deity himself.” ||

“When,” continues my author, “I consider the manner in which the Greek fathers explain the *incarnation of Christ*, I cannot help concluding, that they thought the

* Beausobre adds, “Auroit-il jamais parlé de la sorte, si son opinion eût été particuliere, ou rare de son tems?”

† P. 474. (P.) L. iii. Ch. i. S. viii.

‡ P. 472. (P.) L. iii. Ch. i. S. vi.

§ P. 472. (P.) Ibid.

|| P. 471. (P.) L. iii. Ch. i. S. v.

Divine nature coporeal. ‘The incarnation,’ say they, ‘is a perfect mixture of the two natures; *the spiritual and subtle nature* penetrates the material and corporeal nature, till it is dispersed through the whole of that nature, and mixed entirely with it, so that there is no place in the material nature that is void of the spiritual nature.’**

“Clemens of Alexandria says, in so many words, that *God is corporeal.*” † Justin says, “All substance, which, on account of its tenuity, cannot be subject to any other, has, nevertheless a *body*, which constitutes its essence. If we call God *incorporeal*, it is not that he is so in reality, but—to speak of his attributes in the most respectful manner. It is because the essence of God cannot be perceived, and that we are not sensible of it, that we call it *incorporeal.*” ‡

“Tertullian believed God to be a body, because he thought that what was not a body was *nothing.*” He adds, “when we endeavour to form an idea of the Divinity, we cannot conceive of it but as a very pure *luminous air*, diffused every where.” § “Origen observed, that the word *incorporeal* is not in the Bible,” || and Jerome reproached him with making God corporeal. “Maximus did not believe the *immensity* of the Divine substance,—nor could any of those who thought him corporeal, because it was a maxim with them, that two substances could not be in the same place at the same time.” ¶ Austin says, that God is a *spiritual light*, and that this light “is no other than *truth*. Is truth nothing, says he, because it is not diffused through space, finite or infinite?”** This is the very language of the Magi.

Those passages of Scripture which speak of God as a

* P. 476. (P.) L. iii. Ch. i. *ad fin.*

† Encyclopedie, article *Immaterialisme*. (P.) “St. Clement d’Alexandrie a dit en termes formels, que Dieu étoit corporel.” VIII. p. 572.

‡ Ibid. (P.) “Toute la substance,” dit il [St. Justin] qui ne peut-être soumise à aucune autre à cause de sa légèreté, a cependant un corps qui constitue son essence. Si nous appellons Dieu *incorporel*, ce n’est pas qu’il le soit; mais c’est parceque nous sommes accoutumés d’approprier certains noms à certaines choses, à désigner le plus respectueusement qu’il nous est possible, les attributs de la Divinité. Ainsi, parceque l’essence de Dieu ne peut être apperçue, et ne nous est point sensible, nous l’appellons *incorporel.*” Ibid.

§ Beausobre, p. 477. (P.) “Tertullien n’a cru Dieu corporel, que parce qu’il étoit persuadé, que tout ce qui n’est pas corps est un pur ueant. Il ajoûte, que nous mêmes, lors que nous voulons nous former quelque idée de la Divinité, nous ne pouvons la concevoir que comme un air très pur, très lumineux, repandu partout, et sans limites.” L. iii. Ch. ii. S. i.

¶ P. 484. (P.) L. iii. Ch. ii. S. viii. ¶ P. 475. (P.) L. iii. Ch. i. S. vii.

** P. 481. (P.) L. iii. Ch. ii. S. v.

spirit, were so far from deciding this controversy in favour of the immateriality of the Divine essence, that those Christians who believed God to be corporeal, alleged, in favour of their opinion, that very expression of our Saviour, that *God is a spirit*. Can you, says Gregory Nazianzen, conceive of a spirit without conceiving *motion* and *diffusion*, properties which agree only to body? Origen says, that every spirit, according to the proper and simple notion of the word, signifies a body? This is confirmed by Chalcidius. "The idea of a spirit, according to the ancients, was nothing but that of an invisible, living, thinking, free and immortal being, which has within itself the principle of its actions and motions."*

If the modern metaphysician be shocked at what he has heard already, what will he say of the *Anthropomorphites*, who maintained, that God had even a human form? And yet Beausobre says, that this error "is so ancient, that it is hardly possible to find the origin of it."† They supposed that God had "a body, subtle, attenuated, like light, but with organs exactly like the human body, not for *necessity*, but for *ornament*, believing it to be the most excellent of all forms. This opinion must have been very common in the East." The contrary opinion was even "considered as heresy, because it was the opinion of the famous Heresiarch Simon. Melito, Bishop of Sardis, wrote in favour of this opinion, and though it was combated by Novatian in the West, and by Origen in the East, it still kept its ground in the church. The monks, who soon became very powerful, undertook its defence, and almost all the anchorites of *Nitria* were so much attached to it, that, on this account, they raised violent seditions against their patriarch Theophilus, and exclaimed against the memory and writings of Origen."‡

"They who did not believe the immensity of God, believed nevertheless, his *infinity*, because he knows all things, and acts every where. 'There is but one true God,' says the author of the Clementine Homilies. 'He is adorned with the most *excellent form*, he presides over all beings, celestial or terrestrial, and conducts all events. He is in the world, as the heart is in the man; and from him, as from a centre, there is continually diffused a vivifying

* P. 485. (P.) L. iii. Ch. ii. S. viii.

† P. 501. (P.) L. iii. Ch. iv. S. i.

‡ Pp. 501, 502. (P.) Ibid.

and incorporeal virtue, which animates and supports all things.'” *

As we come nearer to the present time, we shall find that the metaphysical turn of those who are usually called *schoolmen*, refined upon the notions of the early Fathers, as will appear more distinctly when I recite their opinions concerning the human soul; but still, some of the properties of matter were ascribed to spirits even till very near our times. It is something remarkable, however, that we find in the works of Gregory the Great, who flourished in the sixth century, expressions more nearly approaching to the modern language, than any that were generally used long after his time. The only question is, whether he had precisely the same ideas to his words.

He says, that God penetrates every thing without extenuation, and surrounds every thing without extension; he is *superior et inferior sine loco, amplior sine latitudine, subtilior sine extenuatione*. Speaking of Satan going out from the presence of God, he says, how can he go from him who *per molem corporis nusquam est, sed per incircumscriptam substantiam nusquam deest*? †

Damascenus, who wrote in the eighth century, says, that God is not *in loco*, for he is a place to himself, filling all things, and himself embracing (*complectens*) all things; for he, without any mixture, pervades all things, *omnia permeat*. ‡

Photius, in the ninth century, says, that God “is not in the world as created beings are, but in a more sublime manner; that he is in every thing, and above all things; that he is in all things by his operation, but, that his *act* being his *substance*, one may truly say, he is, both in act and substance, every where.” §

Gautier of Mauritania, in the twelfth century, maintained against Thierry, that “God is omnipresent by his essence, as well as by his power.” ||

T. Aquinas, also, and the other schoolmen, say, that God

* P. 507. (P.) L. iii. Ch. iv. S. iv. *ad fin.* † Opera, p. 6. H. I. (P.)

‡ Opera, p. 281. (P.)

§ Du Pin, Fol. 1696. VII. p. 108. (P.) “Nouvelle Bibliothèque des Auteurs Ecclesiastiques.” *Antrecht*, 1731. *Louis Ellies Du Pin* was a learned doctor of the *Sorbonne*, who incurred the censures and persecution of his own church and state for the freedom with which he had animadverted on the ecclesiastical writers. He was favourable to the project of a union between the English and Gallican established churches. *Du Pin* died at Paris, regretted by his friends and the public, at the age of 62, in 1719, when an epitaph was placed on his tomb, written by the historian *Rollin*. See *Nouv. Dict. Hist.* 1774, Art. *Du Pin*.

|| Du Pin, X. p. 173. (P.) *Nouv. Bib.* 1731, IX. p. 134.

is every where by his *essence*, as well as his *power*. He says farther, that God is a *pure act, purus actus*, that he is in all places and all things, not excluding other things, but as *containing them*, not contained by them: and as the whole soul is in every part of the body, so the whole Deity is in all, and every thing. *Deus totus est in omnibus et singulis.** If they had any ideas to this language, which indeed is not easy to suppose, they must have considered the Divine essence as not destitute of extension, and in this state the opinion continued till the reformation.

Crellius, giving a summary view of what was generally asserted concerning God, mentions the following positions, which he justly considers as contradictory: that God is infinite (with respect to immensity) and yet, wholly contained in the smallest particle of dust, or point of space; that he so exists in any whole body, that there is no part of the body that is not full of God, nor on the other hand, is there any part of the Divine essence that is not in the body. †

Bayle says, that till Descartes, all doctors, divines and philosophers gave extension to spirit, an infinite one to God, and a finite one to angels and rational souls. "Descartes and his followers," say the writers of the *Encyclopedie*, "denied that God was present any where by his *substance*; so that, according to them God is *immense*, only by his *knowledge* and *power*.—They add that "it is a grand perfection of the Deity to have *no relation to place*; for otherwise he would be extended and corporeal," ‡ for he made extension to be a proper definition of matter.

Beausobre, indeed, adopting the language of Bayle, in his Article, *Simonide* says, that philosophers *before Descartes* "made the extension of spirits not to be material, nor composed of parts, and that spirits are with respect to the place that they occupy, *toti in toto; toti in singulis partibus*. The Cartesians," says he, "have overturned all these opinions; maintaining, that spirits have no extension, nor local presence. But" he adds, "this system is rejected as

* *Summa*, pp. 281, 7, 16. (P.)

† De Deo, C. xxvii. (P.) "Primum Deum infinitum esse, et nihilominus in minimo quovis pulvisculo, aut spacio,—quia in toto aliquo corpore ita existat, ut nulla sit ejus corporis pars, quæ Deo plena non sit; nec vicissim quicquam sit essentia divinae, quod in eo corpore non sit."

‡ Article *Immensité*. (P.) "Descartes et ses sectateurs ont nié, que Dieu fût présent quelque part par sa substance; ainsi selon eux, Dieu n'est immense que par sa connoissance et par sa puissance.—C'est une grande perfection à Dieu de ne pouvoir correspondre à un lieu, parce qu'autrement il seroit étendu et corporel." VIII. p. 574.

absurd.”* It has appeared, however, that *local presence* was not admitted by all the writers here referred to.

Some very respectable writers, since Descartes, have rejected his metaphysical notions. Thus, Beza, in answer to Marnix, who maintained, that the Divine omnipresence respected his *power* and *majesty* only, asserted his *proper* and *substantial immensity*. †

We shall the less wonder at Descartes's metaphysical refinements with respect to the Divine *essence* and *presence*, when we consider the manner in which he proved the *being* of God. He discovered within himself the idea of an eternal, infinite and all-perfect Being. But every idea having an archetype, this must have one; and *existence* being a perfection, this perfect Being, or God, must actually and necessarily exist.

SECTION XX.

An Account of the different Opinions that have been maintained concerning the SOUL.

THE state of opinions relating to the *Divine essence* is a sufficient guide to us with respect to the doctrine concerning the *human soul*, and other finite intelligences, as they necessarily correspond to one another. But for this reason, in order to gain entire satisfaction with respect to either subject, we must examine them both separately. I shall, therefore, in this Section, go over the same ground as in the last, in order to select what has been advanced concerning the *human soul*, as distinct from the Divine Being. And this will be the more useful, as it will at the same time, shew the derivation of the philosophical doctrine on this subject in the Western part of the world, from the Oriental system. So that in the more ancient times, there was no material difference of opinion with respect to it. And the many wild opinions that have been entertained in later times will be an instructive warning to us, of the consequence of departing from the dictates of *revelation*, which are indeed those of the soundest *philosophy* and of *common sense*.

* Vol. I. p. 482. L. iii. Ch. ii. S. vii.

† Beausobre, Vol. I. p. 507. (P.) L. iii. Ch. iv. S. iv.

PART I.

The Opinions of the HEATHENS and JEWS.

THE opinion of the ancient *Persians* concerning the soul is clearly enough expressed in the following verse from the *Oracles of Zoroaster*, whether they be genuine or not :

Εἰσι πάντα πυρος ενος εκγεγαυτα. L. 29.

They are all produced from one fire. Souls were, therefore, of the nature of *fire*. We find, however, in latter times, several distinctions with respect to the soul, in the Eastern part of the world; and these also were copied with some variation by the Greeks and Christians. The hypothesis of *two souls*, one of a celestial substance, or the rational soul, and the other material, the seat of the passions, was very generally received. It was, says *Beausobre*, “that of the Magi, the Chaldeans and Egyptians;”* and Pythagoras and Plato had it from them. It was also an old opinion in the Barbaric philosophy, that man derives his body from the earth, his soul, ψυχη, from the moon, and his spirit, πνευμα, from the sun; and that after death each of them returns to its proper origin. We find, also, some difference of opinion with respect to the place where the souls were disposed of after death. The Chaldeans thought that the place of departed spirits was *above the world*, but the Greeks thought it was *below*. †

We have no very satisfactory account of the philosophy of the *Chinese*. It appears however, that Confucius believed no future state of rewards and punishments. “Being asked by one of his disciples what angels or spirits are, he answered, they are *air*; and this,” says Leland, “is the notion that the Chinese have of the soul. They look upon it to be a material thing, though highly rarefied.” ‡

When we come to the *Greek philosophy*, we find a considerable variety of opinions with respect to the essence of the soul; but all of them, who believed that there was properly any such thing as a soul, held the opinion of its being an *emanation from the Divine Being*. Cudworth says, that all “the ancients before Christianity that held the

* Vol. II. p. 420. L. vii. Ch. i. S. i.

† Stanleii Hist. per J. Clericum, p. 175. (P.)

‡ Necessity of Revelation, II. p. 295. (P.), on the authority of *Navarette*.

soul's future permanency after death," held that it was not generated or made out of nothing; for that then it might return to nothing, and therefore they commonly began with proving "its pre-existence, proceeding thence afterwards to establish its permanency after death."* And Cicero says, that it was a principle universally acknowledged, that whatever is born, and has a beginning, must also have an end.

Dicæarchus, says Cicero, "wrote three books to prove, that the minds of men are mortal;" but in another place, he says, that "he maintained, that there was *no soul*."† Aristoxenus said, that the soul was *harmony*, and Xenocrates, that it was *number*.‡ And according to him, "Pherecydes Syrius was the first that taught, that the minds of men are *sempiternos*, eternal—in which he was followed by his disciple Pythagoras."§ Pherecydes had that opinion from the East.

"Thales (says Cicero, in his *Book of Consolation*), whom Apollo himself declared to be the wisest of men, constantly asserted that the soul is a *part of the Divine substance*, and that it returns to heaven as soon as it is disengaged from this mortal body. All the philosophers of the Italic school were of this sentiment. It was their constant doctrine, that souls descended from heaven, and that they are not only the work of the Divinity, but a participation of his essence."|| According to Diogènes Laertius, Thales maintained, that the soul is immortal, because, that from which it is taken *αποσπασται* is immortal.¶ Euripides also (according to Cicero,) held, "that the mind was God," and [Cicero adds], that "if God be either *anima*, or *fire*, the same must be the mind of man;—or if it be a *fifth substance*, of which Aristotle first spoke, it must be the same both with respect to Gods and souls."**

* P. 38. (P.) B. i. Ch. i. S. xxxi. *ad fin.*

† Tusc. Quest. p. 64. Ed. Glasg. (P.) "Is enim tres libros scripsit,—in quibus vult efficere animos esse mortales." L. i. S. xxxi. p. 77. "Quid de Dicæarcho dicam qui nihil omnino animum dicat esse?" L. i. S. ii. p. 25.

‡ Ib. pp. 26, 27. (P.) L. i. S. x. pp. 20, 21.

§ Ib. p. 38. (P.) "Pherecydes Syrius primum dixit animas esse hominum sempiternos.—Hanc opinionem discipulus ejus Pythagoras maxime confirmavit." L. i. S. xvi. p. 39.

|| Ramsay, p. 271. (P.) "Quelle idée ne nous donne pas Cicéron de la nature de l'âme dans son *Traité de la consolation*! 'Thales,' dit-il, 'qu'Appolon lui-même déclara le plus sage de tous les hommes, a toujours soutenu que l'âme est une parcelle de la substance Divine, et qu'elle retourne dans le ciel sitôt qu'elle est dégagée du corps mortel. Tous les philosophes de l'école Italique, ont suivi ce sentiment. C'est leur doctrine constante que les âmes descendent du ciel, & qu'elles sont non seulement l'ouvrage de la Divinité, mais une participation de son essence.' *Discours*.

¶ Gale's *Philosophia Generalis*, 1676, p. 178. (P.)

** Tusc. Quest. p. 56. (P.) "Animus—est, ut Euripides dicere audet, Deus.

It is the doctrine of Plato, concerning the soul, that makes the greatest figure of those of the Greek philosophers, and that which the Christians have made the most use of. I shall, therefore, give a fuller detail concerning it. He “distinguished *three sorts of souls*, differing in purity and perfection, the *universal soul*, the souls of the stars, and human souls.” Of those he distinguished two parts, the superior, which was an emanation from the Deity himself, and the inferior, which derived its origin from the more spiritual part of matter.* But according to Cicero, “Plato supposed the soul to be *threefold*, and placed reason in the *head*,—anger in the *breast*, and desire *subter præcordia*.” †

Plato’s account of the cause of the *descent of the soul* has something peculiar in it, but which was not unknown in some of the Oriental systems. Others supposed, that they were condemned to a confinement in these bodies for offences committed in a pre-existent state; whereas he represents their *desire of these mortal bodies* to have been their original sin. “He supposed,” says Beausobre, “that the celestial souls were touched with a secret desire to unite themselves to bodies, and that this *terrestrial thought* was a weight which dragged them to this lower world.” ‡ The Essenes, he says, had the same opinion. The following is his poetical account of it from Ramsay. “Plato says that every soul that follows faithfully the sublime law remains pure, and without spot; but if it content itself with nectar and ambrosia, without following the chariot of Jupiter, to go and contemplate truth, it grows heavy, its wings are broken, it falls upon the earth, and enters into a human body, more or less base, according as it has been more or less elevated;” and that “it is only after ten thousand years that these souls are re-united to their principle, their wings not growing, and being renewed in less time.” §

Et quidem, si Deus aut anima, aut ignis est, idem est animus hominis.—Sin autem est quinta quædam natura, ab Aristotele inducta primum, hæc et deorum est et animorum.” L. i. S. xxvi. pp. 65, 66.

* Beausobre, II. p. 364, I. p. 559. (P.) L. vi. Ch. vi. S. vii. L. iii. Ch. viii. S. iii.

† Tusc. Quest. p. 27. (P.) “Plato triplicem finxit animum: cujus principatum, id est, rationem, in capite, sicut in arce, posuit; et duas partes ei parere voluit, iram et cupiditatem, quas locis suis, iram in pectore, cupiditatem subter præcordia locavit.” L. i. S. x. pp. 21, 22.

‡ Vol. II. p. 332. (P.) L. vi. Ch. iv. S. iii.

§ Ramsay, p. 288. (P.) “Or, (continue Platon) toute âme qui suit Dieu fidèlement dans ce lieu sublime, demeure pure et sans tache; mais si elle se contente de nectar, et d’ambrosie sans accompagner le char de Jupiter, pour aller contempler la vérité, elle s’appesantit, elle rompit ses ailes, elle tombe sur la terre, et

According to the Platonic philosophy, there must be something very corporeal in the composition of the souls of the wicked. Socrates, in the *Phædo*, says, “that the souls of those who only minded the body, and its appetites and pleasures, having something in them ponderous and earthy, shall, after their departure out of the body, be drawn down to the earth, and hover about the sepulchres, till they enter again into bodies suited to their former manners.” But that “they who live holy and excellent lives, being freed from these earthly places, as from prisons, ascend to a pure region above the earth, where they dwell; and those of them who were sufficiently purged by philosophy, live all their time without bodies, and ascend to still more beautiful habitations.” In “his tenth book of *Laws*,” he says, “that those who have been guilty of smaller sins, do not sink so deep” as others, “but wander about near the surface of the region; but they that have sinned more frequently, and more heinously, shall fall into the depth, and into those lower places which are called *Hades*.”*

It is generally acknowledged, that there is great uncertainty with respect to the opinion of *Aristotle* on this subject. It is probable, that he was sometimes inclined to the opinion of man having no soul distinct from the body; as when he says, according to *Plutarch*, that sleep is common to the soul as well as the body. But when he speaks of the soul as a substance distinct from the four elements, and makes it to be *a fifth kind of substance*, it should seem that he meant to declare himself to be of the opinion of those who held the soul to be of divine origin, and to be eternal. *Cudworth* says, that “it must needs be left doubtful whether he acknowledged any thing incorporeal and immortal, at all in us.”†

Cicero, when he speaks as a philosopher, seems to adopt the sentiments of *Plato* with respect to the soul. He says, *Humanus autem animus, decerptus ex mente Divina, cum alio nullo nisi cum ipso Deo (si hoc fas est dictu) comparari potest.*‡

“In all that discourse in his first book of *Tusculan Questions*,” says *Mr. Locke*, “where he lays out so much of his reading and reason, there is not one syllable shewing the least thought that the soul was an immaterial substance,

entre dans un corps humain, plus ou moins vil, selon qu'elle a été plus ou moins élevée.—Ce n'est qu'après dix mille ans que les âmes se réuniront à leur principe. Leurs ailes ne croissent et ne se renouvellent que dans cet espace de tems.”

Discours.

* *Leland*, C. R. II. pp. 307, 308, 313. (P.) † P. 55. (P.) B. I. Ch. i. *ad fin.*

† *Tuscul. Disput.* L. v. S. xiii. p. 371.

but many things directly to the contrary.—That which he seems most to incline to is, that the soul was not at all *elementary*, but was of the same substance with the heavens, which Aristotle, to distinguish it from the four elements, and the changeable bodies here below, which he supposes made up of them, called *Quinta Essentia*.—In all which there is nothing of immateriality, but quite the contrary.” He adds farther, that “the expressions that dropt from him, in several places of this book, evidently shew that his thoughts went not at all beyond matter. For example, that the souls of excellent men and women ascended into heaven; of others, that they remained here on earth: Cap. 12. That the soul is hot, and warms the body: that at its leaving the body, it penetrates and divides, and breaks through our thick, cloudy, moist air: that it stops in the region of fire, and ascends no farther, the equality of warmth and weight making that its proper place, where it is nourished and sustained with the same things wherewith the stars are nourished and sustained; and that by the convenience of its neighbourhood it shall there have a clearer view, and fuller knowledge of the heavenly bodies: Cap. 19. That the soul also, from this height, shall have a pleasant and fairer prospect of the globe of the earth, the disposition of whose parts will then lie before it in one view: Cap. 20. That it is hard to determine what conformation, size and place, the soul has in the body: that it is too subtile to be seen: that it is in the human body as in a house, or a vessel, or a receptacle: Cap. 22. All which are expressions that sufficiently evidence that he who used them had not, in his mind, separated materiality from the idea of the soul.”* To these remarks of Mr. Locke, I will add, that, had any such opinion as that of an *immaterial principle*, in the modern sense of the word, been known in the time of Cicero, who has collected and discussed all the opinions of the Greek philosophers on that, as well as on almost every other question of importance, it would certainly have been found in his writings.

It is much doubted, however, whether, in reality, Cicero did not give into the Epicurean and Atheistical notions of his time; since he expresses himself very much to that purpose in his private letters; † and it is remarkable that

* Essay, II. p. 160. (*P.*) 2d Reply, ad fin. Works, I. pp. 601, 602.

† Yet he is described by *Middleton* as a firm believer in the Divine Unity and Providence and a future Retribution, though he encouraged the worship, which he despised, regarding it as “an engine of state—to keep the people in order.” See *Life of Cicero*, III. pp. 337—345.

Cæsar, speaking in open senate, considers all the accounts of what became of men after death as entirely fabulous, and in such a manner as if he well knew he spoke the sentiments of all his hearers.*

The *Stoics* sometimes adopted the common philosophical doctrine, and sometimes departed from it; but upon the whole they may be ranked with those who adopted the principles of the Oriental system on this subject, as well as on several others. Mrs. Carter says, they held both superior intelligences, and likewise “the souls of men to be portions of the essence of God, or parts of the soul of the world, and to be corporeal and perishable. Some of them, indeed, maintained that human souls subsisted after death, but that they were, like all other beings, to be consumed at the conflagration. Cleanthes taught that all souls lasted till that time; Chrysippus only those of the good. Seneca is perpetually wavering, sometimes speaking of the soul as immortal, and at others, as perishing with the body; and indeed,” she says, “there is nothing but confusion, and a melancholy uncertainty to be met with among the *Stoics* on this subject.”†

“M. Antoninus, upon a supposition that souls continue after death, makes them to remain for some time in the air, and then to be changed, diffused, kindled and resumed into the productive intelligence of the universe. In another place he vindicates the conduct of Providence on the hypothesis, that the souls of the good are extinguished by death.”‡ In general, however, he holds the language of other philosophers on this subject, calling the soul, *νοῦς, μετοχος θειας απομοιρας*, and *απρροια*, and *αποσπασμα τῆς Διου*.§ Thus also Seneca, *Dei pars est*; and Manilius, *Pars ipse deorum est*. “Nothing,” says Mrs. Carter, “can excuse their idolatry of human nature (on this supposition) which they proudly and inconsistently supposed to be perfect and self-sufficient. Seneca carried the matter so far as, by an impious antithesis, to give his wise man the superiority to God. Epictetus sometimes tells his hearers that they cannot be perfect yet. But even he, at other times informs them that they are not inferior to the gods.”||

* It was in his oration, on the conspiracy of Catiline. Cæsar argued against the capital punishment of the conspirators, because it would be a deliverance, not a punishment; saying of death, “*eam cuncta mortalium mala dissolvere; ultra neque cura, neque gaudium secum esse.*” *Sallust Bel. Catilin.* S. l. See also Middleton's *Life of Cicero*, I. p. 220.

† P. 11. (P.) S. xix. p. 16.

‡ P. 12. (P.) S. xx. pp. 17, 18.

§ See Suicer. (P.)

|| P. 17. (P.) S. xxviii. pp. 25, 26.

Galen “declares he was quite ignorant of the nature of the soul, but that he violently suspected that its essence was corporeal.”*

Hitherto we have certainly found nothing like a proper *immaterial soul*, as it is described by modern metaphysicians; and it is remarkable that when we come to the opinions of the *Christian Fathers*, we find that, instead of their ideas being more spiritualized on this subject, they were considerably more gross than those of many of the Heathens, as we have seen to have been the case with respect to their opinions concerning the Divine essence. But before I recite their opinions, I shall take some notice of those of the Jews.

Presently after the time of our Saviour, and not much, I imagine, before, the more speculative of the Pharisees began to adopt the doctrine of the Heathens concerning the soul, as a substance distinct from the body. If we judge by the history of the gospel, we cannot but conclude, that this was not then the common belief. At least Martha, the sister of Lazarus, does not appear to have known any thing of it; nor does it appear from that part of the history, that even the Pharisees in general had adopted it. And though it be said of the Sadducees, so late as the year A. D. 60, as distinguished from the Pharisees, that they “*say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit,*” Acts xxiii. 8; it is not certain, that by spirit, (*πνευμα*) in this place, is meant the soul of a man, especially as it is said of the Pharisees, that they confess *both τα αμφοτερα*, as if there had been in fact but *two articles* mentioned before.

Nor is it quite certain, that even the opinions of the Pharisees in general, in the time of Josephus, were quite so conformable to the notions of the Greeks as he has represented them. That himself, Philo and others, had adopted that system is evident enough; but the disposition of Josephus to accommodate his history to the taste of his readers, and his desire to recommend his nation and religion to his masters, are well known.

There can be no doubt, however, but that after the age of Josephus, the philosophizing Jews went into all the depths of Oriental mysticism. Philo Judæus calls the human soul, *αποσπασμα*, or *απαναγμα*, from the Deity.† The Cabalists, as I mentioned before, supposed that spirits are made not from nothing, but from the Holy Ghost; and

* Leland, C. R. II. p. 281. (P.) † Gale's *Philosophia Generalis*, p. 370. (P.)

that spirits produce spirits, as ideas produce ideas.* They also thought that the soul, being an emanation from the Deity, had the power of multiplying itself without end, because every part of the Deity is infinite; so that they believed that all souls were contained in that of Adam, and sinned with him. Like the Greeks, the Jews in general, in the time of Josephus, thought that the place of departed souls was under the earth.

PART II.

The Opinions of the CHRISTIAN FATHERS to the Sixth Century.

WE find nothing said by any Christian writer concerning the soul, before Justin Martyr, who had been a Platonic philosopher, and who, using their language, speaks of souls as emanations from the Deity.†

But as this doctrine of the high *descent of the soul* has not the least countenance in the Scriptures, we soon find that it did not meet with a hearty reception among Christians, and that it was abandoned by all who were not peculiarly addicted to philosophy. Irenæus “expressly denied the transmigration of souls; he seems to have believed like St. Justin, that they were immortal only through grace, and maintained that those of the wicked shall cease to be after they shall have been tormented a long time.”‡

After this time, we find that the doctrine of a direct *materialism* crept into the Christian church, and it is not easy to say from what source it came. Possibly, however, those who used this language did not, at first, at least, differ from other philosophers; but considering what their ideas of *spirit* really were, thought (and it was certainly with reason) that the term *body* was more justly applicable to it.

The most determined materialist in Christian antiquity is Tertullian, who wrote his treatise, *De Anima*, on purpose to explode the philosophical opinion of the *descent of the soul from heaven*. He maintained, that the soul is formed at the same time with the body, and that as the body produces a body, so the soul produces a soul.§

* Beausobre. (P.)

† Beausobre, II. p. 350. (P.) L. vi. Cb. v. S. ix. *ad init.*

‡ Du Pin, I. p. 60. (P.) *Novv. Bib.* I. p. 73.

§ Du Pin, I. p. 79. (P.) *Novv. Bib.* I. p. 99.

“To what,” says Tertullian, “did Christ, when he died, descend? To the souls, I presume, of the patriarchs; but why, if there be no souls under the earth? *If it be not a body, it is nothing.* Incorporality is free from all confinement, from pain or pleasure; also all the instruments of its pain or pleasure must be bodies. The soul of Adam, he says, came from the breath of God. But what is the breath of God but *vapor, spiritus?*”*

Arnobius, in opposition to the philosophers, maintained, “that it was human vanity that gave the soul a descent from heaven; that it is corporeal and mortal in its own nature; that the souls of the righteous obtained immortality by the divine spirit which Jesus Christ unites to them; but that those of the wicked are to be consumed by fire, and will be annihilated after long torments.”†

This writer argues much at large, that the soul is wholly incapable of sensation or reflection without the body. After supposing the case of a child cut off from all communication with the world, and barely fed, in a hole, without light, he concludes, that he would be destitute of all knowledge, except of the very few ideas that he would necessarily acquire by his senses in that confined situation. And he concludes with saying, “Where, then, is that immortal portion of divinity where is that soul, which enters into the body, so learned and intelligent, and which, with the help of instruction only recollects its former knowledge?”‡

Origen says, “it was not determined by the church, whether a soul was produced by another soul,—whether it be eternal, or created in time [*dans le tems*]; whether it animates the body, or is only attached to it.” But himself, being a Platonist, held, “that souls—had been *from eternity*, that they are sent into bodies as into a prison, for a punishment of their sins.”§ Of course, he believed the transmigration of souls.¶ So also did the Cabalists. “The Jews, however, limited the transmigrations to three, a notion which they seem to have taken from Plato, who admitted no souls into heaven but those which had distinguished themselves by the practice of virtue in three incorporations.¶¶ The Manicheans, more indulgent, allowed five transmigrations;”

* Opera, 1675, pp. 268, 284. (P.)

† Beausobre, II. pp. 413, 414. (P.) L. vi. Ch. ix. S. xv.

‡ Opera, 1610, p. 34. (P.)

§ Du Pin, I. p. 110. (P.) *Nouv. Bib.* I. pp. 137, 138.

¶ Beausobre, II. (P.)

¶¶ Ib. p. 495. (P.) L. vii. Ch. v. S. vi.

but the souls of the *elect*, they said, went immediately into heaven.*

Among the later Fathers, we find three opinions relating to the origin of the soul. First, that souls were created when the body was ready to receive them; another, that they came from God, and are inclosed in the male seed; another, "that the first soul, viz. that of Adam, was made of nothing, and that all the rest came from this by ordinary generation. It was to this opinion that Tertullian and Austin are said to have inclined."†

He was, however, far from being determined in his opinion on this subject, and sometimes expresses himself in such a manner as if he thought the soul to be no *substance*, but only a *property*. He said, that the soul has no *corporeal dimensions*, but that *reason* and the *soul* are one. He expressly denied, however, that the soul is any *part of God*, and says, that God's breathing upon Adam either was his soul, or that which produced it: but he does not determine whether souls are *created daily*, or not.‡

Before his time, Gregory Nyssen held, that souls are formed at the same moment with the body; and he first, I believe, made use of an expression which was long retained in the Christian schools, and was the source of much metaphysical subtlety, viz. that *the soul is equally in all parts of the body*. It was afterwards added more distinctly, that *the whole soul* is in every part of the body.

The opinion of the immateriality of the soul does not seem to have tended to a settlement before the fifth century, when the question seems at length to have been, in a manner, decided by Claudianus Mamertus, a priest of the church of Vienne, whose opinions, and manner of treating the subject, are much commended by Du Pin.

In this century, Æneas Gazæus had maintained, that souls are sensible of nothing without the body. Gennadius had advanced, that God only is incorporeal, and Faustus Regiensis had supported the same opinion more largely, alleging the authority of Jerome and Cassianus, and urging that the soul is inclosed in the body, that it is in heaven or hell, and consequently *in some place*; and that if it was not in place it would be *every where*, which is true of God only. It is to this writer that Mamertus replies. But notwith-

* Beausobre, II. pp. 495, 499. (P.) L. vii. Ch. v. S. vi. viii.

† Ib. pp. 353, 354. (P.) L. vi. Ch. v. S. x.

‡ Du Pin, III. pp. 131, 161. (P.) *Nouv. Bib.* III. pp. 166, &c.

standing the excessive applause he has met with, it will be seen that his ideas on the subject would not be entirely approved by the more acute metaphysicians of the present age. In his reply to Faustus, he says, that every thing that is incorporeal is not uncreated; that the volitions of the soul have their *effect* in place, but are not *made* in place; that it has neither length, breadth nor height; that it is not moved upwards or downwards, or in a circle; that it has neither inward nor outward parts; that it thinks, perceives and imagines, in *all its substance*; that we may speak of the *quality* of the soul, but no man knows how to express the *quantity* of it. It is neither *extended*, nor *in place*. In some of his expressions we find the peculiar opinions of Descartes. For he says, the soul is not different from the *thoughts*, that the soul is never without thought, for it is *all thought*; and that heaven and hell are not different *places*, but different *conditions*.*

But I question whether any modern metaphysician will think him sufficiently accurate, or indeed, consistent, in saying that the soul is the *life of the body*, that this life is equally in all and in every part of the body, and that therefore the soul is in no place. It seems to have been this confounding of the *soul* and the *life*, which is only a *property*, and not a *substance*, that gave rise to the palpable absurdities of all the schoolmen, who maintained that there was *a whole soul in every part of the body*, and yet that one man had but one soul. And analogous to this is their other paradox concerning God, viz. that he is completely in every possible place.

Mamertus's book is dedicated to Sidonius Apollinaris, who, in return, prefers him to all the writers of his time, as the most able philosopher, and the most learned man that was then among Christians. As the compliment he pays him is a very singular one, I shall, for the entertainment of my readers, insert it in the note.†

* Du Pin, II. p. 277, IV. pp. 187, 185, 151—153. (P.) *Nouv. Bib.* II. pp. 226, &c. IV. pp. 280, 277, 224—228.

† He says that he was an absolute master of all the sciences; that the purity of his language equalled or surpassed Terence's, Varro's, Pliny's, &c.; that he knew how to use the terms of logic eloquently; that his short and concise way of writing contained the most deep learning in a few sentences, and he expressed the greatest truths in a few words; that his style was not swelled with empty hyperboles, and did not degenerate into a contemptible flatness. In fine, he scruples not to compare him with the most eminent philosophers, the most eloquent orators, and the most learned Fathers of the church. "He judges," says he, "like Pythagoras, he divides like Socrates, he explains like Plato, he puzzles like Aristotle, he delights like Æschines, he stirs up the passions like Demosthenes, he diverts with a pleasing

PART III.

The State of Opinions from the Sixth Century to the Time of Descartes.

THAT we may have a clearer idea of the state of opinions concerning the soul in what are generally called the *dark ages*, I shall note those of the most considerable writers that have fallen into my hands.

Cassiodorus, who flourished in the beginning of the sixth century, in his treatise *De Anima*, in which he professes to bring into one view what was most approved, and best established on the subject, maintains, that the soul has neither length, breadth nor thickness; that the whole soul is in all its parts (faculties) and that it is of a *fiery nature*. He inclines to the opinion of the *derivation of souls from souls*, because he could not otherwise account for the souls of infants being contaminated with original sin.*

Gregory the Great, in the sixth century, says, that “the question concerning the *origin of the soul* was much agitated among the Fathers; some maintaining, that it descended from Adam, and others, that a soul was given to each individual; and it was acknowledged, that this important question could not be solved in this life. If,” says he, “the soul be of the substance of Adam, as well as the body, why doth it not die with the body? But if it have another origin, how is it involved in the guilt of Adam’s sin?” But as he concludes with saying, that “the latter, viz. the doctrine of *original sin*, is certain, and the other, viz. the *mortality of the soul*, is uncertain,” he seems inclined to think the soul descended from the soul of Adam, *ex traduce*, and therefore was possibly mortal. †

It is very evident, that this writer had a notion that the soul was corporeal, as will be seen by a very curious circumstance

variety like Hortensius, he obviates difficulties like Cethegus, he excites like Curio, he appeases like Fabius, he feigns like Crassus, he dissembles like Cæsar, he advises like Cato, he dissuades like Appius, he persuades like Cicero. And, if we compare him to the Fathers of the church, he instructs like St. Jerome, he overthrows error like Laetantius, he maintains the truth like St. Austin, he elevates himself like St. Hilary, he speaks as fluently and as intelligibly as St. Chrysostom, he reproves like St. Basil, he comforts like St. Gregory Nazianzen, he is copious like Orosius, and as urgent as Ruffinus; he relates a story as well as Eusebius, he excites like St. Eucherius, he stirs up like Paulinus, he supports like St. Ambrose.” (P.) See Du Pin, *Nouv. Bib.* IV. pp. 228, 229.

* Opera, 1637, p. 429. (P.) See p. 275. Note.

† Opera, 1551, II. p. 209. (P.) Dr. Ramsay, mentioned p. 275, denied this inference, though he applied the doctrine of *traduction* to explain *original sin*.

in what follows. He considered the souls of saints and martyrs as continuing in or near their dead bodies and relics. For he says, that, as the life of the soul was discovered by the motion of the body while it was living, so after death its life is manifested by the power of working miracles. But he did not consider the soul as confined to the dead body; for he adds, that many persons, whose minds were purified by faith and prayer, had actually seen souls going out of their bodies when they died; and he relates at large several histories of such souls becoming visible. Among others, he says, that the soul of *Abbot Spes* was seen by all the brothers of his monastery, coming out of his mouth in the shape of a dove, and flying up to heaven.*

As we approach nearer the age of the schoolmen, we find less of materialism, but a language proportionably more unintelligible, though not quite so remote from all conception, as that of our modern metaphysicians.

Damascenus, in the eighth century, says, that “the *whole soul is present to the whole body*, and not *part to part*, nor is it contained in the body, but contains it; as fire contains the red-hot iron, and, living in it, performs its functions.”† Though this writer, as we have seen, considered God as not existing in place, we see here that he confines the soul of a man to his body.

From this time the philosophical opinion of the *descent of the soul* was universally abandoned by Christians. Agobard, who flourished in the ninth century, considers it as a question decided by divines, that the soul is not *a part of the Divine substance* or nature, and had no being before its union with the body, being created when the body is formed.‡ Fredegisus, in the same century, says, that souls are created in and with the body, though the philosophers asserted the contrary, and Austin doubted it.§

Another doubt, however, continued in this century. For, Rabanus Maurus says, it was a dubious question, whether God created the soul to be infused into the body, or whether it was produced from the souls of the father and mother. He maintained that the soul has *no particular figure*, but that it is principally seated in the head. Hincmarus, in the same century, says, that the soul does not *move locally*, though it changes its will and manners.||

Bernard, in the twelfth century, says, that the soul cannot

* Opera, p. 209. (P.)

† Opera, 1619, p. 282. (P.)

‡ Du Pin, VII. p. 182. (P.)

§ Ibid. p. 145. (P.)

|| Ibid. pp. 164, 50. (P.)

be in corporeal place, for that things incorporeal cannot be measured but by *time*.*

Many of the Fathers, we have seen, were of opinion, that the soul is propagated like the body, and that the soul of Adam was an emanation from God. But Peter Lombard condemns those who supposed the soul to be a part of God, and says, that it was created out of nothing.†

My reader must excuse me if, in relating the opinion of the famous schoolman, Thomas Aquinas, I should not make myself perfectly understood. I shall endeavour, however, to make his meaning as intelligible as I well can. He says that the soul is not a body, but the *act of the body*, (*actus corporis*) as heat, which is the principle of warmth; just as the soul, which is the principle of life, is not a body, but the act of a body. This looks as if he considered the soul as a mere *property of body*; but treating of the difference between the souls of men and brutes, he says, that the former is *aliquid subsistens*, but the latter was *non subsistens*. He acknowledgēs, however, with all the Aristotelians, that the soul is *the form of the body*. Since *that by means of which any thing acts, is the form of that to which the operation is attributed*. The whole soul, he says, is in every part of the body, according to the whole of its *perfection* and *essence*, but not according to the whole of its *power*. There is but one soul, he says, to one man, discharging the functions of the intellectual, vegetative and sensitive part. In order to explain the mutual action of the soul and body, he says, that the *contactus virtutis* is opposite to the *contactus qualitatis*, and that body may be touched by what is incorporeal, so that the soul may move the body.‡

In *Pernumia*, whose treatise of *Natural Philosophy* was printed in 1570, the soul is said to be the first act, *primus actus*, of the body, and that it is so united to the body, that, with respect to its *quantity*, it is *tota in toto, et pars in parte*; but with respect to its *essence*, and all its *faculties*, it is *tota in toto, et tota in qualibet parte*. In the same treatise, the *natural* and *vital heat* (which he says is composed of the substance of the *heart*, the most refined (*depuratis*) vapours of the *blood*, and *air* attracted by it) is said to be the middle substance, between the body and the soul.§

* Opera, 1609, p. 466. (P.) † Sententiæ, 1632, Diss. p. 17. (P.)

‡ Th. Aquinatis *Summa*, 1631, pp. 160, 161, 163, 168, 165. (P.)

§ Fol. 85, 91. (P.) "Joannis Pauli Pernumia Patavini Philosophia naturalis ordine definitivo tradita, quod a nullo hactenus factum est." *Patavii*. Fol. 1570. L. iv. Ch. ii. *Pernumia* was a learned Physician of *Padua*, whose *Medendi Ratio* was published at Frankfort, 1596.

PART IV.

The State of Opinions from the Time of Descartes to the Present.

THUS stood the orthodox faith concerning the soul till the time of Descartes, who introduced quite a new mode of considering the subject, beginning upon new principles; which was by doubting of every thing, and then admitting nothing but what his own consciousness absolutely obliged him to admit. And yet his writings on this subject have been the means of introducing more confusion into it than was ever known before.

The Cartesians considered the Aristotelian doctrine of the soul being *the substantial form of the body*, as “inconsistent with its immateriality, and consequently destructive of the doctrine of its immortality.”* But, in consequence of separating from the idea of the soul every thing that he was not obliged to admit, Descartes defined the essence of the soul to consist in *thinking*, the evident consequence of which is, that the soul is, in fact, nothing but a *property*, and no *substance* at all; and, therefore, notwithstanding his boasting of improving the doctrine of immateriality, he has been considered by some as only a more acute materialist.

It is plain, however, that this was not the case, and his meaning must have been, that there was a *substance* of the soul, and that the property of this substance was to think without intermission, which he maintained. He is, therefore, considered by others, and especially Mr. Bayle, as having first established the true doctrine of an immaterial substance, entirely without extension, or relation to place. And yet I do not see that his idea of the soul could be wholly abstracted from matter, when he supposed that the seat of it was the *pineal gland*. I therefore think that the proper immaterial system is of still later date, but who was the author of it may not be easily discovered. Indeed, nothing was necessary to make the doctrine of the schoolmen a complete system of immaterialism, but the omission of a few positions which were inconsistent with it. But in the same proportion in which we cut off from spirit every property that it was supposed to have in common with matter, we bring it to

* Historical View, p. 17. (P.)

a state in which it is naturally impossible to act upon matter, or to be acted upon by it.

Malebranche adopted the system of Descartes, maintaining, that the essence of matter consists in extension, and that of the soul in thinking. He, therefore, said that the soul thinks always, and most of all when it has no consciousness of its thoughts. He is also said to have been the first who brought into vogue the doctrine of *animal spirits*.

The system of Descartes has been generally adopted, but with some improvements, by more modern metaphysicians. I do not, however, find the strict immaterial system in any writer earlier than our Sir Kenelm Digby, who considers it as “the great property of the soul, that it is able to move, and to work, without being moved or touched; that it is in no place, and yet not absent from any place; that it is also not in time, and not subject to it, for though it does consist with time, and is while time is, it is not in time.”* To this doctrine Alexander Ross very naturally and sensibly replies, “If the soul be no where, it is nothing, and if every where, it is God, whose property indeed it is to be every where, by his essence, power and providence.”†

The good sense of Mr. Locke was evidently staggered at the extravagant positions of the strict immaterialists, though he had not courage, or consistency, to reject the doctrine altogether. In opposition to them, he maintains largely, that spirits are *in place*, and *capable of motion*.‡ He likewise maintained, much at large, the possibility of thinking being superadded to matter, and was inclined to be of opinion, that the souls of men are only in part immaterial.§ “It is

* Treatise of the Nature of Man's Soul, p. 85. (P.) 1644, &c.

† Philosophical Touchstone, 1645, p. 80. (P.) See *Athen. Oxon.* II. p. 240.

‡ Essay, Vol. I. p. 259. (P.) B. ii. Ch. xxiii. S. xix.—xxi.

§ So considerable a writer as Mr. Locke, having maintained the *possible materiality* of the soul, I cannot satisfy myself without giving my reader, in this note, an idea of his manner of considering the subject, by bringing together his most striking arguments:—

“We have the ideas of *matter* and *thinking*, but possibly shall never be able to know whether any mere material being thinks or no, it being impossible for us, by the contemplation of our own ideas, without revelation, to discover whether Omnipotency has not given to some systems of matter, fitly disposed, a power to perceive and think; or else joined and fixed to matter, so disposed, a thinking immaterial substance: it being, in respect of our notions, not much more remote from our comprehension, to conceive that God can, if he pleases, superadd to matter a faculty of thinking; than that he should superadd to it another substance with a faculty of thinking; since we know not wherein thinking consists, nor to what sort of substances the Almighty has been pleased to give that power, which cannot be in any created being, but merely by the good pleasure and bounty of the Creator.” *Essay*, II. p. 167. [B. iv. Ch. iii. S. vi.]

This position he defends and illustrates very largely, in his letter to the Bishop of Worcester, some of the most remarkable passages of which I shall subjoin.

worth our consideration," says he, "whether active power be not the proper attribute of spirits, and passive power of matter. Hence it may be conjectured, that created spirits are not totally separate from matter, because they are both active and passive. Pure spirit, viz. God, is only active; pure matter is only passive; those beings that are both active and passive, we may judge to partake of both."*

I cannot help thinking that he who could maintain these positions, viz. that spirits exist *in place*, and have proper *loco-motion*, that *matter may be made to think*, that the souls of men are probably *in part material*, and also that the *souls of brutes are not immortal*, was not far from a proper materialism; and that to have been consistent with himself, he certainly ought to have declared for it without regarding vulgar prejudices.

Indeed, the tendency of these principles to materialism was so evident, that almost all the subsequent defenders of the immateriality and natural immortality of the soul have disclaimed them. Among others, Dr. Watts has most clearly and largely proved, that the necessary consequence of admitting spirits to exist in space, and to be capable of a proper motion from one place to another, is that they

"You cannot *conceive* how an extended solid substance should think, therefore God cannot make it think. Can you conceive how your own soul, or any substance thinks? You find, indeed, that you *do* think, and so do I, but I want to be told how the action of thinking is performed. This, I confess, is beyond my conception." *Ibid.* p. 146. [2d. Reply, *ad fin.* Works, I. p. 590.]

"They cannot conceive how the solid substance should ever be able to move itself. And as little, say I, are they able to conceive how a created unsolid substance should move itself. But there may be something in an *immaterial* substance that you do not know. I grant it, and in a *material* one too. For example, gravitation of matter towards matter, and in the several proportions observable, inevitably shews that there is something in matter that we do not understand, unless we can conceive *self-motion* in matter, or an inexplicable and inconceivable *attraction* in matter, at immense and almost incomprehensible distances." P. 147. [*Ibid.* p. 591.]

"The gravitation of matter towards matter, by ways unconceivable to me, is not only a demonstration that God can, if he pleases, put into bodies, powers and ways of operation, above what can be derived from our ideas of body, or can be explained by what we know of matter, but also an unquestionable and every where visible instance that he has done so." P. 149. [*Ibid.* p. 592.]

"When you can make it conceivable how any created finite dependent substance can move itself, or alter or stop its own motion, (which it must to be a free agent,) I suppose you will find it no harder for God to bestow this power on a solid, than an unsolid created substance." P. 166. [*Ibid.* p. 605.]

"He that considers how hardly sensation is, in our thoughts, reconcileable to extended matter," (it must be remembered that Mr. Locke thought brutes to be wholly material,) "or existence to any thing that hath no extension at all, will confess that he is very far from certainly knowing what his soul is. It is a point which seems to me to be put out of the reach of our knowledge. And he who will give himself leave to consider freely, and look into the dark and intricate part of each hypothesis, will scarce find his reason able to determine him fixedly for or against the soul's materiality." [Essay, B. iv. Ch. iii. S. vi. Works, I. p. 263.] (P.)

* Essay, I. p. 264. (P.) B. ii. Ch. iii. S. xxviii.

must have proper extension, figure, and a corporeal substance.*

“With regard to conscious beings, whether created or uncreated,” he says, “I confess I have no clear idea how they can have any proper locality, residence, situation, nearness, or juxta-position among bodies, without changing the very essence or nature of them into extended beings, and making them quite other things than they are. When we say that God, the infinite spirit, is *every where*, in a strict philosophical sense, we mean that he has an immediate and unlimited consciousness of, and agency upon all things, and that his knowledge and power reach also to all possibles, as well as to all actual beings. When we say the soul of man *is in his body*, we mean he has a consciousness of certain motions and impressions made on that particular animal engine, and can excite particular motions in it at pleasure.”†

This being the only consistent system of immaterialism, it is that which is held by Mr. Baxter, and all the most approved modern writers upon the subject.

From the whole of this Section, and the preceding, it will appear, that the modern idea of an *immaterial being* is by no means the same thing that was so denominated by the ancients; it being well known to the learned, as has been shewn, that what the ancients meant by an immaterial being, was only a *finer kind* of what we should now call *matter*; something like *air* or *breath*, which first supplied a name for the *soul*, or else like *fire* or *flame*, which was probably suggested by the consideration of the *warmth* of the living body. Consequently, the ancients did not exclude from mind the property of *extension* and *local presence*. It had, in their idea, some common properties with matter, was capable of being united to it, of acting and being acted upon by it, and of moving from place to place along with it.

But it was justly considered by the moderns, that such an immaterial substance as this, was, in fact, no immaterial substance at all, but a material one; it being the opinion of all modern philosophers (though it was unknown to the ancients) that all matter is ultimately the same thing, all kinds of bodies differing from one another only in the *size* or *arrangement* of their ultimate particles or atoms. It was, therefore, seen, that if the powers of sensation or thought

* Philosophical Essays, p. 133, &c. (P.) Essay vi. S. ii. Works, VI. pp. 510—543.

† Ibid. p. 381. (P.)

could belong to such a material substance as the ancients had denominated an immaterial one (being only an attenuated kind of matter), it might be imparted to the very *grossest* matter, since it is naturally capable of the same attenuation, and, therefore, that the *soul* and *body*, being in reality the same kind of substance, must die together.

To avoid this conclusion, of which divines entertained a very unreasonable dread, they refined upon the former notion of spirit, excluding from it every property which it held in common with matter; making it, in the strict metaphysical sense of the term, an *immaterial thing*, without extension, that is, occupying no portion of space, and therefore bearing no relation to it, and consequently incapable of motion from one place to another. In fact, there was no other method of keeping clear of a proper *materialism*. For there can be no medium between absolute materialism, and this proper and strict immaterialism. Now, what I maintain is, that this dread of materialism has driven these refiners among the moderns, to adopt a system with respect to human nature, that is not only contradicted by fact and experience, as I think has been fully proved, but is likewise absurd and impossible in itself. For, by denying to spirit every property in common with matter, it necessarily makes them incapable of *mutual action* or *influence*; in consequence of which, it will be naturally impossible, that the Divine mind should either have *created matter*, or be capable of *acting upon it*.*

After the deduction that I have given of the history of opinions concerning the soul, it may be useful to give a summary view of the whole, that the several steps in the progress, and their natural connexion, may more easily appear.

Man is a being possessed of various faculties, or powers. He can *see, hear, smell, feel, walk, think* and *speak*. He is also a very complex being, consisting of various distinct parts, some of which are evidently appropriated to some of these powers, and others to others of them. Thus it is the eye only that sees, the ear that hears, the nose that smells, the feet that walk, and the tongue is of principal use in modulating the voice. What it is in man that *thinks* is not so obvious, and the opinions concerning it have been vari-

* What follows to the end of this part was added to the 2d Ed. from the *Illustrations*.

ous. I apprehend, however, that it was always supposed to be something *within* a man, and not any part that was conspicuous.

The writers of the Old Testament seem to have conceived of it variously, sometimes referring it to the *heart*, perhaps as the most central part of man, as when the Psalmist says, *My heart is inditing a good matter*, &c., but at other times to the *reins*, as *My reins instruct me in the night season*. The *passions* are generally seated by them in the heart, but the sentiments of pity and commiseration are more frequently assigned to the *bowels*, which are said to yearn over an object of distress. It is remarkable, that the *head*, or *brain*, never seems to have been considered by them as having any thing to do in the business of thinking, or in any mental affection whatever. But the reason of it may be, that strong mental affections were sooner observed to affect the heart, reins and bowels, than the head.

In ancient times the simple power of *life* was generally thought to be in the *breath*, or animal *heat*, because breathing and warmth are the universal concomitants of life. I do not, however, recollect that the latter idea ever occurs in the Scriptures, but there life is sometimes said to be in the *blood*.

When men reflected a little farther, and began to conceive that possibly both the property of *life*, and also all the powers that we term *mental*, might belong to the same thing, the breath (the supposed principle of life) was imagined to be competent to the whole; and then the idea of a *soul* was completely formed. Consequently, it was first conceived to be an aerial, or an igneous substance, which animates the body during life, and makes its escape at death; after which it was supposed to be either detained near the place where the body was deposited, being held by a kind of attraction, or an affection to its former companion, or to rise in the atmosphere to a region in which it was counterpoised by the surrounding elements.

We may smile at the ignorance of mankind in early ages, in supposing that the *breath of life* could be any thing more than part of the common air, which was first inspired, and then expired. But though this be a thing well known in the present age, I can easily conceive that, when the nature of air and respiration were little understood, men might not immediately conceive that the breath, though it mixed

with the air, and was invisible, was therefore the very same thing with it. They might well enough imagine that it was something distinct from it, which was in part drawn in and out during the continuance of life, and wholly discharged and set loose at death. There are other instances of the ignorance of the ancients in matters of philosophy, and even in tolerably enlightened ages, almost, if not altogether, as gross as this.

When, at length, it was discovered that the breath was nothing more than the air, still the idea of an *invisible principle of life and thought* being once fixed would not be immediately exploded, but would be supposed to be a substance more attenuated and refined; as being, for instance, of an *ethereal* or *fiery* nature, &c. still invisible, and more active.

Whatever was the invisible substance of which the human soul consisted, the *universal soul* of the heathen philosophers, or the *Divine essence*, was supposed to be the very same; and all other souls were supposed to have been parts of it, to have been detached from it, and to be finally resumed into it again. In this state of opinions, therefore, the soul was supposed to be what we should now call *an attenuated kind of matter*, capable of division, as all other matter is.

This was the notion adopted by the Christian Fathers from the Oriental and Platonic systems of philosophy, and therefore many of these Fathers did not scruple to assert that the soul, though conceived to be a thing distinct from the body, was properly *corporeal*, and even *naturally mortal*. The opinion, however, of its being naturally immortal gained ground; and, *matter*, according to the philosophical system, being considered as a thing that was necessarily *perishable*, as well as *impure*, the doctrine of the immateriality, as well as of the immortality of the soul, was pretty firmly established; an immaterial substance being, however, still considered as only something more refined than gross matter.

The idea of the soul being immaterial soon led to the idea of its not having any property in common with gross matter, and in time with matter strictly considered; and being confounded with, and illustrated by the idea of the *principle of life*, it was asserted to have no length, breadth or thickness, which are properties peculiar to matter; to be *indivisible* also, and finally *not to exist in space*. This was the idea that generally prevailed after the time of Mamertus,

though various other refinements occur in the writings of the schoolmen upon the subject.

But the doctrine of *pure spiritualism* was not firmly established before Descartes, who, considering extension as the essence of matter, made the want of extension the distinguishing property of mind or spirit. Upon this idea was built the immaterial system in its state of greatest refinement, when the soul was defined to be *immaterial, indivisible, indiscerptible, unextended*, and to have nothing to do with *locality or motion*, but to be a substance possessed of the simple powers of thought, and to have nothing more than an arbitrary connexion with an organized system of matter.

This was the idea of mind or spirit that was prevalent about the time of Mr. Locke, who contributed greatly to lower it, by contending, that whatever exists must exist *somewhere*, or in *some place*; and by shewing that, for any thing that we know to the contrary, the power of thought may be superadded by the Divine Being to an organized system of mere matter, though, at the same time, declaring himself in favour of the notion of a separate soul. From this time, the doctrine of the nature of the soul has been fluctuating and various; some still maintaining that it has no property whatever in common with matter, and bears no relation to space, whereas, others say, that it exists in space, and occupies a portion of it, so as to be properly extended, but not to have solidity, which they make to be the property that distinguishes it from matter.

The object of this work is to prove, that the doctrine of a *soul* is altogether unphilosophical and unscriptural; for that, judging from the phenomena, all the powers of *the same being*, viz. *man*, ought to be referred to *one substance*, which, therefore, must necessarily be *the body*, and that the refined and proper spiritualism above described is peculiarly chimerical and absurd. Absurd, however, as is the notion of a substance which has *no property in common with matter*, which bears *no relation to space*, and yet both acts upon body, and is acted upon by it, it is the doctrine that, in the course of gradual refinement, philosophers and divines were necessarily brought to, and is the only consistent immaterialism. For every other opinion concerning spirit makes it to be, in fact, the same thing with matter; at least every other opinion is liable to objections similar to those which lie against the notion of a soul properly material.

SECTION XXI.

A brief History of Opinions, concerning the STATE OF THE DEAD.

AFTER reciting the foregoing series of opinions concerning the soul in general, it may not be amiss to consider by itself what has been thought concerning its condition between the death of the body and the resurrection. And the revolution of opinions, with respect to this question, has been not a little remarkable.

It was unquestionably the opinion of the apostles and early Christians, that whatever be the nature of the soul, its percipient and thinking powers cease at death; and they had no hope of the restoration of those powers, but in the general resurrection of the dead. But when it was concluded that men had souls distinct from the body, and capable of subsisting after the body was dead, it was necessary to provide some *receptacle* for them, where they might wait till they were re-united to their respective bodies.

“Before the council of Florence, which was held in the year 1439, under Pope Eugenius IV., the current doctrine both of the Greek and Latin churches was, that ‘the souls of the saints were *in abditis receptaculis*, or, as some of them expressed it, *in exterioribus atriis*, where they expected the resurrection of their bodies, and the glorification of their souls; and though the Fathers believed all of them to be happy, yet they did not think they would enjoy the *beatific vision* before the resurrection.’”* How the souls of the wicked were disposed of, little or nothing is said by them.

The Catholics, as well as heretics, says Beausobre, believed that the souls of the Old Testament saints were kept in prison *in the shades below*, and could not be delivered from thence but by the grace of Christ.† Christ, they say, when he was in a state of death, went and preached to them, and brought from thence as many as believed in him. Irenæus maintained this opinion.‡

That the genuine Christian doctrine, of the *sleep of the whole man* till the resurrection, did however continue in the

* Historical View, p. 1. (P.) † Vol. I. p. 290. (P.) L. i. Ch. v. S. x.

‡ Du Pin, I. p. 60. (P.) Nouv. Bib. I. p. 73.

Christian church, and especially among those who had little intercourse with philosophers, there is sufficient evidence. Du Pin says, that under the reign of Philip, an assembly of bishops was held on the account of some Arabians, who maintained that the souls of men died, and were raised again with their bodies, and that Origen convinced them of their mistake. He also says, that Tatian was of the same opinion with those Arabians.*

It will be more satisfactory to my readers, if, besides this general account, I quote more particularly the sentiments of some of the Christian writers upon this subject. I shall, therefore, relate what is said by a few of those of the middle ages, when the opinion began to change.

Gregory the Great, says, that the souls of some of the righteous, on account of their imperfections, are not immediately admitted to heaven, though others certainly are. But, he says, the souls of all the wicked are tormented in hell; and he explains how, like the soul of the rich man in the gospel, and of the devils, they may be tormented with corporeal fire, though they themselves be incorporeal.†

Julian of Toledo, also, in the seventh century, maintained, "that the wicked immediately after death are precipitated into hell, where they undergo endless torments."‡

Anselm says, that the souls of good men do not enjoy perfect happiness till they be re-united to their bodies; and that even then they could not be perfectly happy, if this union impeded their *velocity*, in instantly conveying themselves from one place to another, even the most distant; in which, he says, part of their perfection will consist.§

Bernard asserts, that, at the resurrection, the soul recovers its *life* and *sense*; that is, its *knowledge* and *love*. But he says, that the souls of the *martyrs*, when loosed from their bodies, are immersed in a sea of eternal light. This, however, was peculiar to the martyrs, and not the necessary privilege of all the departed souls of good men. Again, he says,

* Vol. I. pp. 99 and 55. (P.) "Ils nient l'immortalité de l'âme, et soutient qu'elle meurt, et qu'elle ressuscitera un jour avec le corps." Nouv. Bib. I. p. 64. Sir Thomas Browne describing his early opinions, which he had quitted to "keep the road in Divinity" and "follow the great wheel of the Church," says, "The first of mine was that of the Arabians, that the souls of men perished with their bodies, but should yet be raised again at the last day. Not that I did absolutely conceive a mortality of the soul; but if that were, which faith, not philosophy, hath yet thoroughly disproved, and that both entered the grave together, yet I held the same conceit thereof, that we all do of the body, that it rise again." *Rel. Med.* S. vii. p. 4. Works, Fol. 1686.

† Opera, I. p. 39. (P.) ‡ Du Pin, VI. p. 44. (P.) Nouv. Bib. VI. p. 38.

§ Opera, 1612, III. p. 146. (P.)

that the souls of the just go to rest at death, but not to the *full glory of their kingdom*; and, that though they drink of happiness, they are not intoxicated. He hardly seems to think that the wicked suffered any thing in the intermediate state; for he says, that white robes are given to the saints, in which to wait till the wicked are punished, and themselves are crowned with double happiness.*

In this state continued the doctrine concerning the dead, through the greatest part of the dark ages, between the Christian Fathers and the Reformation. It seems, however, that the opinion of the admission of the souls of the righteous to a state of perfect happiness in heaven, had gradually gained ground, and had become the general opinion in the fourteenth century. For Pope John XXII. made himself very obnoxious by reviving, as it is said by Du Pin, the opinion of the ancient Fathers, that the souls of good men do not enjoy the beatific vision till the day of judgment. He was very strenuous in asserting and preaching this doctrine, contrary to the judgment of the divines at Paris, whom the king of France assembled for that purpose. But it is said that, on his death-bed, he retracted his opinion, and acknowledged that souls separated from the body, which are purged from their sins, are in the kingdom of heaven, and in paradise with Jesus Christ, and in the company of the angels; that they see God face to face and the Divine essence, as clearly as the state and condition of a soul separated from the body will permit.†

His successor, Benedict XII., made a solemn decree against the opinion of his predecessor. But probably the opinion of John had many adherents, since it was thought necessary, a considerable time afterwards, to bring a decree of a council in aid of the contrary doctrine; and, it is remarkable, that it was by the authority of a Pope, who was obliged to use great art and address to gain his point, that the present faith of all Protestant churches on this article was properly established.

In a council summoned by Eugenius IV., to meet at Ferrara, and adjourned to Florence, it was decreed, that “the souls of those who, after baptism, have incurred no stain of sin, as also those souls which having contracted the stain of sin, whether in their bodies, or divested of their bodies, have been purged by sacrifices of the mass, prayers

* Opera, pp. 481, 954, 290, 1716, K. (P.)

† Du Pin, XII. pp. 28, 29. (P.) Nouv. Bib. XI. pp. 31—33.

and alms are received into heaven immediately, and clearly behold the triune God as he is.”*

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, which implies, that of its separate existence after death, being denied by many of that age, especially by the disciples of Averroes, and other Arabian philosophers, (who maintained one *universal soul*, the derivation of all other souls from it, and their absorption into it,) it was thought necessary to reinforce the belief of it in another council. Accordingly, in the Lateran council, held by Leo X., in 1513, it was decreed, “that the soul is not only truly, and of itself, and essentially *the form of the human body*, as it is expressed in the canon of Pope Clement V., published in the general council of Viennes, but likewise *immortal*, and according to the number of bodies into which it is infused, is singularly multipliable, multiplied, and to be multiplied, (*multiplicabilis, multiplicata, et multiplicanda.*” †) This certainly implies the generation of souls from souls, contrary to the decision of Damascenus mentioned above.

“Pomponatius, a philosopher of Mantua, not at all intimidated by this Lateran thunder, published a book in the year 1516, on the immortality of the soul; in which he exposed the futility of that argumentation by which the followers of Aristotle had endeavoured to prove the immortality of the soul, on the principles of their master, by shewing, that they either mistook the sense of Aristotle’s principles, or drew wrong conclusions from them. He then examines the hypothesis of Aristotle himself, and shews, that the mortality of the soul may be as easily proved by it as the contrary. After which he states the moral arguments for the immortality, or rather against the mortality of the soul, under eight heads; and having shewn, that they are weak and inconclusive, he infers, upon the whole, in his last chapter, that ‘the immortality of the soul being a problematical question, we can have no assurance of the thing but from revelation; and that they who would build immortality upon any other foundation, only verify the character given to certain self-sufficient reasoners by the apostle, namely, that *professing themselves wise they became fools.*” ‡

Though this doctrine of the immortality of the soul, as a substance distinct from the body, is manifestly favourable to Popery, but few of the Protestants appear to have had

* Historical View, p. 2. (P.)

† Ibid, p. 6. (P.) Translated from *Caranza*. Sum. Concil. 1681.

‡ Ibid. pp. 8, 9. (P.)

strength of mind to call it in question. Luther, however, did it, though the opposition almost died with him. In the defence of his propositions, in 1520, which had been condemned by a bull of Leo X., he “*ranks the natural immortality of the soul, and that the soul is the substantial form of the human body,*” among “those monstrous opinions to be found in the *Roman dunghills of decretals;*” and he afterwards made use of “the doctrine of *the sleep of the soul,*—as a confutation of purgatory and saint worship, and continued in that belief to the last moment of his life.” William Tyndall also, the famous translator of the Bible into English, in defending Luther’s doctrines against Sir Thomas More’s objections, considers the sleep of the soul as the doctrine of the Protestants in his time, and founded on the Scriptures.*

Calvin, however, violently opposed this doctrine; and this seems to have given a different turn to the sentiments of the reformed in general, and Tyndall himself recanted his opinion. Calvin seems to have been embarrassed with the souls of the wicked. He says, “it is nothing to him what becomes of their souls; that he would only be responsible for the faithful.”† But it appears from Calvin’s own writing, that *thousands* of the reformers were of a different opinion from him; and though the doctrine of the immortality of the soul be exhibited in all the present Protestant confessions of faith, there is little or nothing of it in the earliest of them.

After the long prevalence of the doctrine of the *intermediate state*, that of the *sleep of the soul* has of late years been revived, and gains ground, not so much from considerations of philosophy, as from a closer attention to the sense of the Scriptures. No person has done more in this way than the present excellent Bishop of Carlisle.‡ Very important service has also been done to the same cause by the author of the *Historical View of this Controversy*,§ from which much of

* Historical View, pp. 13—17. (P.)

† Ibid. p. 25. (P.) “Quid si quis ipsorum adhuc obstrepit, quid perditionis filiis futurum sit? Nihil ad nos. Ego pro fidelibus respondeo.” *Psychopanychia*. Strasburgh, 1545. Fol. 50. *Ibid.*

‡ Dr. Edmund Law. See Vol. II. p. 258. He died in 1787, aged 84. Those who value Christian consistency, must regret, that this well-informed Unitarian who, at length, became a firm believer in the simple humanity of Christ, should have consented to live and die the Bishop of an *Athanasian* Church. Yet he knew how to value those who were more consistent. See his Letter to Mr. Lindsey in the *Memoirs*, p. 163.

§ Archdeacon Blackburne, the friend and literary associate of Bishop Law, died also in 1787, aged 82. This highly respectable Christian unaccountably satisfied himself to remain a *Conformist*, though he had written the *Confessional*.

this Section is extracted. Upon the whole, the doctrine of an intermediate state is now retained by few who have the character of thinking with freedom and liberality in other respects. And the more attention is given to the subject in a philosophical light, the better founded, I doubt not, will the conclusions that have been drawn from the study of the Scriptures appear to be.

It has not, however, been considered how much the doctrine of the *insensible state of the soul* in death affects the doctrine of the *separate existence of the soul*, which it appears to me to do very materially. It certainly takes away all the *use* of the doctrine, and therefore should leave us more at liberty from any prejudice in the discussion of the question, since nothing is really gained by its being decided either way. Though we should have a soul, yet while it is in a state of *utter insensibility*, it is, in fact, as much *dead*, as the body itself while it continues in a state of death. Our calling it a state of *sleep*, is only giving another and softer term to the same thing; for our *ideas* of the state itself are precisely the same, by whatever name we please to call it. I flatter myself, however, that in time Christians will get over this, as well as other prejudices; and, thinking with more respect of *matter*, as the creation of God, may think it capable of being endued with all the powers of which we are conscious, without having recourse to a principle, which, in the most favourable view of the subject, accords but ill with what matter has been conceived to be.*

SECTION XXII.

An Account of Opinions concerning the SENTIENT PRINCIPLE IN BRUTES.

THE souls of brutes, which have very much embarrassed the modern systems, occasioned no difficulty whatever in

* "I think it plainly appears—that *life* and *soul* are the same,—the consequences of life are sensation, thinking and reasoning, by which it is demonstrated to be a mere figment, and idle and vain philosophy, to frame an idea of a spiritual substance in man.—Methinks I hear the *Psychonutnist* arguing, that according to my notion, man is a mere piece of mechanism, a curious frame of clock-work, and only a reasoning engine. To which I answer—that man is such a curious piece of mechanism, as shews only an Almighty power could be the first and sole artificer, viz. to make a reasoning engine out of dead matter, a lump of insensible earth, to live, to be able to discourse; to pry and search into the very nature of heaven and earth: nay, of an infinite and omnipotent Being, with abundance more of noble operations. I say, if this be that being which is called mere mechanism, I see no objection but in the words, and I am sure, no degradation to the honour of an Almighty Creator, or the excellency of man, his perfectest and chiefest workmanship." Dr. Coward's *Second Thoughts*, 1702, pp. 123, 124.

in that of the ancients. They considered all souls as originally the same, in whatever bodies they might happen to be confined. To-day it might be that of a man, to-morrow that of a horse, then that of a man again, and lastly, be absorbed into the universal soul, from which it proceeded.*

But Christianity made a great difference between men and brutes. To the former a happy immortality was promised, and in such a manner as made it impossible to think that brutes could have any title to it. It was absolutely necessary, therefore, to make a change in the former uniform and comprehensive system; and though some philosophical Christians still retained the doctrine of transmigration, it was generally given up, notwithstanding the doctrines of *pre-existence*, and of a *separate consciousness after death*, which were originally parts of the same system, continued.

To account for the great difference which Christianity made between the future state of men and brutes, and yet retain the separate state of the soul, it was necessary to find some *specific difference* between them. But a most unhappy one was pitched upon, one that is contradicted by every appearance. It has, however, been so necessary to the rest of the now *disjointed system*, that notwithstanding this circumstance, it has maintained its ground, in some sort, to this day. It is that, though the soul of a man is immortal, that of a brute is not; and yet, it is evident, that brutes have the rudiments of all our faculties, without exception; so that they differ from us in *degree* only, and not in *kind*. But the consequence of supposing the soul of a man and that of a brute to be of the same nature, was absolutely inadmissible; for they must then, it was thought, have been provided for in a future state as well as our own.

It has been seen, that the Platonists thought there was something corporeal even in the human soul. It is no wonder then that the souls of brutes should have been thought to be *wholly* so, and therefore mortal, which was the opinion I believe, of all the Christian world till very lately. Even the great Lord Bacon entertained this opinion. *Anima sensibilis*, says he, *sive brutorum, plane substantia corporea censenda est*. The celebrated anatomist Willis also professed the same.†

* It was consistent, however, with this hypothesis, to suppose, that while souls were confined to the bodies of brutes, their faculties should differ, with respect to their exercise, from those of men. Thus "Aristotle—bestowed *sensation, memory*, and the *passions* on other animals, and *reason* on man exclusively. On this principle the schoolmen, and all the Peripateticks have proceeded." *Bolingbroke's Works*, III. p. 530. (P.)

† Gale, p. 326. (P.) Dr. Willis's work is entitled, "De Anima Brutorum, qua"

The opinion of Descartes was much more extraordinary, for he made the souls of brutes to be mere *automata*, and his disciples in general denied that they had any perception. Malebranche says, that they eat without pleasure, and cry without pain, that they fear nothing, know nothing; and if they act in such a manner as shews understanding, it is because God, having made them to preserve them, has formed their bodies so as mechanically to avoid whatever might hurt them.

The learned Dr. Gale maintains at large, that the sensitive soul is corporeal;* and the very justly celebrated Dr. Cudworth has revived, for the sake of helping this great difficulty, the long-exploded notion of the *soul of the world*, from which the souls of brutes issue, and to which he supposes they return, without retaining their separate consciousness after death. "They may, if they please," says he, "suppose the souls of brutes, being but so many particular *eradiations*, or *effluxes*, from that *source of life above*, whensoever and wheresoever there is any fitly prepared matter capable to receive them, and to be actuated by them, to have a sense and fruition of themselves in it, so long as it continues such. But as soon as ever those organized bodies of theirs, by reason of their indisposition, become incapable of being further acted upon by them, then to be resumed again, and retracted back to their original head and fountain. Since it cannot be doubted, but what creates any thing out of nothing, or sends it forth from itself, by free and voluntary emanation, may be able either to retract the same back again to its original source, or else to annihilate it at pleasure."†

This writer, however, suggests another method of solving this difficulty, much more liberal and rational, supposing the immortality of the soul not to follow necessarily from its immateriality, but from the appointment of God. But he

Hominis vitalis ac sensitiva est, Exercitationes duæ," first published 1672. This learned physician died in 1675, aged 53. Wood says that "though he was a plain man, a man of no carriage, little discourse, complaisance or society, yet for his deep insight, happy researches in natural and experimental philosophy, anatomy and chemistry, for his wonderful success and repute in his practice, the natural smoothness, pure elegance, delightful unaffected neatness of Latin style, none since hath equalled, much less outdone him, how great soever." *Athen. Oecon.* 1691, li. p. 402. Mr. Layton admired and largely considered Dr. Willis's *Exercitationes*. He says that "*Antonius Roccus*, a German philosopher, maintains the very same opinion of the soul's being generated, and naturally mortal, and yet both of them allow and maintain an immortal soul in man, yet but in words, for all their reasons and deductions make against it." *Search after Souls*, Pt. 2, 1693, p. 23. See also Mr. L.'s *Observations on Bentley's Sermon*, pp. 5, &c.

* *Philosophia Generalis*, p. 323. (P.) † P. 45. (P.) B. i. Ch. i. S. xxxv. *ad fin.*

injures the brutes very much, when, to account for the difference in the Divine dispensations to them and us, he supposes them to be destitute of *morality* and *liberty*.*

I am most surprised to find Mr. Locke among those who maintain, that, though the souls of men are, in part, at least, immaterial, those of brutes, which resemble men so much, are wholly material. It is evident, however, from the manner in which he expresses himself on the subject, not only that this was his own opinion, but that it was the general opinion of his time. He says, "Though to me sensation be comprehended under thinking in general, yet—I have spoke of sense in brutes as distinct from thinking;—and to say that fleas and mites, &c. have immortal souls, as well as men, will possibly be looked on as going a great way to serve an hypothesis."† Many, however, have been compelled by the analogy between men and brutes to go thus far. I do not see how they can stop short of it.

It would be endless to recite all the hypotheses that have been framed to explain the difference between brutes and men, with respect to their intellects here, and their fate hereafter. I shall, however, mention that of Mr. Locke, who says, "This, I think, I may be positive in, that the power of *abstracting* is not at all in them, and that the having of *general ideas* is that which puts a perfect distinction betwixt man and brutes.—For it is evident, we observe no footsteps in them of making use of general signs for universal ideas, from which we have reason to imagine that they have not the faculty of abstracting or making general ideas, since they have no use of words, or any other general signs."‡

In fact, however, as brutes have the same external senses that we have, they have, of course, all the same *inlets to ideas* that we have; and though, on account of their wanting a sufficient *quantity of brain*, perhaps, chiefly, the combination and association of their ideas cannot be so complex as ours, and therefore they cannot make so great a progress in intellectual improvements, they must necessarily have, *in kind*, every faculty that we are possessed of. Also, since they evidently have *memory, passions, will, and judgment* too, as their actions demonstrate, they must, of course, have the faculty that we call *abstraction*, as well as the rest; though, not having the use of *words*, they cannot commu-

* P. 45. (P.) B. i. Ch. i. S. xxxv. *ad fin.*

† Essay, l. p. 148. (P.) 2d Reply, Works, I. p. 592.

‡ Ibid. p. 120. (P.) B. ii. Ch. ii. S. x.

nicate their ideas to us. They must, at least, have a natural capacity for what is called *abstraction*, it being nothing more than a particular case of the *association of ideas*, of which, in general, they are certainly possessed as well as ourselves.

Besides, if dogs had no general or abstract ideas, but only such as were appropriated to particular *individual objects*, they could never be taught to distinguish a *man* as such, a *hare* as such, or a *partridge* as such, &c. But their actions shew, that they may be trained to catch hares, set partridges, or *birds* in general, and even attack *men*, as well as to distinguish their own master, and the servants of the family in which they live.

Whether brutes will survive the grave we cannot tell. This depends upon other considerations than their being capable of reason and reflection. If the resurrection be properly *miraculous*, and entirely out of all the established laws of nature, it will appear probable that brutes have no share in it; since we know of no declaration that God has made to that purpose, and they can have no expectation of any such thing. But if the resurrection be, in fact, *within the proper course of nature*, extensively considered, and consequently there be something remaining of every organized body that death does not destroy, there will be reason to conclude, that they will be benefited by it as well as ourselves. And the great misery to which some of them are exposed in this life, may incline us to think, that a merciful and just God will make them some recompense for it hereafter. He is *their* Maker and Father as well as *ours*. But, with respect to this question, we have no sufficient *data* from which to argue, and therefore must acquiesce in our utter ignorance, satisfied that the Maker and Judge of all will do that which is right.

THE
HISTORY
 OF THE
**Philosophical Doctrine concerning the Origin of the Soul,
 and the Nature of Matter;**
 WITH ITS
 INFLUENCE ON CHRISTIANITY,
 Especially with respect to the Doctrine of
THE PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST:
 BEING A SEQUEL TO THE
Disquisitions concerning Matter and Spirit.

*We have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power
 and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* 2 Pet. i. 16.

THE
 INTRODUCTION,

CONTAINING

*The Outlines of the Philosophical Doctrine concerning the
 Origin of the Souls of Men, &c.*

TRUE religion, which consists in the observance of just precepts for the conduct of life, and of reasonable expectations after death, is necessarily founded on a just knowledge of God, of ourselves and our situation. But it was naturally impossible that mankind, in the infancy of the world, should attain to just notions on these subjects. It could not be, but that the philosophy of the world around us, and the various substances that compose it, should precede the knowledge of ourselves, and especially the knowledge of God, the maker of all things. And the very slow progress that mankind have made in the true philosophy of the

external world, our acquaintance with which is at present but very imperfect, and all the great discoveries recent, is sufficient to convince any person, who knows what philosophy is, and how ready men always are to speculate upon every subject, and to attach themselves to *general principles*, false as well as true, of what importance it was that the Universal Parent should make some provision for his offspring in these respects; by imparting to them that information which, in their circumstances, it was absolutely impossible they should have acquired. Without this seasonable assistance, very absurd notions would unavoidably have been formed, and foolish and pernicious practices would have been the consequence of them.

It is not from *theory* only, but from unquestionable *facts* that we are authorized to pronounce in this manner. All authentic history shews us, that when mankind, unfurnished with the rudiments of just previous knowledge, *did* speculate concerning the structure of the world and the origin of it; concerning their own nature and future destination, and especially the nature and moral government of God, they did adopt the wildest and most extravagant systems imaginable; and that the religion they thus made for themselves gave a sanction to such practices as exceedingly debased their natures, and sunk them to the lowest degree of depravity, vice and wretchedness. That the religions of the heathen world, and especially those of the early ages of mankind, were of this pernicious kind, no person acquainted with history will deny.

It is, likewise, no less evident from history, that it has been owing to the influence of a few *fundamental truths*, communicated by God to men, that the mischievous tendency of the various Pagan religions has, in fact, been counteracted; and it is from these alone we are to expect the future prevalence of sound knowledge, virtue and happiness. I do not say, however, that *no* just principles of religion could ever have been formed by men unassisted by revelation, but that this knowledge would have been acquired *very late*, not till error, superstition and vice had become too prevalent and inveterate; and some important religious truths, I may venture to say, would never have been acquired at all.

That there is *one God*, who made the world, and all things in it, and who governs it by his providence, who loves virtue, and will reward it; who hates vice, and will punish it; are truths too sublime to have been investigated by human spe-

ulation. On the contrary, a various and absurd *polytheism*, leading to the most abominable and horrid rites, was the immediate consequence of the wild, undirected speculations of men concerning the origin of the world. The religion of the Patriarchs and Jews, which alone contained the great truths above-mentioned, was a most seasonable check upon the polytheism of the East, which was of the most flagitious and horrid kind. And it has been owing to Christianity, and to nothing else, that the same great and generous principles have now spread into this Western part of the world, overturning the polytheism that prevailed in it before, and bidding fair, according to the prophecies of the gospel, to diffuse their beneficial influence among all the nations of the world.

The incapacity of mankind, in the early ages of the world, for speculating concerning their own nature, or that of the Divine Being, and therefore the real importance of revelation, is in nothing more conspicuous than in its appearing (now that we are somewhat better prepared to form a judgment concerning these subjects) that the doctrines of revelation only, prove to be truly *rational*; and all the ingenious speculations of men, how specious soever, are found to be all chimerical and vain, being contradicted by the appearances of nature.

This is in nothing more evident, than in the doctrine concerning *human nature*. The doctrines of the ancient philosophy on this subject, even those that have been in some measure subservient to the interests of virtue, will by no means stand the test of just reasoning; whereas, the simple doctrine of revelation stands uncontradicted by any natural appearance whatever, and by this means proves its origin from the *God of all truth*.

The doctrine of the Scripture is, that God made man of the *dust of the ground*; and, by simply animating this organized matter, made him that living, percipient and intelligent being that he is. According to revelation, *death* is a state of rest and insensibility, and our only, though sure hope of a future life, is founded on the doctrine of the *resurrection of the whole man*, at some distant period; this assurance being sufficiently confirmed to us, both by the evident tokens of a divine commission attending the persons who delivered the doctrine, and especially by the actual resurrection of Jesus Christ, which is more authentically attested than any other fact in history.

On the contrary, the doctrine of philosophy on this sub-

ject is, that there are *two distinct principles* in man, a *body* and a *soul*, the latter of which comes from heaven, and returns to it again, when the body dies; and, consequently, that the body is so far from being the *whole man*, that it is very improperly called a part of him; being, in fact, an incumbrance to the percipient and thinking substance, which alone is *himself*; and we only begin to live to purpose, when we are disengaged from these impediments to our highly active powers.

Contrary as this system is to all appearances whatever, as I have shewn at large in the preceding treatise, it has been to an attentive study of the Scriptures chiefly, and not so much to the consideration of natural phenomena, that we are indebted for the downfall of it. We there find a total and remarkable silence concerning the *unembodied state of man*. Death is there considered as a state of oblivion and insensibility; and it is only at the general resurrection of the human race, that the rewards of virtue, and the punishments of vice, are expressly said to *commence*.

These circumstances are so striking in the system of revelation, that divines (and not philosophers) were first convinced that, though man has a soul distinct from his body, its powers of perception and action depend upon the body, and that the whole man is in a state of insensibility from death to the resurrection. After this, we discover that natural phenomena entirely favour the same conclusion, and that, had we known nothing of man but what we see of him here, we must necessarily have formed the same judgment; and that death would be followed by the utter extinction of all our percipient and intellectual powers.

This having been the state of opinions for a considerable time, and the soul having served no other purpose but that of an *hypothesis* (being deemed incapable of subsisting, or at least of *acting* by itself), we are encouraged to lay aside all prejudice, and examine whether this hypothesis of a soul, distinct from the body, be favoured by fact and appearances. Finding it not to be favoured by any one fact or appearance in nature, I have ventured to reject it altogether; and here, and here only, I find a perfect consonancy between the doctrines of revelation and the dictates of natural reason.

Having proceeded thus far, I am tempted to extend my views, and consider the whole philosophical system, of which the doctrine of the soul makes a part; endeavouring to trace it from its source, and to shew the mischievous

effects that have followed from incorporating a thing of so heterogeneous a nature into the system of revelation.

The importance of these inquiries must be evident to any person who attends to the progress of knowledge and good sense in the world. For if the general body of Christians retain any doctrine as essential to revealed religion, which true philosophy shall prove to be actually false, the consequence will be, that the whole system will be rejected by those who consider that tenet as an inseparable part of it. So greatly doth it behove us, that *Christian knowledge* should keep pace with *philosophical*.

A conjecture concerning the origin of the opinion of a *soul distinct from the body* of man, was advanced in the preceding treatise. I shall now observe, that after the soul had, for reasons there assigned, been conceived to be of the nature of *air*, or *fire*, to *go above the clouds*, and to *have come down from thence*, all which opinions have an easy connexion, we find the following more extended philosophical system erected on this basis. All accounts prove, that it was first established in the Oriental part of the world, and that it was thence diffused through Europe, but it was held with considerable variations every where.

There have existed from eternity *two principles*, essentially different from, and opposite to each other, *God* and *matter*; the former an intelligent and perfectly good Being, generally compared to *light*, the other the source of all evil, and generally compared to *darkness*. Either from eternity, or in time, there issued from the Supreme Intelligence various inferior intelligences. This production was by way of *efflux* or *emanation from himself*, it being an indisputable maxim, that *nothing can come from nothing*. These intelligences occupied the region of light, bounded by that of darkness, which lay below it. The second principle, or matter, was by some represented as wholly inert, but by others it was said to be animated, or to have a peculiar soul.

Some of the inferior intelligences having sinned, and forfeited their rank in the regions of light, were condemned to assume material bodies, several of which they sometimes animated in succession, till, by this course of suffering and purgation, they were sufficiently purified from their original stains; after which they were to re-ascend to the regions of light, and be finally absorbed into the Supreme Mind from which they issued.

For the purpose of forming these material bodies, and

preparing a habitable world for their reception, there was a peculiar emanation from the Supreme Mind, or a *second God*; since the present habitable world, containing a mixture of good and evil, could not come from a being perfectly good. Others, however, supposed, that this peculiar emanation was prior to all others, and co-eternal with the Supreme Mind.

The most considerable variation in this system respects the *origin of matter*. For some did not suppose it to be eternal, but, like all other things, to have issued, directly or indirectly, from the One Great Original Being, and Source of all existence; and, therefore, that this also will, at length, be re-absorbed, and nothing will exist but the Divine Being himself.

The next considerable variation is, that some represent the descent of souls into bodies, to have been at the same time a *sin* and a *punishment*; those souls having first been smitten with a desire to animate such bodies, for the sake of the corporeal pleasures they might enjoy in them.

Such are the outlines of a system, which, though founded on nothing but *imagination*, without a single *fact* or appearance in nature to support it, has dazzled and captivated the philosophical part of the world from the earliest ages. And, though the humble *system of revelation* be diametrically opposite to it, in all its parts, representing one God as being *himself* the maker of all things, the author of good and evil, and as having made man *of the dust of the earth*, to which he is to return, and from which he is to be raised at last; and though this system of revelation has not failed, wherever it has been received, to overturn the *heathenish system* in part, much of it, however, was unnaturally incorporated into Christianity in early times; and there are no small remains of it in the Christianity of the present time, both Popish and Protestant, as will abundantly appear in the course of this work.

Notwithstanding the very general spread of this philosophical system, it is remarkable, that the minds of the Jews were long uncontaminated with it. The doctrine of revelation concerning a future life for man, depends upon *the resurrection of the dead*, and has no other foundation whatever. No other ground of hope is so much as hinted at in any part of the Old or New Testament; and though it is possible that some of the learned Pharisees in our Saviour's time might have been infected with other notions, borrowed from the Greeks, or from the East, they appear not to have been then known to the *vulgar* among the Jewish nation, as is suffi-

ciently evident from the history of the death and resurrection of Lazarus.

From this valuable history, we find that Martha, the sister of Lazarus, had no hope respecting her brother, but from *the resurrection of the last day*, John xi. 24; and our Lord gives her no consolation but on the same ground. *I am the resurrection and the life.* Had the notion of a *separate soul*, released from the fetters of flesh, and enjoying consummate happiness in another life, been known to them, and believed by them, it could not but have been uppermost in their minds; and some mention of it, or some allusion to it, would certainly have been found in the history; whereas no such thing appears.

This belief of a resurrection, as the only foundation of a future life, evidently existing, and being universally received in the time of our Saviour, there can hardly be a doubt, but that it must have been the belief of the most early Jews and Patriarchs. And since this doctrine could never have been suggested by any appearance in nature, it must have been derived from some original revelation, probably prior to the flood.

It is remarkable, that the doctrine of a resurrection appears to have been a part of the religion of the ancient Persians and Chaldeans, as may be seen in Le Clerc's edition of Stanley's *History of the Chaldean Religion*, and Beausobre's account of the religion of the Magi, in his excellent *History of Manicheism*;* but it seems to have become extinct in time, and to have given place to the more flattering account of the origin of the human soul, and its future destination, mentioned above. For, after this, it is remarkable, as all writers acknowledge, that no philosopher admitted any future life but on the supposition that the soul survived the body, or admitted that the soul survived the body, who did not, at the same time, suppose that it had existed before its union to the body, and who inferred that it would survive the body from the consideration of its having pre-existed. This, then, was the only ground of hope on the *heathen system*, as opposed to that which revelation holds out to us, and which, though utterly inconsistent with it, has kept its place along with it in almost all our public creeds to this day.

* *Histoire*, L. ii. Ch. ii. l. p. 167.

SECTION I.

Of the INDIAN, or the proper ORIENTAL Philosophy.

IT is in the East, and especially in the empire of Indostan, where the same people, and the same government, continued for many ages, that we are to look for the genuine Oriental philosophy with respect to the soul. We have not only the testimony of all ancient writers, that the system I have mentioned prevailed there, and that from thence it was propagated Westward, but later travellers into those countries give us the most satisfactory information concerning it. It is at this very day the reigning religion of the Hindoos, and of a great part of the East; and the attachment of these people to it, is exceeded by nothing but by that of the Jews to theirs.

Ramsay informs us, from *Abraham Roger, concerning the religion of the Bramins*, and *Kercher's Sina Illustrata*, that the Bramins believe "that souls are an eternal emanation from the Divine essence, or at least that they were produced a long time before the creation of the world; that in this pure state they sinned, and from that time are sent into the bodies of men and beasts, each according to its desert; so that the body which the soul inhabits resembles a chaos or a prison." They teach "that, after a certain number of transmigrations, all souls are reunited to their original, enter into the company of the gods, and become divinities."*

The Baudistes (says the author of *Examen du Fatalisme*), a sect of Indian philosophers, say that it is *sensual pleasure* that weighs down the soul, corrupts it, and chains it to matter; so that the soul, in order to recover its natural dignity, must make itself independent of the wants of the body, and be sensible of the deceitfulness of the pleasures it procures. The Baudistes, therefore, convinced of these principles, renounce pleasure, the world, and their families, and give themselves up to contemplation and incredible austerities.†

Later travellers have given us much more extensive and exact information concerning the religion of Indostan; and in them we have more particulars of the Oriental system unfolded, so as to leave no doubt but that it was from this

* Travels of Cyrus, pp. 300, 301. (P.) *Discours. Roger, L. ii. Pt. ii. Ch. vii.*

† Vol. I. p. 215. (P.)

source that the Greeks derived their boasted wisdom, and the Christians the first taint that was given to their purer principles. Two English travellers have particularly distinguished themselves by their attention to this subject, Mr. Holwell and Mr. Dow, who, though they differ in some particulars, agree sufficiently in many things, for which I shall quote them.

Mr. Holwell gives his account of the religion of the Hindoos, from the *Chartah Bhade*, which, he says, contains a genuine, uncontaminated account of their religion, in opposition to the *Aughtorah Bhade*, which, he says, is a corruption of it.* He sums up the whole in the following manner:

“That there is one God, eternal, omniscient, omnipotent and omniscient, in all things excepting a *providence* of the future actions of *free agents*. That God, from an impulse of divine love and goodness, first created three angelic persons, to whom he gave precedence, though not in equal degree. That he afterwards, from the same impulse, created an angelic host, whom he placed in subjection to *Birmah*, his first created, and to *Bistnoo*, and *Sieb*, as coadjutors to *Birmah*. That God created them all free, and intended they should all be partakers of his glory and beatitude, on the easy conditions of their acknowledging him their Creator and paying obedience to him, and to the three primary created personages whom he had put over them.

“That in process of time, a large portion of the angelic host, at the instigation of *Moisoosor*, and others of their chief leaders, rebelled, and denied the supremacy of their Creator, and refused obedience to his commands. That in consequence, the rebels were excluded heaven, and the sight of their Creator, and doomed to languish for ever in sorrow and darkness. That after a time, by the intercession of the three primary, and the rest of the faithful angelic beings, God relented, and placed the delinquents in a more

* Interesting Historical Events, Part. II. p. 29. (P.) This curious work is thus entitled: “Interesting Historical Events relative to the Provinces of Bengal and the Empire of Indostan—as also the Mythology and Cosmogony, Fasts and Festivals of the Gentoos, followers of the Shastah, and a Dissertation on the Metempsychosis, commonly though erroneously called the Pythagorean Doctrine.” By J. Z. Holwell, Esq. 1767. Mr. Holwell, who had borne a very high station in the British government of India, died, in England, at an advanced age, in 1798. He professed Christianity with the Arian notion of the person of Christ, but contended that *Brama* was also *inspired* though his religion, like the Christian, had been corrupted, especially on the article of the Divine Unity. Mr. H. advocated the theory of Mr. Berrow, a Divine of the Established Church, who published, in 1762, *A pre-existent Lapse of Human Souls*. See his 4th Part, pp. 37, 47, 48, 72.

sufferable state of punishment and probation, with powers to regain their lost happy situation. That for that purpose, a new creation of the visible and invisible worlds instantaneously took place, destined for the delinquents. That the new creation consisted of fifteen regions, seven below and seven *above* this terraqueous globe, and that this globe is the eighth, last and chief stage of punishment, purgation and trial. That mortal bodies were prepared by God for the rebel angels, in which they were for a space to be imprisoned, and subject to natural and moral evils, more or less painful, in proportion to their original guilt; and through which they were doomed to transmigrate, under eighty-nine different forms, the last into that of man, when the powers of the animating rebel spirits are supposed to be enlarged, equal to the state of their first creation.—

“That the rebel leaders had power given them by God to enter the eight regions of punishment and probation, and that the faithful angelic spirits had permission occasionally to descend to those regions, to guard the delinquents against the future attempts of their leaders. And that consequently, the souls, or spirits, which animate every mortal form, are *delinquent angels*, in a state of punishment, for a lapse from innocence in a pre-existent state.”*

In this summary the word *creation* is made use of by Mr. Holwell; but in the work from which the summary is made, it is said, that the Eternal One *formed* the angelic host, “in part, *of his own essence*.” It is also said, that the rebel angels were driven from heaven into the *Onderah*, or *intense darkness*,† the origin of which, not being mentioned, may be supposed to have been from all eternity; and it is nowhere said in this account, that any thing was made from nothing.

“It is an established doctrine,” he says, “of the *Aughtorrah Bhade*, that the three primary created personages, as well as the rest of the heavenly angelic faithful spirits, have from time to time, according to the permission given them by God, descended to the eight *Boboons* of punishment, and have voluntarily subjected themselves to the feelings of natural and moral evil for the sake of their brethren, the delinquent *Debtih*.”‡

These extracts from Mr. Holwell contain a pretty full detail of most of the tenets that I have mentioned in my

* Interesting Historical Events, Part. II. pp. 60—63. (P.)

† Ibid. pp. 35, 44. (P.)

‡ Ibid. p. 71. (P.)

sketch of the Oriental system. Some other particulars we learn from Mr. Dow.

According to him the *Bedas*, written in the Shanscrit language, are said to have been collected by *Beäss*,—who divided them into four distinct parts, four thousand eight hundred and ninety-four years before 1776 of the Christian æra.* “The Hindoos,” he says, “are divided into two great religious sects, the followers of the doctrine of the *Bedang*, and those who adhere to the principles of the *Neadirsen*.† *Bedang*—is an exposition of the doctrine of the *Bedas* by that great philosopher and prophet *Beäss Muni*.” It was revised some ages after “by *Sirrider Swami*. Almost all the Hindoos of the Decan, and those of the Malabar and Coromandel coasts are of the sect of the *Bedang*.” ‡

According to the *Bedang*, “*affection* dwelt with God from all eternity. It was of three different kinds, the *creative*, the *preserving* and the *destructive*. The first is represented by *Brimha*, the second by *Bishen*, and the third by *Shibah*.—The affection of God then produced *power*, and power, at a proper conjuncture of time and fate, embraced *goodness* and produced *matter*. The three qualities then, acting upon matter, produced the universe.§ According to this system, since nothing is said to be made out of nothing, matter must have been produced by a kind of generation from beings whose substance was originally derived from God himself, which was agreeable to the avowed opinion of the Cabalists.

“God seeing the earth in full bloom—called forth for the first time *intellect*, which he endued with various organs and shapes, to form a diversity of animals upon the earth.” “*Intellect* is a portion of the great *soul of the universe*, breathed into all creatures, to animate them for a certain time.—After death it animates other bodies, or returns like a drop into that unbounded ocean from which it first arose,” which is the case with the souls of the good. But those of the wicked are, after death, “immediately clothed with a body of fire, air and akash,” (a subtle ethereal matter, from whence the Greeks probably had their notion of the *materia prima*,) “in which they are for a time punished in hell. After the season of their grief is over they reanimate other bodies; but till they shall arrive at a state of purity, they can never be absorbed into God.—That absorbed state—is a participation

* Dissertation prefixed to his “History of Hindostan,” 1768, p. 27. (P.)

† Ibid. p. 38. (P.)

‡ Ibid. p. 38. (P.)

§ Ibid. pp. 40, 41. (P.)

of the Divine nature,—where consciousness is lost in bliss.” At length “a comet—shall involve all things in fire, and reduce the world into ashes. God shall then exist alone, for matter will be totally annihilated.” This doctrine of a *final conflagration* was adopted by the Stoics. “The more learned Bramins,” he says, “affirm that the hell which is mentioned in the Bedang, was only intended as a mere bugbear to the vulgar;—for that God has no passion but benevolence;” and men are never punished for their vices, “but by the pain and affliction which are the natural consequences of their actions.”* This we find to have been the opinion of all the Greek philosophers, without exception.—Such are the doctrines of the Bedang.

The *Neadirsen* “is not reckoned so ancient as the Bedang, yet it is said to have been written by a philosopher called *Goutam*, near four thousand years ago,” and is received as sacred in Bengal, and all the northern provinces of Indostan, but is rejected by the rest.†

According to this system, “the soul or vital principle is a subtle element, which pervades all things,” distinct from “organization and vital motion. Five things,” he says, “must, of necessity, be eternal. The first of these is—the *great soul*, who is immaterial, one, invisible, &c.; the second—is the *vital soul*,” which he supposes is material, by giving it the following properties, “number, quantity, motion, contraction, extension, divisibility, perception, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, accident and power.” Upon the difference of “the vital soul from the great soul,—the followers of the Bedang and Neadirsen are principally divided.” From this *vital soul* arises all evil.‡

It is remarkable, that we find the same difference of opinion among the Greeks, the Stoics maintaining that inferior intelligences are detached from the *Supreme Mind itself*, and are to be absorbed into it again; whereas other sects make the human soul to be a portion of the *soul of the universe*, a principle distinct from the Supreme Mind, or to be composed in part, of the one, and in part, of the other.

“Goutam’s third eternal principle is *time* or *duration*,—the fourth is *space* or *extension*, the fifth is *akash*, a subtile and pure element, which fills up the vacuum of space, and is compounded of *parmans*, or quantities infinitely small, indivisible and perpetual. God,” he says, “can neither make

* Dissertation prefixed to the “History of Hindostan,” pp. 42—44, 45, 50. (P).

† Ibid. p. 56. (P.)

‡ Ibid. pp. 57, 58. (P.)

nor annihilate these atoms ;—but they are in other respects totally subservient to his pleasure. God, at a certain season, endued these atoms—with plasticity, by virtue of which they arranged themselves into four gross elements, fire, air, water and earth. These atoms, being from the beginning formed by God into the *seeds* of all productions,—the vital soul associated with them ; so that animals and plants of various kinds were produced upon the face of the earth. The superiority of man, according to the philosophy of the Neaderisen, consists only in the finer organization of his parts.” The doctrine of transmigration and absorption into the Deity he holds in common with others. He “ maintains, that the world is subject to successive dissolutions and renovations, at certain stated periods. He divides these dissolutions into the lesser and the greater.” At “ the lesser—the world will be then consumed by fire, and the elements shall be jumbled together ; and after a certain space of time they will again resume their former order.” This, also, was the doctrine of some of the Greek sects.—“ These repeated dissolutions and renovations,” Mr. Dow says, “ have furnished a most ample field for the inventions of the Bramins. Many allegorical systems of creation are, upon that account, contained in the Shasters,” and “ it was for this reason that so many different accounts of the cosmogony of the Hindoos have been promulgated in Europe ; some travellers adopting one system, and some another.” *

The doctrine of the restitution of all things is also found farther to the East. “ F. Longobardi, in his Treatise concerning the learned sect in China, observes, that it is a doctrine of theirs, that ‘ this universe will expire, and all things in it.—All things shall return to the first principle, which shall produce another world, after the same manner ; and this also ending, another will succeed, and so another without end.’ ” †

The curious reader will be amused with seeing a manifest resemblance between the mythological system of Indostan and that of Greece in several other respects, besides those which I have had occasion to point out.

It appears from the tenets of the early Christian heretics, which are universally acknowledged to have been derived from the East, that an opinion was entertained by some of them, that the intelligence employed to make the world became puffed up with pride, and renounced his allegiance

* Dissertation prefixed to his “ History of Hindostan,” 1768, pp. 59, 60, 66. (P.)

† Leland’s “ Necessity of Revelation,” II. p. 286. (P.)

to the Supreme Mind. The following is the account that Mosheim gives of the Oriental system in general, as it was entertained by many about the time of the promulgation of Christianity, and which the reader may compare with the preceding accounts.

According to *the Oriental philosophers*, “The eternal nature, infinitely perfect, and infinitely happy, having dwelt from everlasting in a profound solitude, and in a blessed tranquillity, produced at length from itself, two minds of a different sex, which resembled their Supreme Parent in the most perfect manner. From the prolific union of these two beings, others arose, which were also followed by succeeding generations; so that in process of time, a *celestial family* was formed in the *pleroma*. This divine progeny being immutable in its nature, and above the power of mortality, was called by the philosophers *æon*.—How many in number these æons were, was a point much controverted among the Oriental sages.

“Beyond the mansions of light—lies a rude and unwieldy mass of *matter*, agitated by innate, turbulent and irregular motions. One of these celestial natures descending from the *pleroma*, either by a fortuitous impulse, or in consequence of a divine commission, reduced to order this unseemly mass,—created men and inferior animals of different kinds,—and corrected its malignity, by mixing with it a certain portion of light, and also of a matter, celestial and divine. This creator of the world is distinguished from the Supreme Deity by the name of *demiurge*. His character is a compound of shining qualities and insupportable arrogance. He claims dominion over the new world he has formed, as his sovereign right; and excluding totally the Supreme Deity from all concernment in it, he demands from mankind, for himself and his associates, divine honours.”*

This was the species of Oriental philosophy adopted by the early Gnostics, who maintained that this imperious demiurge was the God of the Jews, and the author of the law of Moses. And Mosheim says, that the Platonic philosophy was of some use to Christianity in combating these Gnostics, and asserting, that the Maker of the world, though not the Supreme Mind himself, was a Benevolent Being. †

One practical and horrid consequence of the notion of *the evil nature of matter*, and of its serving for a clog or prison to

* Ecclesiastical Hist. 1758, I. pp. 71—73. (P.) † Dissertations, p. 19. (P.)

the soul, we see in the disposition to mortify the body, which is so prevalent in the East, where the Fakeers torment themselves in the most shocking manner. The same notions led to the *mortification of the flesh* in those Christians that adopted them, viz. fasting, corporal penance, abstinence from marriage, solitude, silence, and various other austerities.

SECTION II.

Of the Religion of the ancient PERSIANS and CHALDEANS.

OUR knowledge of the religion of the ancient Persians and Chaldeans is very imperfect, for the same reason that our knowledge of that of the Egyptians is so; the people having been subjugated, their priests dispersed, and no writings of their own having come down to us. But it appears sufficiently from the collections of learned men, that the religion of this part of the world was contained within the same general outlines with the Oriental system above described.

According to Zoroaster, says Beausobre, (in his *History of Manicheism*.) God, who “is self-existent, before all ages, formed the world of pure and happy spirits, the same as the *æons* of the Manichees, the *intelligences* of Plato, and the *angels* of the Jews and Christians. Three thousand years after that first work God sent his *will*, under the form of a glorious light, and which appeared in the figure of a man, accompanied by seventy of the most honourable of the angels. Then were formed the sun, the moon, the stars and men.— Three thousand years after *evil* appeared, when God formed this lower world, bounded by the vortex of the moon, where the empire of evil and of matter ceases.”* “The Magi,” he says, “thought matter animated, and having the power of producing from itself an infinity of beings, partaking of the imperfections of the cause which produced them.† This matter, according to the Magi, lay in the lowest regions.”‡

It is said by some, that the original Magi believed, that God only was from eternity, and that darkness had been created.§ But Zoroaster appears to have held two eternal principles.||

* Vol. I. p. 164. (P.) L. ii. Ch. i. S. iv.

† P. 168. (P.) L. ii. Ch. ii. S. i.

‡ P. 175. (P.) “Dans le fonds de la space.” L. ii. Ch. ii. S. iii.

§ P. 170. (P.) “Ils n’ont attribué l’Eternité qu’à Dieu, ou à la lumière, soutenant que les *Ténèbres* avoient été produites.” L. ii. Ch. i. S. ii.

|| P. 172. (P.) L. ii. Ch. ii. S. iii. Yet see *Prideaux*, l. pp. 303—305.

All this sufficiently agrees with the account of the Oriental philosophy of Mr. Stanley, published with many corrections and additions by Le Clerc. From this treatise it appears too, that the doctrines of the *descent* and *transmigration of human souls* were parts of this philosophy. The soul, it is said, descending from the region of light into the body, if it behave well, returns to the light from which it came; but if it behave ill, it is sent to a still worse situation, according to its desert.*

The Chaldeans thought, that there was an intelligent principle in the stars and planets, the latter of which are called ζῶα πλανώμενα in the oracles of Zoroaster.†

Some of the Persians thought, that there were two gods, of different natures, the one good, called *Horomazes*, and the other evil, called *Arimanius*, the one resembling *light*, and the other *darkness*; and that in the medium between these was *Mithras*, who was therefore called the *Mediator*.‡ This Mithras seems to correspond to the *Birmah* of the Hindoos, and the *νοῦς* of Plato; being a peculiar emanation from the Deity, and employed by him in the formation of the world, and, therefore, was supposed by philosophizing Christians to be the same with *Christ*.

SECTION III.

Of the Introduction of the Oriental Philosophy into GREECE.

WE may clearly distinguish several periods of philosophy in Greece, the first before they began to speculate much, and while they retained a general idea, derived from tradition, but mixed with many fables, of a God, a providence and a future state; the second when they began to speculate without much foreign assistance, or neglecting and despising it, when they rejected all belief of a God or future life; the third when they adopted the principles of the Oriental philosophy, either in its more imperfect state from Egypt, or when it was more ripened into a system in the remoter parts of the East.

This was the state of philosophy in Greece in its most splendid time, after the age of Socrates, and in this state it continued till near the age of Augustus, when every thing in the whole system that could possibly influence the

* P. 36. (P.)

† Le Clerc's Index Philologicus. *Stella*. (P.)

‡ Ibid. p. 105. (P.)

conduct of men sunk into contempt, and was considered as a pleasing dream. But after the spread of Christianity, some of the sects which inculcated a stricter regard to morals, and favoured elevation of soul, as that of Plato, and the Stoics, were revived. In a much later period succeeded the revival of the Aristotelian philosophy, by the schoolmen, which continued till the time of Descartes.

Of the state of mere *tradition* in Greece we know very little; but of the period of the *atheistical philosophy* we have pretty distinct accounts, as it subsisted long after the introduction of the Oriental, and was often the more prevalent of the two, though even this species of philosophy borrowed something from the Oriental system.

“It is expressly asserted by Aristotle and others,” says Mr. Toland, “that the most ancient Greek philosophers did not dream of any principle, or *actuating spirit* in the universe itself, no more than in any of the parts thereof; but explained all the phenomena of nature by matter and local motion, levity and gravity, or the like; and rejected all that the poets said of God, dæmons, souls, ghosts, heaven, hell, visions, prophecies and miracles, as fables invented at pleasure, and fictions to divert their readers.”*

That the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was not of Grecian origin, may be concluded even without historical evidence (of which, however, there is abundance) from the circumstances of the thing; it being always accompanied with other opinions, which were certainly of Oriental extraction. “All the philosophers who believed the immortality of the soul, believed its *pre-existence*, thinking it impossible that the soul should subsist after the body, if it had not existed before it, as Lactantius has remarked. All the ablest Greek Fathers embraced this opinion, and were followed in it by a part of the Latins.”†

The Oriental doctrine was, however, adopted by the Greeks with considerable variations, some of the philosophers holding, that souls were sent into bodies for offences committed in a pre-existent state, but others, by the sovereign will of God.‡ The opinion of the *evil nature of matter* also appeared in Greece, together with the first idea of a God, the doctrine of two principles being very apparent; and the philosophers, who acknowledged two eternal principles, believed the world

* Letters to *Serena*, p. 22. (P.)

† Beausobre, II. p. 330. (P.) L. vi. Ch. iv. S. i.

‡ Ib. p. 331. (P.) L. vi. Ch. vi. S. iii.

not to have been made by God, but by angels, some by good ones, and some by bad.* And this is no other than the Oriental doctrine.

The first intimation that the Greek philosophers had of the immortality of the soul, they seem to have imported from Egypt, and it was even then accompanied with the doctrine of transmigration. Diodorus says, “ that Orpheus brought from thence the greatest part of the mysterious rites used in Greece, with the *orgies* that are celebrated at their explanation, and the fictions of hell;” and he explains particularly those customs which were the foundation of the Grecian notions.† According to Cebes, Orpheus “ called the body a prison, because the soul is here in a state of punishment, till it has expiated the faults committed in heaven.”‡

Orpheus, however, was long before the æra of philosophy in Greece, and his history is very uncertain. Of the proper philosophers, both Cicero and Maximus Tyrius say, that Pherecydes was the first among the Greeks who openly maintained that the body only died, but that the soul was immortal (*sempiternum*), and that he also taught that it existed before it came hither, so that he must have had his doctrine from the East.

It is rather extraordinary that Warburton, notwithstanding the express authority of Herodotus to the contrary, quoted before, and on no ancient authority, but the passage of Cicero above referred to, should maintain, that this doctrine was of no other than Grecian original;§ when almost all the ancients who speak of Pherecydes, say that he had his doctrine from the East. Hesychius says, that he had no master, but that he instructed himself, after having found some secret writings of the Phenicians. Suidas and Eustathius say the same thing. Homer expressly says, that the Phenician vessels frequented the isle of Scyros, where he lived. Josephus also says, that the first who treated of celestial and divine things among the Greeks, Pherecydes of Scyros, Pythagoras and Thales, learned their opinions from the Egyptians and Chaldeans. Both Hesychius and Suidas say that Pherecydes first introduced the doctrine of the transmigration of souls.||

* Beansobre, p. 11. (P.) I. iv. Ch. i. S. xi.

† Toland's Letters, pp. 50—52. (P.) † Ramsay, p. 282. (P.) Discours.

§ Divine Legation, II. p. 221, &c. (P.) Works, 4to. 1788, II. 122, &c.

|| See a Dissertation by Mr. Heinius, in the Memoirs of the Academy of Berlin, III. p. 210, &c. (P.)

The next Greek philosopher who taught this doctrine, viz. Pythagoras, besides being the disciple of Pherecydes, is universally acknowledged to have had it from the East. He “conversed with the Chaldean Magi, the Indian Gymnosophists, and particularly with the Egyptian priests and prophets; suffering himself to be circumcised, that he might be admitted to hear the secret doctrines of the latter.”*

“Pythagoras,” says *Beausobre*, “acknowledged two eternal principles, God and matter, and in that matter the necessary causes of evil.”† He also taught the doctrine of divine emanations, calling these first intelligences NUMBERS, being the same with the *æons* of the Valentinians, those spirits which are, as it were, the *eldest sons of God*. Plato called them *ideas*, or *λογοι*.‡ The others considered the *æons* as divine virtues, remaining in the divine essence. The *Sephiroth* of the Cabalists are the same.

The Pythagorean philosophy seems not to have spread much in Greece, but to have been confined pretty much to Italy, whither that philosopher retired. For, according to all accounts, the first person who taught the doctrine of a God in Greece, properly so called, was Anaxagoras; who, coming after Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes and others, who had taught the universe to be infinite, and matter eternal, though the forms of it were changeable, added *another principle*, which he called *mind*, as that which moved and disposed matter; from which, as being a new thing in Greece, he was surnamed *Νους*.

But this philosophy was not his own discovery. It is said that he also “was first taught by the Magi, having been twenty years of age at the expedition of Xerxes; and (as Dionysius Phalareus relates) he began to philosophize in Athens at those years—and as Theodoret and Ammianus Marcellinus inform us, had travelled likewise into Egypt.—The Greeks learned several things of the Magi in those days, which afterwards inspired others with the desire of going into those parts for perfecting their knowledge.”§ Pliny also relates that Osthanes, who accompanied Xerxes in his Grecian expedition, propagated his knowledge wherever he came. *Hic maxime Osthanes ad rabiem, non aviditatem modo scientiæ ejus, Græcorum populos egit.*||

None of the heads of the Grecian sects made so much

* Toland's Letters, p. 31. (P.)

† Vol. I. p. 33. (P.) L. i. Ch. iii. S. i.

‡ P. 57. (P.) L. iii. Ch. ix. S. iii.

§ Toland's Letters, pp. 31, 32. (P.)

|| Hist. Nat. Lib. 30. Cap. i. S. ii. (P.)

account of a future life as Plato, and no philosophical system bears more evident marks of an Oriental origin than his. It is, in fact, the Oriental system itself, with very little variation; no greater, probably, than might have been found in the East at the time that he visited it. Pausanias particularly says, that he learned his doctrine from the Chaldeans and the Indian Magi.*

Plato believed "two co-eternal principles, God and matter," and "that matter is the source of all evil.† This he had from Pythagoras, and Pythagoras from the Magi.‡ He maintained the *pre-existence* of souls, and "asserted all human souls to be here in a lapsed state, wanderers, strangers and fugitives from God; declaring that it was a divine law, that souls sinning, should fall down into these earthly bodies."§ Agreeably to this, Cicero informs us, that he maintained that all *acquired science* was nothing but the recollection of former knowledge.

Without any softening, he frequently calls *souls, God, and part of God, $\nu\omicron\upsilon\nu$ ἀεὶθεόν*. Plutarch says that Pythagoras and Plato held the soul to be immortal; for that, launching out from the soul of the universe, it returns to its great parent and original. Eusebius expressly says, that Plato held the soul to be ungenerated, and to be derived by way of emanation from the first cause, as being unwilling to allow that it was made out of nothing; which necessarily implies that, according to Plato's doctrine, God was the material cause of the soul, or that the soul was part of his substance.||

This account of the Deity, and the sub-division of his nature by *emanation*, could not have been derived from any other source than the East. But besides the supreme intelligence, and the emanation of human and other souls from it, Plato supposed, agreeably to the Oriental doctrine, that there was another *peculiar emanation* from him, which he calls *νοῦς*, and also *δημιουργός*, as having been employed in making the world, which world had also a soul peculiar to itself; and this, together with the two higher principles, make a kind of *trinity of minds*. The second person in this trinity is also sometimes call *αὐτοπατωρ*, from his producing other beings, and *αὐτογενήτος*, from being the emanation of the Supreme Being.¶

* Toland's Letters, p. 32. (P.)

† Beausobre, Vol. I. p. 479. (P.) L. iii. Ch. ii. S. iv.

‡ Ib. (P.)

§ Cudworth, p. 23. (P.) B. i. Ch. i. S. xxiv. *ad init.*

|| Divine Legation, II. p. 28. (P.) Works, 4to. 1788, II. p. 110.

¶ Cudworth, p. 579. (P.) B. i. Ch. iv. S. xxxvi.

There is, however, something peculiar to the Platonic system, which is, "that the world is as ancient as its cause," a mind not being capable of existing without action,* so that the divine emanations were as eternal as himself. This doctrine was of capital use to the Christian Fathers, who maintained the *eternal procession* of the Son from the Father, as well as his being of the *same substance* with him. Nor has it been of less use to those Arians, who maintain the eternal creation of the Son out of nothing.

"Aristotle," says Warburton, "thought of the soul like the rest, as we learn from a passage quoted by Cudworth,—where, having spoken of the *sensitive soul*, and declared it to be mortal, he goes on in this manner. *It remains that mind, or intellect, and that alone (pre-existing) enter from without, and be only divine.* But then he distinguishes again concerning this *mind* or *intellect*, and makes it twofold, *agent* and *patient*, the former of which he concludes to be *immortal*, and the latter *corruptible.*"†

As for the Getes, Celtes, and other Northern nations, who held the doctrine of the future existence of the soul, they also held the doctrine of transmigration, and are known to have had both from the Greeks and the East. *Zamolxis*, the philosopher of the Getes, and of Thrace, was "servant and disciple of Pythagoras."‡

SECTION IV.

Of the Mixture of the Oriental and Greek Philosophy with CHRISTIANITY.

THAT the leaven of this Oriental philosophy was mixed with Christianity, at a very early period, even in the times of the apostles, all antiquity, and even their own writings, sufficiently testify; and it is far from being wholly purged out even at this day. But whether the first introduction of it was directly from the East, or by the medium of the Greek philosophy, is not quite clear. I rather think from Greece, though not long after, more was introduced than the Greek philosophy could well supply. It happened, however, that by the influence of the Greek philosophers, who embraced Christianity, and distinguished themselves as writers, a great deal of that which came by this channel was firmly retained,

* Beausobre, Vol. II. p. 12. (P.) L. iv. Ch. i. S. xi.

† Divine Legation, II. p. 211. (P.) Works, II. p. 111.

‡ Toland's Letters, p. 42. (P.)

and became incorporated into the system, while much of that which was derived immediately from the East, being more glaringly inconsistent with the Christian principles, was rejected, and those who introduced it were condemned as heretics.

On the first view of things, we are apt to wonder at the propensity of the primitive Christians, to adopt a system so utterly repugnant to their own. But it is not more extraordinary than the propensity of the Israelites to idolatry; and both were deceived by very specious reasons, that is, by reasons which could not but appear specious *in their circumstances*.

The Oriental system, besides other flattering allurements, was wonderfully calculated to remove the two great objections that were in those times made to Christianity, and at which the minds of men most revolted, viz. the doctrine of a *crucified man* for the founder of their religion, and of a *resurrection from the dead*. The former, we learn from the apostle Paul, was a great stumbling block both to Jews and Gentiles; and at the latter, all the wise men of Greece absolutely laughed, as a thing utterly incredible.

How ready, then, must those who were dazzled with the *wisdom of this world*, more than with the *true but hidden wisdom of God*, have been to catch at the splendid doctrine of the *emanation of souls from the divine mind*, which was already received in the Gentile world, and to take that opportunity of advancing their master, the too *humble Jesus*, to the high rank of the first and principal emanation of the Deity, the *νοϋς* or *λογος* of the Platonists, and the *θεμιουργος* under God, in making the world!

More effectually to wipe away the *reproach of the cross*, and make their system more coherent, how natural was it to suppose, that this great Being did not really, but only *in appearance* put on *flesh*; and, therefore, did not really suffer and die, but only seemed to do so!

Also, when the philosophers of that age sneered at the doctrine of a *resurrection*, with what pride would these weak Christians pretend to equal wisdom and refinement with themselves, by alleging, that the true Christian resurrection was not the resurrection of a *vile body of flesh and blood*, which could only be a burden to the soul, but either a mystical resurrection to a *new life*, or indicated the glorious time when the soul, being freed from all its impurities, would join its bright original, in a vehicle of light, a true spiritual

body, and not that carnal one, which had been its punishment here!

Lastly, the doctrine of the *impurity of matter*, has in all ages led to such mortifications and austerities, as, requiring great resolution and fortitude, have never failed to strike mankind with respect and reverence; giving an idea of an extraordinary degree of abstractedness from the world, and of greatness and elevation of soul.

It is very probable, also, that, as in later times, and also in our own days, persons who pretended to extraordinary purity, more than they really had resolution to keep up to, by exposing themselves to temptations too strong for them, were seduced into lewdness and other vicious practices, and then found pretences for continuing in them, as not affecting the *mind*, but the *body only*, which is no part of our *proper selves*, and of small consequence in itself. I am led to think so from what we may collect concerning the first Christian sectaries in the writings of the apostles, who always speak of great irregularities of conduct, as joined to a departure from the true faith of the gospel. Perhaps their writings might check those enormities, so that those who retained the same general system of principles would afterwards be more upon their guard against such an abuse of them. For it does not appear that the Valentinians, Manicheans, and others also, in later times, who went the farthest into the Oriental system, were justly reproachable with respect to their lives and manners.

The first trace that we find of any thing like the Oriental system in the New Testament, is in St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians, supposed to be written about the year 56. For though the same apostle inculcates the doctrine of a resurrection upon the Thessalonians, in the year 52, what he says upon that subject to them does not imply that they *denied* the doctrine, but only that they had not been well informed concerning it, or had not rightly apprehended it. But what he says to the Corinthians, shews, that some among them had absolutely disbelieved the doctrine. Besides, other hints that he drops in the course of the same epistle, shew that their minds had been infected with some specious system of *philosophy*.

Speaking of his own preaching the gospel, he says, 1 Cor. i. 17—25, it was “not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto

us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise, where is the scribe, where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them who are called both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men."

It is probable also, from the instructions which the apostle gives concerning *virgins*, in the seventh chapter of this epistle, that too favourable an idea of *continence* and *abstinence from marriage* had crept in among them, from the same system.

This epistle appears to have had a great effect. In his second, however, he repeats his cautions with respect to the deceitfulness of worldly wisdom, and he still expresses his fears of their being seduced by it. 2 Cor. xi. 2—4: "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy, for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him." Now a *Jesus not really crucified*, might well enough be called *another Jesus*, one that he had not preached to them, and the gospel of that Jesus, and the spirit of it, would be quite *another gospel* and *another spirit*.

The evil, however, appears by no means to have been stopped by these seasonable and forceable admonitions, at least not in other churches. For in all the epistles written by this apostle from Rome, during his imprisonment there, in the years 61 and 62, we find that this corruption of Christianity had risen to a most alarming height; as we see that it excited the strongest expressions of concern and indignation from this truly wise and good apostle.

To the Colossians he says, ch. ii. 4, "This I say lest

any man should beguile you with enticing words." Ver. 8: "Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy, and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Ver. 18: "Let no man beguile you of your reward, in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding the head," &c. Ver. 23: "Which things have, indeed, a show of wisdom, in will worship and humility, and neglecting the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh." He goes on to say, ch. iii. 1, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God;" in which he might possibly allude to the turn they gave to the doctrine of a resurrection, willing to make some use of their mistake. "If it be true, as you pretend, that the *resurrection is past already*, and you are risen again in the sense that Christ really meant, act as becomes persons so renewed in mind, and advanced to so pure and holy a state."

But it is in the epistles to Timothy and Titus, men who had the inspection and care of several churches, that this apostle is most earnest in his admonitions to oppose the progress of this mischievous, but specious philosophy. His first epistle to Timothy begins with this subject, as what was uppermost in his mind. Ch. i. 3, 4: "I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some, that they teach no other doctrine, neither give heed to fables, and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying, which is in faith." In the fourth chapter he again plainly alludes to the same system of opinions, as what had been foretold should be introduced into the church. Ver. 1—5: "Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of *demons*—forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meat, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving, of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving. For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer."

To the same, no doubt, he refers in the sixth chapter, where, speaking of some who taught otherwise than he had done, he says, ver. 3—5, "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our

Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh—perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth,” &c. And he concludes the epistle with exhorting him, no doubt, with the same view, in the following words: “O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called, which some professing, have erred concerning the faith.”

In his second epistle to the same person he very plainly alludes to the same system, when he says, ch. ii. 16—18, “But shun profane and vain babblings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness, and their word will eat as doth a canker. Of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred, saying, that the resurrection is past already, and overthrow the faith of some.” And as a motive with him to preach the word, and to be instant in season and out of season, he adds, ch. iv. 3, 4, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but, after their own lusts, shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

In this epistle to Titus we find many expressions very much like those in his epistle to Timothy, and therefore, they probably allude to the same things; though he here intimates, that they were *Jews* who were most industrious in propagating these new doctrines, accommodating them to their own law, as the Cabalists afterwards are known to have done. Mosheim says, “that considerable numbers of the Jews had imbibed the errors of this fantastic system appears evidently both from the books of the New Testament, and from the ancient history of the Christian church, and it is also certain that many of the Gnostic sects were founded by Jews.”* Titus i. 9—11: “Holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake.” Again, ver. 14, 15.: “Not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. Unto the pure all things are pure,

* Eccles. Hist. i. p. 88. (P.)

but to them that are defiled and unbelieving, is nothing pure," alluding perhaps to the prohibition of marriage, and of certain meats. Ch. iii. 9: "Avoid foolish questions and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and vain."

It is not improbable, also, that the apostle Peter alludes to the same system, when he says, 2 Ep. 1. 16, "For we have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye witnesses of his majesty."

But the apostle John, who wrote later than the rest, uses language that cannot be applied to any thing but the system I have mentioned; and it is, moreover, evident from the strain of his writings, that he knew of no other considerable heresy in the church in his time, which agrees with what ancient writers say, that no heresies were known in the times of the apostles, but that of the *Docetæ*, who believed that Christ did not come in real flesh (which is most evidently a branch of the system I have described), and that of the *Nazarenes*, or *Ebionites*, of which I shall say more in its proper place.

To guard against this heresy, which, in fact, subverted the whole gospel, this venerable apostle is very particular in giving a most circumstantial testimony to the proper humanity of Christ. 1 John i. 1—3: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life. For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you, that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us. That which we have seen, and heard, declare we unto you," &c.

It is, moreover, remarkable, that this apostle expressly calls this very doctrine *that of Antichrist*, and he says there were many that published it. Ch. ii. 18: "Little children, it is the last time, and as ye have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time." Ver. 22, 23: "Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus" (the man Jesus) "is the Christ;" the opinion of some of these sectaries being, that *Christ* was another person than *Jesus*, and that he came down from heaven, and entered into him. "He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father."

Again, ch. iv. 2: "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus

Christ is come in the flesh, is of God." From which we may clearly learn, that this was the only heresy that gave any alarm to this good apostle. Ver. 3: "And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is not of God. And this is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world." It is also to the reality of the *body* of Christ that he alludes, when he says, ch. v. 6—8, "This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ, not by water only, but by water and blood—for there are three that bear record—the spirit and the water and the blood;" alluding, perhaps, to Jesus being declared to be the Son of God at his *baptism* by his *miracles*, and by his *death and resurrection*, of which the former was allowed by the Docetæ, but the latter they denied.

In his second epistle, this apostle still dwells upon the same subject. Ver. 7: "Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an Antichrist." Ver. 10: "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." It is to this also, probably, that he alludes when, in his third epistle, he expresses his joy that Gaius, to whom he writes, *walked in the truth*. Ver. 3, 4: "I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came, and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

Who were the *Nicolaitans*, mentioned in the book of Revelation, is not known with any certainty; but as antiquity mentions no heresies in the church in those early times, but some branch of the Oriental sect, and the Nazarenes, who are falsely considered as heretical, it is probable that the Nicolaitans were some of the more flagitious of the former sort, abusing their tenets to licentious purposes; and perhaps this apostle naming them so expressly, and in terms of such extreme disapprobation, in an epistle from Christ himself, might be a means of extinguishing both the name and the thing.

"The writers of the second, and the following centuries," says Mosheim,* "*Irenæus, Tertullian, Clemens* and others, affirm, that the Nicolaitans adopted the sentiments of the

* Eccles. Hist. I. p. 116. (P.)

Gnostics, concerning the *two principles* of all things, the *æons*, and the origin of this terrestrial globe.”

“There is no sort of doubt,” says the same writer, “but that *Cerinthus*,” another heretic, said to have been contemporary with the Apostle John, “may be placed with propriety among the Gnostics.—He taught ‘that the Creator of this world, whom he considered also as the sovereign and law-giver of the Jewish people, was a *Being* endowed with the greatest virtues, and derived his birth from the *supreme God*; that this *Being* fell, by degrees, from his native virtue and his primitive dignity; that the *supreme God*, in consequence of this, determined to destroy his empire, and sent upon earth, for this purpose, one of the ever happy and glorious *æons*, whose name was Christ; that this Christ chose for his habitation the person of Jesus, a man of the most illustrious sanctity and justice, the son of Joseph and Mary; and descending in the form of a *dove*, entered into him while he was receiving the baptism of John in the waters of Jordan; that Jesus, after his union with Christ, opposed himself with vigour to the *God of the Jews*, and was, by his instigation, seized and crucified by the Hebrew chiefs; that when Jesus was taken captive, Christ ascended up on high, so that the man Jesus alone was subjected to the pains of an ignominious death.’”*

It is to the same Oriental philosophy that, for my part, I have little doubt, this apostle, who certainly referred to it in his *epistles*, alluded also in the *Introduction to his Gospel*, where (in direct opposition to the principles of this philosophy, which supposed, that the *λογος*, which made the world, was a *Being distinct from God*) he explains what the word *λογος* really means, (as when it is said in the Old Testament that the *world was made by it*,) viz. the *wisdom and power of God himself*, and nothing that was distinct from him. *In the beginning, says he, was the λογος*, as the philosophers also said; but the *λογος was with God*, that is, it was *God's own λογος*, or *his attribute*, so that the *λογος* was really God himself. This divine power and energy was always with God, always belonged to him, and was inherent in him. *All things were made by it, and without it was not any thing made that was made.* Thus we read in the Psalms, *By the word of the Lord, were the heavens made, &c.*

Launching beyond the age of the apostles, we find our-

* Eccles. Hist. I. pp. 116, 117. (P.)

selves in a wide sea of this *vain philosophy*, partly of Grecian and partly of immediate Oriental extraction; which, however, as has been seen, was ultimately the same thing. The most distinguished of the Christian Fathers, as Justin Martyr, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, &c., were deeply versed in this philosophy, and studiously covered the *offence of the cross*, by giving such an idea of the author of their religion, and the tenets of it, as was calculated to strike the philosophical part of the world.

A principal source of the mixture of the Platonic philosophy with Christianity was from the famous school of Alexandria, as will appear from the following general account of it, in the *Apology of Ben Mordecai*.* “The school of Alexandria in Egypt, which was instituted by Ptolemy Philadelpus, renewed the old academy, or Platonic philosophy, and reformed it.” This school “flourished most under Ammonius (the master of Origen and Plotinus), who borrowed his choicest contemplations from the sacred Scriptures, which he mixed with his Platonic philosophizings; and it is disputed by Eusebius and Porphyry whether he died a Pagan or a Christian.† He had great advantages, being bred up in the same school with Philo Judæus. Besides which, there was in the town of Alexandria a famous church, settled by Mark the Evangelist, and the school was continued by *Pantænus*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, &c., and after him successively by *Origen*, *Heraclius*, *Dionysius*, *Athenadore*, *Mulchion*, and *Didymus*, who reached the year 350, which doctors gave an admirable advance to the church. The town was for this reputed the universal school of the church, and the Platonic philosophy was in the highest authority among the Fathers. For it was the common vogue, that it differed little from *Moses*; yea, *Cælius Rhodius* thinks, that *Plato* differs little from Christ’s placits.”

“*Origen*, scholar to *Ammonius*, though a professed Christian, yet followed his master’s steps, mixing the *Platonic* philosophy and the doctrines of the gospel together, hoping thereby to gain credit to the Christian religion; and, with

* *Henry Taylor*, a Clergyman, who ably advocated the *Arian* hypothesis.

† Mosheim says, that “Ammonius maintained, that the great principles of all philosophical and religious truth were to be found, equally, in all sects; that they differed from each other only in their method of expressing them, and in some opinions of little or no importance;—that all the Gentile religions, and even the Christian, were to be illustrated and explained by the principles of this universal philosophy,” which “derived its origin and its consistence from the Eastern nations; that it was taught to the Egyptians by *Hermes*, and brought from them to the Greeks,” and was “preserved in its original purity by *Plato*, who was the best interpreter of *Hermes*, and of the other Oriental sages.” *Eccles. Hist.* I. pp. 139, 140. (P.)

Clemens Alexandrinus, and others, made use of the *Platonic* and *Pythagoric* philosophy, as a medium to illustrate the grand mysteries of faith, thereby to gain credit among those Platonic sophists. And F. Simon says, ‘La mélange de la *Platonicienne* avec la Religion Chrétienne ne tendoit, pas a la destruction de la Foy orthodoxe ; mais a persuader plus facilement aux *Grecs* le Christianisme.’* (Hist. Crit. Tom. III.) This, no doubt, was the intent, and it succeeded as all such methods have done. Among other *Platonic* mysteries, that of the *Logos*, on which *Ammonius* and *Plotinus*, both heads of the *Platonic* school, had commented, was taken, and applied to the divine *logos*, explicated by St. *John*, which gave occasion and foundation to many philosophic disputes and contests in the school and church of Alexandria.” †

That most of the celebrated Fathers were Platonists, and borrowed many of their explanations of Scripture doctrines from that system, is too well known to be insisted upon here. It was by this means that Austin, by his own confession, as will be seen hereafter, came to understand, as he thought, the doctrine of the Trinity.

He said, that if the Platonists were to live over again, they would, by changing a few words and phrases only, become Christians. Many of the Platonic philosophers, when they embraced Christianity, did not lay aside their philosophical gown, but thought to follow Christ and Ammonius too. The same judicious historian says, that those Christian doctors who were infected with Platonism, did not discourse of the state of souls after death, of the nature of the soul, of the trinity, and many other things that bore a relation to them, as those who drew their instructions from the Sacred Scriptures, and were taught by Christ only. ‡

“Synesius,” says Warburton, “went into the church a Platonist, and a Platonist he remained, as extravagant and as absurd as any he had left behind him. This man forsooth, could not be brought to believe the *Apostles’ Creed* of the resurrection. And why? Because he believed with *Plato*, that the soul was before the body, that is, eternal, *à parte ante*.—However, in this station, he was not for shaking hands with *Christianity*, but would suppose some

* “That the mixture of the Platonic philosophy with the Christian religion, did not tend to the destruction of the orthodox faith, but more easily to persuade the Greeks to embrace Christianity. (P.)”

† Letter I, p. 105. (P.) *Apol.* Ed. 2, 1784. I. pp. 188—190.

‡ Moshcim’s Dissertations, pp. 98, 117, 210. (P.)

grand and profound mystery to lie hid under the Scripture account of the *resurrection*.”*

But it is not my design to trace the Platonism of the Fathers in every article of faith. Enough of it has appeared in my historical account of opinions concerning the nature of God, and the human soul, on which I have enlarged pretty much, in order to trace the rise and progress of the doctrines of materialism and immaterialism, and other things connected with them.

That the early heretics, or those who attempted to bring into Christianity more of the Oriental system than the bulk of Christians were disposed to relish, had their instructions partly in the East, and partly also in the school of Plato, is universally acknowledged. The doctrine of the Gnostics, says Beausobre, was compounded of the philosophy of Plato, the Oriental philosophy, and the Christian religion.† Tertullian’s complaints, that so excellent a philosophy as that of Plato should give occasion to all the heresies, gives but too much reason, by discovering his own excessive admiration of it, to suspect that he had himself made too free with it. “But in those days,” says Beausobre, “it was allowed that, together with the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, any person was at liberty to philosophize about the rest; and the nearer they could bring their religion to the established principles of philosophy, the more success they had.”‡ But how dangerous a maxim was this! It was, in fact, setting up their own wisdom against the wisdom of God himself.

Manes and his predecessors were all known adepts in the philosophy of the East. Basilides, the proper founder of Manicheism, was a *philosophical divine*, who travelled into Persia, and mixed the philosophical opinions of that country with his religion. “Bardesanes travelled even into India, to acquaint himself with the wisdom of the Brachmans.”§ The four books of Scythian, a teacher of Manicheism, and who had travelled into India, were thought to be those which he had from the Brachmans, and which he brought into Egypt.|| And “the Valentinians,” Beausobre says, “were Pythagoricians and Platonists, as,” he adds,

* Divine Legation, II. p. 236. (*P.*) Works, II. p. 133. † Vol. I. p. 394. (*P.*)

‡ Vol. I. p. 40. (*P.*) “On pensoit alors avec plus de liberté qu’aujourd’hui sur une infinité de choses; et après avoir posé les Dogmes de la Religion Chrétienne, que l’on regardoit comme fondamentaux, il étoit permis à un savant de philosopher sur le reste. Plus on tâchoit de rapprocher la Religion des principes établis, plus on la rendoit vraisemblable, et plus on avoit de succès.” L. i. Ch. iii. S. iii.

§ Ibid. (*P.*) Ibid. || P. 45. (*P.*) L. i. Ch. iv. S. ii.

“were almost all the principal Greek philosophers, who embraced Christianity.”*

Simon Magus is, by several ancient writers, called the *parent of all heresies*, not that he was properly a Christian heretic, but because the Gnostics, and other early heretics, borrowed much of their system from him, and because he introduced the Oriental philosophy into Judea, and that neighbourhood.†

In these circumstances can it be any wonder that the pure religion of Christ got a tincture that would continue for ages, and even to the present time ?

SECTION V.

Of the Influence of the Philosophical System on the Christian Doctrine concerning the PERSON OF CHRIST.

PERHAPS the greatest disservice that the introduction of philosophy ever did to Christianity was, that, in consequence of the general doctrine of the *pre-existence of all human souls*, the soul of Christ was, of course, supposed to have had a pre-existent state, and also to have had a superior rank and office before he came into the world, suitable to the power and dignity with which he appeared to be invested on earth.

Had the state of philosophical opinions in that age of the world been what it is now, and, consequently, had the doctrine of pre-existence been unknown, the rise of such a doctrine concerning the person of Christ would have been very extraordinary ; and *the fact of its existence* might have been alleged as an argument for its truth. But the introduction of this tenet from the Oriental or Platonic philosophy was but too easy ; so that to a person who considers the state of opinions at that time, there appears to have been nothing extraordinary in it. Nay, it would have been very extraordinary if, together with other opinions, known to have been derived from that source, philosophizing Christians had *not* adopted this also ; the temptation in this case being greater than in any other whatever ; viz. to wipe away the reproach which was reflected upon Christianity from the *meanness of the person of our Saviour*, and the *indignity* with which he was treated.

We have seen that it was a fundamental doctrine in the

* Beausobre, II. p. 161 (P.) L. v. Ch. i. S. xii.

† Mosheim's Dissertations, p. 226. (P.)

East, and likewise in the Platonic system, that, on account of the mixture of *evil* in the world, it could not be supposed to have been made by the Supreme Being himself; but that it was formed from pre-existent matter, by a celestial spirit, a principal emanation from the Divine mind, the *Birmah* of the Hindoos, the *prima mens* of the Chaldeans, the *νοῦς* and *λογος* of Plato. And what was more natural than to suppose, that the *restorer* of the human race had been the *former* of it; especially as those who adopted that hypothesis could so plausibly apply to Christ, as we know they actually did, those passages of the Old Testament, in which the world was said to have been made by the *word*, *λογος*, of God, the same word or *power*, which actually dwelled in Christ, and acted by him? * By this easy channel, I make no doubt, did this great corruption flow into the Christian system, with all the train of mischievous consequences that soon followed it.

It is likewise remarkable, that, as in the philosophical system of those times, there was but *one* emanation of the Divine Being distinguished in so particular a manner as to be the creator of the world, so we find that Christians were first charged with introducing *two Gods*, and not *three*, the divinity of the *Holy Ghost*, as a separate person, not having been an article in any Christian creed till after the council of Nice. Also the orthodox in those times always gave that superiority to the Father, as the source of all intelligence, that the philosophers did to the *supreme mind* with respect to his emanations; so that the correspondence between the two systems was wonderfully complete.

The Platonists, indeed, besides *the second spirit*, called *νοῦς*, which they supposed to be a *perfect image* of the Supreme God, supposed a *third*, which was the *soul of the universe*, diffused through all its parts. † But though this makes a kind of a *trinity of Gods*, and, therefore, the doctrine is by some of the orthodox, said to be found in that philosophy, it by no means tallies with the Christian trinity. But the doctrine of a *second God*, an emanation from the first, is well known to have been a fundamental principle in the ancient philosophy.

According to the oracles of Zoroaster, the *monad* from which all things were produced, delivered the government

* Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, "to prove the eternity of the *Logos*, cites Ps. xlv. 1: *My heart is inditing a good matter, λογος αγαθου.* Jortin's Remarks, III. p. 47 (P.) 1805, II. 179.

† Beausobre, I. p. 560. (P.) L. iii. Ch. viii. S. iii.

of things to the *second mind*, an opinion which, as Le Clerc says, was adopted by Plato.*

That this was the true source of the doctrine concerning the pre-existent nature and power of Christ, as well as of the aversion that was soon entertained to the thought of his having assumed a real body of flesh and blood, is so obvious, that even the orthodox Beausobre almost acknowledges it, though without design. "Those," says he, "who were educated in the school of Plato, whose philosophy was much esteemed in the East, believed that there was a perfect intelligence, which is a second God, called mind, *νοῦς*, or word, *λογος*, an emanation from the Supreme God." They concluded, "that this sublime intelligence had revealed his will to men, and taught them the way of salvation. But they could not believe that such a sublime intelligence would become united to matter.—Their view," he says, was "to abolish the *scandal and the foolishness of the cross*, and to render the Christian religion more plausible." †

The history of Austin's conversion to orthodoxy is another striking argument in favour of this hypothesis. Austin, says Beausobre, believed Christ to be a mere man, though much exalted above others by divine gifts, till he learned of the books of Plato, translated by Victorinus, "that the *word* existed before all things, that he was from all eternity with God, that he had created all things, that he is the only Son of the Father, and, finally, equal to the Father, being of the same substance with himself." ‡

The very *language*, which the early orthodox Fathers made use of to express the derivation of the Son from the Father, viz. *emanation, efflux, probole, &c.* shews plainly enough whence that doctrine was derived. This language is even used by some of the modern orthodox, without considering how the doctrine of the immateriality of the Divine Being is affected by it. Cudworth says, that the "second and third hypostases or persons of the Holy Trinity—were both eternal and necessary emanations—from the first." and that they "all have a mutual *inexistence* and *permeation of one another.*" § This divine also maintains the subordination of the Son to the Father, which agrees with the ancient doctrines on this subject. He says, that "the second and

* Stanley, by Le Clerc, p. 26. (P.)

† Vol. I. pp. 379, 380. (P.) L. ii. Ch. iv. S. ii. iii.

‡ Ibid. pp. 477, 478. (P.) L. iii. Ch. ii. S. ii.

§ P. 559. (P.) B. i. Ch. iv. S. xxxvi.

third persons in the Trinity are not so omnipotent as the first, because not able to produce it.*

Several of the orthodox Christians, however, in early times, objected to the language above-mentioned, viz. *emanation*, &c. as denoting either a “*separation, efflux, or extension* of the essence of the Father,” which the Basilidians and Valentinians avowed.† But “those Christian writers who thought God to be corporeal,” made no difficulty of “explaining the generation of the Son” by the term *πρῶτογενής*, or *branch*, as not implying any separation of substance, or a part detached from the rest.‡ Tertullian uses this term. “The Son,” says he, “comes from the essence of the Father, as the stock of a tree from the root, and a river from its source, or a ray emanates from the sun.” Justin Martyr uses the same term.§

The Manicheans explained the generation of the Son from the Father, without supposing any loss to the Father, by comparing it to the lighting of one lamp by another.|| Justin Martyr and Tatian use this comparison. Tatian also uses another comparison with the same view; but it is less happy in other respects. When I speak to you, says he, and you hear me, my reason (*λογος*) goes into you, without my being deprived of it.¶

Others of them had recourse to worse shifts than even this. Some of the Catholics being charged with introducing *three Gods*, and with making the persons of the Trinity as distinct from one another, “as Peter, James, and John,” denied that consequence; saying, that “Peter, James, and John are but one man, because the human nature which constitutes men is one and indivisible.”**

The term *πρῶτογενής* “was rejected,” however, “by Origen,” who was a Platonist, “as an heretical expression,” implying, that God was corporeal.††

According to the heathen system, the emanation of the Son from the Father was not a necessary, but a *voluntary* thing, and took place either *in time*, according to the proper Oriental system, or *from eternity*, according to Plato. And we also find the doctrine of the voluntary emanation of the Son by the Father among the early Christians, though this

* P. 599. (P.) † Beausobre, I. p. 546. (P.) L. iii. Ch. vii. S. iii.

‡ Ibid. p. 548. (P.) L. iii. Ch. vii. S. vii. § Ibid. p. 549. (P.) Ibid.

|| Ibid. p. 554. (P.) L. iii. Ch. vii. S. x. ¶ Ibid. p. 558. (P.)

** Pp. 557, 558. (P.) “Les Anciens nioient la conséquence, soutenant, qu’au fond, Pierre, Jacques et Jean ne sont qu’un homme, parce que la Nature Humaine, qui la constitue Hommes, est unique et indivisible.” L. iii. Ch. viii. S. ii.

†† Vol. I. p. 553. (P.) L. iii. Ch. vii. S. ix.

idea is not admitted at present. Justin Martyr says of Christ, that "the Father begat him voluntarily. Origen taught the same doctrine in several places, and the celebrated Petavius acknowledges, that it was the opinion of a great number of the ancient doctors."* "The principles of the ancients concerning the Trinity," says [Beausobre after] M. Du Pin, was, "that the word was from all eternity in the Father, being his wisdom, his power, and his counsel; and that when he chose to make the world, *he put him*, as it were, *without himself*."†

"The Fathers did in general believe, that the word was not produced by the Father from eternity, but only immediately before the creation of the world," that he might be employed for that purpose.‡ This opinion is found even later than the council of Nice.§ Lactantius says, that "when God was resolved to make the world, which was to be composed of things of a contrary nature, he began with creating two sorts of them, the one good, *his only Son*, and the other evil, *the devil*, which are to be in continual war."||

It is, likewise, "a very ancient opinion among very Catholic authors," that the first intelligent being that God made was *the devil*; he being "the first of those intelligences that God created—an infinite number of ages before the creation of the visible world,"¶ at which time, and not before, Christ was produced.

The hypothesis I am pursuing clearly explains why the Marcionites, Valentinians, and Manicheans escaped censure at the council of Nice. For those sectaries, as Beausobre says, were orthodox with respect to the Trinity; since they could make use of the term *consubstantial* as well as the most orthodox; which the Arians, who believed that the Logos was created out of nothing, could not do.** The Manicheans "believed the consubstantiality of the persons, but not their *equality*; believing the Son to be below the Father, and the Spirit below both." This error, however, was not peculiar to them, but was very general.††

It is only by an attention to these principles, that we can understand the state of the controversy between the orthodox and the Arians. For though the Fathers in general believed,

* Beausobre, I. p. 522. (P.) L. iii. Ch. v. S. v.

† Vol. i. p. 520. (P.) L. iii. Ch. v. S. iv.

‡ Ibid. (P.) Ibid.

§ Ibid. p. 521. (P.) Ibid. || Ibid. p. 574. (P.)

¶ Ibid. p. 524. (P.) L. iii. Ch. v. S. vii.

** Ibid. p. 542. (P.) L. iii. Ch. vi. S. xiii.

†† Ibid. p. 561. (P.) L. iii. Ch. viii. S. iii.

that the Son had not proceeded from the Father, but a short time before the creation of the world, in which he was employed, they believed that he issued *from the substance of the Father*, and, therefore, was *light of light, very God of very God, begotten, not made*, that is, *not created out of nothing*, which the Arians maintained. We see, then, that the Arians retained so much of the established system, as not to deny the *pre-existence* of Christ, or his office of *creating the world*. These notions were so deeply riveted, that they were not easily eradicated; but, it is evident, that the Arians had less of the Oriental, or Platonic philosophy, than the orthodox.

Indeed, the learned Cudworth acknowledges, that the Athanasians and the Nicene Fathers platonized, and not the Arians; though he says, that they derived their ideas not from Plato, but from the Scriptures.* But of that let the reader judge. The platonizing Fathers, says Le Clerc, thought, that before the actual generation of the Son, he was *virtually in the Father*, and, therefore, *αὐτοθεός*, whereas the Arians denied this, and said, that he, like other creatures, was produced from nothing.†

SECTION VI.

General Arguments against the PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST.

THE preceding history of opinions relating to the pre-existence of Christ, affords a very striking argument against that doctrine. But I think it will not be amiss in this place, in order to remove the strong prejudices that have taken place with respect to this subject, to add some other arguments of a *general nature*, such as arise from the known state of things in the apostolic age, and what may be fairly inferred from the apostolic writings, without entering into the discussion of particular texts of Scripture, for which I beg leave to refer my reader to my *Illustration of particular Texts*,‡ and more especially to *Mr. Lindsey's* excellent *Sequel to his Apology*; where that worthy man, and valuable writer, has thrown much new light upon many of those passages which have been the greatest stumbling-blocks in the way of the anti-pre-existent doctrine.

It is acknowledged by all writers, that, “at the beginning of Christianity, there arose *two* opposite errors concerning the person of our Lord. The first chiefly prevailed among

* P. 529. (P.) † See his Edition of Stanley, p. 160. (P.) ‡ Vol. II. p. 449.

the Jewish converts, many of whom maintained that Christ was a *mere man*, distinguished from other men by the abundance of divine gifts with which he was endowed, and by his incomparable virtues. ‘This,’ says Athanasius, ‘was an error of the Jews, from the time of the apostles; and,’ he says, ‘they drew the Gentiles into it.’” Of these there were two sorts, some called Nazarenes, who believed the miraculous conception, and the other Ebionites, who believed Christ to be born of Joseph and Mary. “These two” are expressly said to have been “*the most ancient heresies in the church.*”*

“Presently after, however, there arose another error, quite opposite to this,—introduced by the philosophers, who had come, some out of Paganism and others from Judaism.—They stripped Christ of his human nature.—This heresy was one of the first that spread among the Gentiles.—St. John who witnessed its birth, endeavoured to stifle it in the cradle, but in vain.”†

Now, admitting these facts, viz. the existence of the *Nazarene* heresy, and that of the *Docetæ* in the apostolic age, and that the former was prior to the other, I think we may safely infer, from the notice taken of heresy in the New Testament, that the former was not considered as any heresy at all, because there is no mention made of it *as such*; whereas the other is inveighed against, and especially by the apostle John, in the strongest terms; and moreover, as has been shewn above, he evidently speaks of it in such a manner as implies, that he had no idea of any other heresy of consequence in his time.

Against this heresy he writes in the clearest and most express manner, and with the most vehement zeal. Of the other supposed heresy he is so far from taking any notice at all (notwithstanding what has been imagined by some commentators upon him), that he writes exactly like a person who considered Christ as a man; who was so far from being of *the same substance with the Father*, and consequently possessed of any power *of his own*, that he received all his powers immediately from God. And it is remarkable, that those texts which most strongly express the absolute dependence of Christ upon God, and which assert, that all the wisdom and power that appeared in him were the wisdom

* Beausobre, II. p. 517. (P.) “Ces deux Hérésies sont le plus anciennes du Christianisme.” L. viii. Ch. i. S. i.

† Ibid. pp. 517, 518. (P.) L. viii. Ch. i. S. ii.

and power of the Father, and not his own, occur chiefly in the gospel of this very apostle.

Also, the rest of the apostles, instead of taking any notice, direct or indirect, of this capital heresy, as it has been represented, constantly use a language that could not but give the greatest countenance to it; always speaking of Christ as *a man*, even when they represent him in a light of the greatest importance.

This utter silence of the writers of the New Testament concerning a *great heresy*, the very first that ever existed in the Christian church, and as it is now represented, the most *dangerous* of all others; a heresy taking place chiefly among the Jews, with whom the apostles had most to do, looks as if they considered the opinion of the *proper humanity of Christ*, in a very different light from that in which it was viewed by their philosophizing successors.

Athanasius, who could not deny these facts, endeavours to account for them, by saying, that "all the Jews were so firmly persuaded that their Messiah was to be nothing more than a man like themselves, that the apostles were obliged to use great caution in divulging the doctrine of the proper divinity of Christ."* But did the apostles spare other Jewish prejudices, which were, at least, as inveterate as this, especially their zeal for the law of Moses, and their aversion to the admission of the Gentiles into the Christian church without circumcision, &c.? And ought not the *importance* of the doctrine to have constrained them to venture a little beyond the bounds of a *timid prudence*, in such a case as this; especially as the Jewish Christians in general, as far as appears, always continued in this error, till their final dispersion, by the civil convulsions that took place in the East, subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem?

Besides, whether was it more probable that the *illiterate Jews*, who received their doctrine from none but the apostles themselves, and indeed conversed with no other, should have fallen into so grievous an error with respect to the person of Christ, *their own Messiah*, or those who are known to have drawn various opinions from other sources besides the genuine apostolical doctrine, and particularly from that very *philosophy* which, manifestly contrary to any thing that the Jews could possibly have learned from their sacred books, expressly taught the doctrine of the pre-existence of

* See his *Epistola de Sententia Dionysii contra Arianos*. Opera, I. p. 553. (P.)

all human souls, and their emanation from the Divine mind ; which was, in fact, the doctrine and language of the pretended orthodox Fathers ?

Without examining the merits of the question, *probability* will certainly incline us to take the part of the poor Jewish converts. Indeed, their poverty and illiterateness made them despised by the Gentile Christians, who were captivated with the *wisdom of this world*. Justin Martyr, however, the earliest Gentile Christian writer, speaks of them and their opinions with more respect than they were afterwards treated with. He was one of the first of the philosophizing Christians, and therefore might know that their doctrines were those of the bulk of Christians in his time ; and perhaps, at that time, few thought differently from them, besides a few speculative persons like himself.*

2. It is evident, that the most intelligent of the Jews expected nothing more than a *mere man* for their Messiah ; † nor can it be said that any of the ancient prophecies give us the least hint of any thing farther. Had the prophecies *not* been *explicit*, there seems to have been the greatest reason why our Lord, or his apostles, should have expressly observed that they were so ; or if they had been universally *misunderstood*, or *perverted*, we might expect that this should have been noticed by our Lord, as well as other abuses or mistakes which prevailed in his time. Or if a discovery of so great importance would have staggered the faith, or checked the freedom of the disciples of our Lord, when they were fully apprised of the transcendent greatness of the person whom they had considered as a man like themselves, we might have expected that this great discovery would have been made to them, when their minds were fully enlightened by the descent of the Holy Spirit, or at some other time when they were fully instructed in all things relating to the religion they had to teach. And whenever the revelation of a thing so highly *interesting* and *unexpected*, as this must have been, had been made to them, their wonder and surprise must have been such, as we should have found some *traces* or *intimations* of, in their writings.

* See Edit. *Thirlby*, p. 235. (P.)

† “They,” says Trypho (the Jew speaker in Justin Martyr’s Dialogue) “who think that Jesus was a man, and, being chosen of God, was anointed Christ, appear to me to advance a more probable opinion than yours. For all of us expect that Christ will be born a man from man (*ανθρωπον εξ ανθρωπων*), and that Elias will come to anoint him. If he, therefore, be Christ, he must, by all means, be a man born of men.” *Ibid.* (P.)

Nor can it be supposed that a thing of so wonderful a nature as this, could have been announced to the body of Christians, who certainly had not, at first, the most remote idea of such a thing, without exciting an astonishment that could not have been concealed, and such *speculations* and *debates* as we must have heard of. And yet the apostles, and the whole Christian world, are supposed to have passed from a state of absolute ignorance concerning the nature of their Lord and Master (regarding him in the familiar light of a friend and *brother*), to the full conviction of his being the *most glorious of all created natures*; him by whom *God* originally *made*, and constantly *supported all things*, without leaving any intimation by which it is possible for us to learn *in what manner* so wonderful a communication was made to them, or of the *effects* it had on their own minds, or those of others.

At whatever *time* it be supposed that the apostles were first apprised of the *superangelic nature* of their Master, it might be expected, that so very material a change in their conceptions concerning him, would have been attended with a correspondent change in their *language*, when they spoke of him; and yet through the whole book of Acts, he has hardly any other appellation than simply that of *a man*. Thus the apostle Peter calls him, Acts ii. 22, "A man approved of God;" and the apostle Paul, ch. xvii. 31, "That man whom He hath ordained." Nor when we may most certainly conclude that the apostles meant to speak of him in his *highest capacity*, do they give him any other title; as when the apostle Paul says, 1 Tim. ii. 5, "There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, *the man* Christ Jesus."

3. Had this Mediator between God and man been of a *middle nature* between God and man, I think one might have expected some *positive declaration* of it, in this or some such place; and that the apostle would not have expressed himself in a manner so unguarded, and which, without some explanation, must necessarily lead his readers into a very great mistake. It is in vain, however, that we look through the whole New Testament for any thing like such an express declaration, or explanation on the subject; and a doctrine of this extraordinary nature is only pretended to be deduced by way of *inference from casual expressions*.

4. It is also with me a very strong presumption against the Arian hypothesis, that no *use* is made by the writers of the New Testament, of so extraordinary a fact as that of

the union of a superangelic spirit with the body of a man. No *argument* or *exhortation* is ever grounded upon it; whereas it might have been expected, that so very wonderful a thing as this must have been *alluded to*, and *argued from*, in a great variety of respects; and especially that the first converts to Christianity should have been frequently, and very distinctly informed of the *high rank of their master*; especially as the great popular objection to the Christian scheme was the *mean birth* and *obscurity* of its author, and the *disgraceful treatment* he met with in the world. The very few texts in which it is thought by some that arguments are drawn from the pre-existent state of Christ, appear to me to refer to nothing more than the dignity with which he was invested as *Messiah*, after he was *sent of God*, and endued with power from on high, for the important purposes of his mission.

It weighs much with me, that if so extraordinary a thing as the descent of a superangelic spirit to animate a human body, had been true, it must have appeared, in the course of the history of Christ, that such an extraordinary measure was *necessary*; as by his acting a part which a *mere man* was either naturally incapable of, or in which there was an obvious impropriety for a mere man to act. But so far are we from perceiving any thing of this in the evangelical history, that nothing is exhibited to us in it, but the appearance of a *man approved of God*, and *assisted* by him. For, though no man could have done what he is said to have done, *unless God had been with him*, yet *with that assistance*, every thing must have been easy to him.

If our Lord had, *in himself*, though derived originally from God, any extraordinary degree of wisdom, or peculiar ability of any other kind, for carrying on the work of man's redemption, above the measure or capacity of that nature which God had given to men, he would hardly have declared so frequently, and so expressly as he does, that *of his own self he could do nothing*, that *the words which he spake were not his own*, but *his Father's who sent him*, and that *his Father within him did the works*. This is certainly the proper language of a person who is possessed of no more natural advantage than any other man. If he had any superior powers, abstracted from what he derived from the immediate agency of God, *in what do they appear?*

So solicitous does the Divine Being always appear, that his rational offspring, mankind, should *understand* and *approve* of his proceedings respecting them, that there is hardly

any measure which he has adopted, that is of much moment to us, for which some *plain reason* is not assigned by one or other of the sacred writers. Indeed, this is a circumstance that cannot but contribute greatly to the efficacy of such measures. But though, I believe, every other circumstance relating to the scheme of redemption is clearly revealed to us, yet we neither find any reason assigned for so important a preliminary to it, as the *incarnation of the first of all created beings*, nor are we any where given to understand that this was a necessary preliminary to it, though the reasons for it were such as we could not comprehend. A conduct so exceedingly dark and mysterious as this, has no example in the whole history of the dispensations of God to mankind.

5. Could the history of the *miraculous conception of Jesus* have been written so fully as it is by both Matthew and Luke, and so very important a circumstance relating to it as this have been overlooked by them, if it had been at all known to them? I will appeal to any Arian, whether he himself could possibly have given such an account of that transaction as either of these evangelists has given? It must certainly be thought by them to be a capital omission in the account.

6. It has often been observed, and I cannot but think very justly, that the uniform scripture doctrine of the present and future dignity of Christ, being conferred as *the reward of his services and sufferings on earth*, is peculiarly favourable to the idea of his being a man only; and I think the Arians are obliged to strain very hard in order to make out any material difference between the pre-existent and present state of Christ; or to explain the nature of his *reward*, of which so striking an account is always given, if there be no material difference between the two states.

7. It is said that, if it be difficult to explain the reward of Christ upon the Arian hypothesis, it is equally difficult to account for his distinguished reward, and future honour and power, upon the supposition of his being a *mere man*; these being *too great* in this case, if they were *too little* in the other. But it should be considered, that there is a *natural propriety* in distinguishing a man appointed by God to act the most important part that man could act (and a part that *no other than a man* could with propriety appear in, respecting the whole human race) in a manner greatly superior to what is conferred on any other man.

It should also be considered, that there are many passages of Scripture which most expressly say, that, great as is the

honour and dignity to which Christ is advanced, his disciples, and especially his apostles, will be advanced to *similar*, if not *equal* honour. And it is remarkable, that there is no one *power* or *prerogative* that is mentioned as conferred on Christ, but the same is likewise said to be imparted to his followers.

As to what is called his *glory*, or honour and dignity in general, and the *love that God* has for him, that love and high regard from which those honours proceed, our Lord himself says expressly, that his disciples are on a level with himself. What else can be inferred from his prayer before his death, in which he says, John xvii. 21—23, “That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us;—and the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me”? Other parts of this remarkable prayer are in the same strain, and it appears to me, that nothing but our having long considered Christ in a light infinitely higher than that of his disciples, has prevented our understanding it as we ought to have done.

Christ is appointed to *raise the dead*, but this is not said to be performed by any proper *power of his own*, any more than the miracles of that and other kinds which he wrought when he was on earth; and dead persons were raised to life by the apostles as well as by himself.

Christ is also said to *judge the world*. But even this honour is said to be shared with him by his disciples, and especially the apostles. “Do ye not know,” says St. Paul, 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3, “that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not, that we shall judge angels, how much more things that pertain to this life?”

8. The *kingdom of Christ*, whatever it be, is expressly said to *have an end*. 1 Cor. xv. 24—28: “Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father.—And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” This is what we should hardly have expected if Christ had been the first of all created beings, by whom all things were made, and who upholds and governs all things.

9. How it may affect others I cannot tell, but with me it is a very great objection to the pre-existence of Christ, that it savours strongly of the Oriental doctrine of the *pre-existence of all human souls*, which was the foundation of the Gnostic heresy, and the source of great corruption in genuine Christianity. For if the soul of one man might have pre-existed, separate from the body, why might not the soul of another, or of all? Nay, analogy seems to require, that the whole species be upon one footing, in a case which so very nearly concerns the *first and constituent principles of their nature*. Besides, the opinion of the separability of the thinking part of man from his bodily frame, even after he comes into the world, is so far from being agreeable to the phenomena of human nature, that it is almost expressly contradicted by them all.

10. The author of the epistle to the Hebrews, one of whose principal objects was to reconcile the Jews to the thoughts of a suffering Messiah, seems to make use of arguments which necessarily suppose Christ to have been a man like ourselves; as when he says, Heb. ii. 9, "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour." In this passage the writer seems to consider Christ as a *man*, in direct opposition to created beings of a *superior nature*, or *angels*, under which denomination Christ himself must have been ranked, according to the phraseology of Scripture, if he had existed prior to his becoming man; since no other term is made use of, to denote his nature and constitution, as distinct from that of men, or angels.

With this view this writer applies to Christ that authority and dominion which is ascribed to man, *as distinguished from angels*, by the Psalmist, Ps. viii. 5—8: "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak. But one in a certain place testified, saying, 'What is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the work of thy hands. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet.'" As, in this passage, he plainly considers the nature of man as properly characterized by his being *a little lower than the angels*, and he applies the very same expression to Christ, without giving the least hint of any distinction between them, I cannot help thinking that, in the writer's idea, the nature of both was precisely the same.

It is also remarkable, that this same writer speaks of Christ as distinguished from angels, when he says, Heb. i. 9, "Thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows;" by which, therefore, *in this connexion*, I do not see how we can help understanding his *fellow men* or *fellow prophets*.

11. This writer, also, seems to lay particular stress on Christ's having *felt* as we feel, and having been *tempted* as we are tempted; and to assert, that, for this purpose, it was necessary that he should be, *in all respects*, what we ourselves are; Heb. ii. 11: "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren"—and *children*. Ver. 14: "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same." And again, ver. 17, 18: "Wherefore, in all things, it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." Now, I cannot help thinking, from these passages, that the writer had an idea of Christ being much more *what we are*, and consequently of his *feeling* more as we do, than he could have meant upon the supposition of his being of an angelic or superangelic nature. For, then, the views that he had of his *sufferings*, and consequently his *feelings under them*, must have been exceedingly dissimilar to ours. And every argument that the apostle uses, to shew the impropriety of Christ's being an *angel*, seems to weigh *much more* against his being of a nature *superior to angels*.

12. If it be supposed that, upon becoming an inhabitant of this world, Christ lost all consciousness of his former pre-existent state, I do not see of what use his superior powers could possibly have been to him; or, which comes to the same thing, what occasion there was for such a being in the business. Besides, the hypothesis of an intelligent being, thinking and acting in one state, and losing all the remembrance of what he had been and done in another, has something in it that looks so arbitrary and unnatural, that one would not have recourse to it, but upon the most urgent necessity.

It should seem, however, that if Christ did pre-exist, it was not unknown to him in this world, since one of the strongest arguments for this hypothesis is, his praying, John xvii. 5, that *his Father would glorify him with the glory*

that he had before the world was. But if Christ did retain a perfect consciousness of his former state, and, consequently, retained all the *powers* and all the *knowledge* of which he was possessed in that state, I have no idea of such an *increase of wisdom* as the evangelist Luke ascribes to him, when he says, ch. ii. 52, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." In the idea of this evangelist, Jesus certainly made such improvements in knowledge as other well-disposed youths make; so that I think he had manifestly no other idea of him.

13. Similar to the above-mentioned reasoning of the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, is that of the apostle John, or rather that of Christ himself, John v. 27: "And he hath given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the son of man;" for I do not see the force of this inference, unless the meaning of it be, that Christ, being a man like ourselves, having felt as we feel, and having been tempted and tried as we have, is the most *unexceptionable* of all judges. No man can complain of it; since it is being judged, as it were, *by our peers*, and by a person who knows how to make every proper *allowance* for us.

14. Some may possibly lay stress on its being said, by the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews, in the passage above-mentioned, that *Christ himself took flesh and blood*, as if it had depended upon his own choice, whether he would become man or not, which implies a pre-existent state. But the word $\mu\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\chi\omega$ is used for *partaking*, or *sharing in*, absolutely, without any respect to *choice*, and is used in that sense in two other passages of this epistle, ch. v. 13, vii. 13, where the apostle speaks of the *propriety of the divine designation*, not of the motive of Christ's election. Also, in other places, he is represented as *passive* with respect to the same event. Thus, in the ninth verse of the same chapter, it is said, that *Jesus* "was made a little lower than the angels," and not that *he made himself lower*, or condescended.

It is said, ver. 16. that Christ "took not on him the nature of angels, but—the seed of Abraham." But $\epsilon\pi\iota\kappa\alpha\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$, which is the word here used, properly signifies, and is, in every other place in the New Testament, rendered to *lay hold upon*. In this place, therefore, the meaning probably is, that Christ did not (after he appeared in the character of the Messiah) lay hold upon, so as to *interpose in the favour of*, or *rescue*, angels, but the seed of Abraham;

and thence we see that the apostle infers, that there was a necessity, or at least an exceeding great propriety, that a Mediator for men should be, in all respects, a man; for he immediately adds, ver. 17, “wherefore, in all things, it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest,” &c.

15. Indeed, there appears to me to be a most evident propriety, that a person who acted so important a part with respect to mankind, as Christ did, who was sent to be our instructor and example, and especially who came to ascertain the great doctrine of a *resurrection from the dead*, should be, with respect to his *nature*, the very same that we ourselves are; that he might exhibit before us an example of proper *human virtue*, and especially that he might die as we ourselves die, and his resurrection be the resurrection of a *man like ourselves*; and so the proper *first-fruits from the dead*, and consequently of the very *same kind* with those of which the *general harvest* will consist; and thereby give us the greater reason to hope, that because *Christ lives, we shall live also*.

16. It is now agreed, both by Arians and Socinians, that the Supreme God is the only object of *prayer*; it being acknowledged, that we have no authority in the Scriptures for addressing ourselves to Christ: but this restriction cannot be founded upon any other than the Socinian hypothesis, and is by no means reconcileable with the principles of Arianism.

I ought not, in reason, to address a petition to a *man* who may not be within hearing of me; and much less can there be a propriety in numbers of persons, in very distant places, addressing themselves to the same man at the same time, because no man can attend to more than one person, or one thing, at once. But a Being equal to the formation of the world, and especially of the whole system of worlds, and even the universe, or the whole creation; he *by whom all things consist*, that is, who still *supports* and governs all things, must be *capable* of giving his attention to every thing that passes. Nay, every thing must necessarily be at all times subject to his inspection; and, therefore, there could be no impropriety, *in the nature of things*, in addressing prayers to him.

Besides, it is very obvious to reflect, that if there was any reason, or propriety, that some derived being, and not the Supreme, should be the immediate *maker of the world*, and

that the Deity should not himself interpose in the government of it, it can only be this derived being, and not the Supreme, *with whom we have to do*. It can only be to him who *made us* what we are, and who himself immediately *supports* us in being, that we ought to look. A child naturally addresses itself to its nurse, who attends constantly upon it and not to its mother; and a tenant applies to the steward, who immediately inspects and manages the estate, and not to the owner of it.

In fact, no reason can be imagined why the Supreme Being should delegate to any inferior the making and governing of the world, which would not be equally a reason for his appointing him to hear our prayers. Nothing but the most express declarations, founded on reasons, which I should think impossible to suggest, can authorize us to admit the former, and not the latter, the connexion is so natural. I therefore look upon the undoubted *fact* of all prayer being, upon the plan of revelation, confined to God, exclusive of all inferior beings and of Christ, to be a most satisfactory argument, that God himself is alone the immediate maker of the world, and that it is he himself who constantly supports and governs it, without the mediation of any such glorious, though derived being, as the Arians imagine Christ to have been before his incarnation.

17. It is said, and certainly with great reason, that it is in vain to preach Christianity to Jews or Mahometans, while it is loaded with such a tenet as the doctrine of the *Trinity*, which, it is well known, they both regard as equally absurd and impious; the great and distinguishing principle of the Jewish religion being the *unity of God*, and the great objection that the Mahometans made to the corrupt Christianity of the sixth century, being the general departure of Christians from the same fundamental principle, as may be seen in the Koran itself. But the principles of Arianism are hardly more reconcilable to the notions of the Jews, or Mahometans, than those of Athanasianism; and the following language of the Jew in Limborch's *Collatio*, is applicable to the idea of Christ being the maker of the world, and the person who spake to Moses in the burning bush, as well as to his being strictly equal to the Father. "The prophet," he says, "who pretends to be the true God of Israel, who arrogates divine omnipotence, and gave his own words as the words of God, cannot be admitted; and, supposing what is impossible, that the true Messiah

should publish this doctrine, he ought to be stoned as a false prophet.”*

The conduct which Dr. Jortin, who was himself an Arian, recommends with respect to the Jews, I think to be insidious, unworthy of Christian simplicity, and what must be altogether ineffectual. He says, that, in addressing the Jews and Mahometans, whose great objection to Christianity is the doctrine of the Trinity, “no one should attempt to remove this prejudice, and to satisfy them upon this subject, till he has brought them to believe the Divine mission of Jesus Christ, and his character as prophet, Messiah, teacher of truth, and worker of miracles;” and that “then many things may be observed concerning the *Λόγος*, the *angel of God's presence*, and the *angel of the covenant* from the Old Testament, and from Philo, and from some ancient Jewish writers.”†

But, in fact, *external* evidence is nothing more than *conditional* evidence with respect to Christianity, going upon the supposition that the things to be proved by miracles are not *incredible in themselves*. The evidence that might be sufficient to satisfy a Jew, that Christ was simply a *teacher sent from God*, and such a Messiah as *their prophecies announced*, would by no means prove to his conviction that he was the *maker of the world*, and such a Messiah as he was fully persuaded their ancient prophets did *not* foretell, and such a one as it was utterly repugnant to the whole system of his religion to admit.

18. Some Arians of the present age, staggered, it may be supposed, with the glaring absurdity of making a man who died upon the cross to be the maker of the world, and one who even in his lowest state of humiliation, was actually *supporting all things with the word of his power*, and of supposing him to be the person who, with the name and character of *Jehovah*, had intercourse with the Patriarchs, spake to Abraham, to Moses, and to all the nation of Israelites from Mount Sinai, &c. &c. &c., seem willing to abandon this part of the system; but without considering, that with it, they necessarily abandon all the advantages for

* See Jortin's Remarks, Vol. III. p. 342. (P.) “Propheta, qui in seipsum ut verum Deum Israelis fidem exegerit, qui Dei omnipotentiam sibi arrogaverit, qui verba sua ut a se præcepta, populo indixerit, admitti non debet; et dato impossibili, quod Messias, quem Judæi expectant eam doctrinam Israelem edoceret, jure foret ut pseudo propheta lapidendus.” *Respons.* p. 296. *Remarks*, 1805, II. 349.

† *Ibid.* Vol. III. p. 339. (P.) Ed. 1805, II. 348.

the sake of which the whole system was originally adopted. They likewise disclaim the aid of the very strongest texts on which the doctrine of pre-existence is founded; as the introduction to the gospel of John, which speaks of the Logos as the Being "by whom all things were made," and "without whom nothing was made that was made;" Col. i. 15—17, which speaks of Christ as "the first born of every creature," by whom "were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible," &c. as being "before all things," and by whom "all things consist"; and, Heb. i. 2, 3, where Christ is said to be the person by whom God "made the world," or rather *the ages*, and who upholds "all things by the word of his power."

Upon the whole, nothing can be more evident, than that this *low Arian hypothesis* has no plausible foundation whatever, except being free from the palpable absurdities of the *high Arian scheme*. Certainly, the person who can explain those texts, which speak of Christ as the *maker and supporter of all things*, without supposing that he pre-existed, can have no difficulty in explaining any other texts, which represent him as *simply pre-existing*. For, the most difficult of all the texts are those in which his *creating and supporting power* are expressly referred to. The capital circumstances that recommended the doctrine of Christ's pre-existence, when it was started, were the ideas of the *maker* of the world being the great *restorer* of it, and the giver of the *law* being the author of the *gospel*; so that the same person was the medium of all the dispensations of God to mankind. But when these flattering advantages are abandoned, nothing is left but *simple pre-existence*, without any knowledge, or the least colourable conjecture, that Christ had ever borne any *relation to this world* more than to any other.

It is no less evident, that by abandoning the specious advantages of the proper Arian hypothesis, the low Arians are as far as ever from being able to avail themselves of the advantages peculiar to the Socinian scheme; as the propriety of a man being employed in a business so nearly respecting *men*, his exhibiting an example of proper *human virtue*, having a reward capable of being conferred on all his followers; of the same kind of being, viz. a man both introducing *death*, and the *resurrection of the dead*; of the *first-fruits* from the dead being of the same kind with the general

harvest; and that the great judge of all men should be himself a man.

In fact, therefore, this low Arian hypothesis is entirely destitute both of the strongest texts in favour of pre-existence, and also of every advantage peculiar either to the high Arian hypothesis, or the Socinian, so that no scheme can be more insignificant, or rest on narrower or weaker foundations.

Had such general considerations as these been attended to, the doctrine of the pre-existence of Christ could never have advanced so triumphantly as it has done. And such arguments as these ought certainly to weigh more than the supposed *incidental reference* to a doctrine in particular texts of scripture, the interpretation of which is always various and uncertain. Besides, if we confine ourselves to the literal interpretation of particular texts of scripture, there is no system that we may not embrace.

The doctrine of *transubstantiation* is doubly intrenched in such fortifications as these, and so are the gross errors which have now got the name of *Calvinism*, such as *original sin*, *atonement*, &c. and also the doctrine of the *perfect equality of the Son to the Father*. And yet Arians do not find themselves affected by such texts; and, in my opinion it requires much less judgment to see that the texts on which they lay so much stress are equally insufficient to bear it.

19. If we consider the *practical tendency* of the doctrine concerning Christ, I think we shall find nothing at all in favour of the scheme of pre-existence, but much in favour of the contrary doctrine, which represents him as a man like ourselves. To this purpose I shall quote, with some little addition, what I have said on this subject in the *Discourse on the Corruption of Christianity*.*

“ Much of the peculiar power of the gospel motives to virtue (separate from our acting with a view to obtain the reward of immortality promised in it), arises from just ideas of the nature and offices of Christ, as distinct from those of the Divine Being himself, with which they are too much confounded upon the supposition of the proper Deity, or super-angelic nature of Christ, notwithstanding the different offices ascribed to the divine persons, or rather beings, in the Athanasian scheme.

* Pp. 24—27. (P.) Prefixed to *An Essay on Church Discipline*, 1770.

“ The consideration of *the love of Christ*, has something in it peculiarly endearing, when it is not considered as the same thing with *the love of the Creator towards his creatures*, but as the love of one, who, notwithstanding his miraculous birth, was as much a man as Adam was, or as we ourselves are ; when it is considered as the love of our *elder brother*, who *bore our infirmities*, who felt all the pains and agonies that man can feel ; and, being the very same that we are, was in all respects *tempted as we are* ; who *loved us*, and *freely gave himself to death for us*, to redeem us from sin and misery, that we might become partakers of the same love of God, and be *joint heirs* with him of the same glory and happiness, that we might all alike become *kings and priests unto God, even the Father, for ever and ever* ; who, after living many years on earth, in which he manifested the most intense affection for us, is now *gone to prepare a place for us in our heavenly Father’s house*, that *where he is, there we may be also* ; as one who is now exercising a power which, as the reward of his obedience unto death, he received from God, to be *head over all things to his church* ; who still feels for, and will be *present with his faithful disciples and followers* in all their trials, even to the end of the world.

“ The esteem and love that we bear to the character which we form of Christ, considered as a man like ourselves, the attachment we have to him and his cause, and the efficacy of this principle to promote a Christian temper and conduct, and to encourage us to follow this our glorious leader, the *captain of our salvation* and the *first-fruits from the dead* (even though, like him, we be called to *lay down our lives for our friends*, and to bear persecution and torture in the cause of conscience, virtue, truth and God), is exceedingly great, and *peculiar to itself*. It is a kind of love and esteem that cannot be felt by one who is truly and practically an Athanasian or Arian, and, in general, but imperfectly by those who have long been Athanasians or Arians, and who, therefore, cannot easily get rid of the ideas they have had of Christ as God, or at least as a being who has little in common with us ; who, therefore, could not feel as we do, act upon views similar to ours, or entertain, and be the proper object of, a similar and reciprocal affection.

“ A man may have rejected the Athanasian or Arian hypothesis a long time before these ideas shall even occur to him, or their power be at all apprehended. At least we can only expect to feel their influence at intervals, and

must not hope to experience that amazing force, which, however, we may easily conceive they must have had with the primitive Christians, and especially with the apostles and others, who personally knew Christ, and who, therefore, never had an idea of his being any other than a man like themselves; though, as Peter expresses himself, *a man approved of God by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him.*"

Upon the whole, I cannot help thinking it to be a capital advantage of the doctrine of *Materialism*, that it leaves no shadow of support for the doctrine of *pre-existence*, or the *Arian hypothesis*, which is totally repugnant to the genuine principles of the Christian religion, so as hardly to be brought within the general outline of it; and that the greatest mischief that Christianity has derived from the unnatural mixture of Heathen philosophy with the principles of it, has been this injudicious exaltation of our Saviour; which, in fact, has been nothing else than setting up the vain conceits of men in opposition to the wisdom of God.*

In what I have observed in this Section I am far from meaning to detract from the peculiar dignity and just prerogative of Christ. And upon this subject I shall beg leave to quote what I have said in my *Discourse concerning the Spirit of Christianity*, prefixed to my *Essay on Church Discipline*.

"Our aptness to pass from one extreme to another, and the inconvenience attending it, are also felt with respect to our sentiments concerning the person and character of Christ. Upon finding, that instead of being *very God of very God, the Creator of heaven and earth*, he is only *a man like ourselves*, we are apt at first to undervalue him, and not to consider him in that distinguished light in which, though a man, he is every where represented in the Scriptures; as the great instrument in the hands of God, of reversing all the effects of the fall; as the object of all the prophecies from Moses to his own time; as the great bond of union to virtuous and good men (who, as *Christians*, or having Christ for their master and head, make *one body*, in a peculiar sense); as introduced into the world without a human father; as having communications with God, and speaking and acting from God, in such a manner as no other man ever did; and, therefore, having *the form of God*, and being *the Son of*

* What occurs, p. 429 to this place, was added to the 2nd Ed.

God, in a manner peculiar to himself; as the means of spreading divine and saving knowledge to the whole world of mankind; as under God, *the head over all things to his church*; and as *the Lord of life*, having power and authority from God, to raise the dead and judge the world at the last day.

“There seems to be a peculiar propriety, that these powers respecting *mankind*, should be given to a *man*; and, it therefore *behoved* our Redeemer, to be *in all things like unto his brethren*, and to be *made perfect through sufferings*; but, certainly the man who is invested with these powers and prerogatives should be the object of our attention, reverence and love, in such a manner as no other man can be, or *ought to be*.” Pp. 50, 51.

SECTION VII.

Of the Opinions that have been held concerning MATTER, and their Influence with respect to Christianity.

WE have already seen a great deal of the mischievous consequence that has followed from the specious doctrine of *matter being the source of all evil*, and of the union of an immaterial principle with it. In this Section I propose to enter into a more particular detail of those consequences with respect to the Christian doctrine of a *resurrection*, the *state of marriage*, and other things connected with it, and with this I propose to close the subject. It may not be amiss, however, previous to this, to state distinctly the various opinions that have been held concerning matter. For, notwithstanding almost all the philosophical opinions have been nearly the same, there have been some differences among them.

Some of the philosophers thought that matter was originally “without motion, quality, or form, but capable of receiving them,” though with some necessary imperfections; while others gave it qualities, figure, and even a *soul*, and Pythagoras thought matter animated, as well as evil, and was therein followed by Plato and Plutarch.*

The opinion of an *immaterial principle* as necessary to motion, &c., is a prevailing sentiment at present, but was by no means so in ancient times: otherwise the souls of brutes could never have been thought material and mortal.

* Beausobre, II. pp. 245, 248. (P.) L. vi. Ch. vi. S. i. iv.

Aristotle, and all the ancients, admitted a *motive force* in matter, without which they could not complete the idea of a body. This is acknowledged by Malebranche, and especially by Leibnitz, and the schoolmen. Goudin says, *Ratio principii activi convenit substantiis corporeis, et independent affectiones corporum quæ cernuntur in modo.**

Plato thought that all evil came from matter, and that its imperfection was eternal and incorrigible. It was a maxim with him, that an eternal being can produce nothing but an eternal being, and that corporeal and frail beings are the production of inferior intelligences. He, therefore, makes the angels of the planets to be the formers of the human body.†

Many of the Jews entertained no better an opinion of matter than the Oriental or Greek philosophers. Maimonides says, that all impediments and obstacles which hinder men in their progress towards perfection, and all sin, come only from the part of matter. He also says, that matter is to be understood by the *adulterous woman*, in the book of Proverbs, seducing a young man to criminal conversation with her.‡

Manes thought the demons altogether material, and Beausobre says,§ [after Petavius] that many of *the most ancient Fathers* thought the same. According to some of the orthodox Fathers, the devil is the angel to whom God intrusted the government of matter.||

The complaint of the *evil tendency of matter* is a hackneyed topic of declamation among all the ancients, Heathens and Christians. Origen, among others, considered the body as the *prison of the soul*;¶ and every thing that tended to humble and bring under the body, was thought to be the triumph of the soul, and a step towards its purification and restoration.

The whole of this specious doctrine was evidently drawn from other sources than the system of Moses. He speaks of God himself as the maker of the terrestrial world, and of

* Histoire Naturelle de l'Âme, p. 212. (P.)

† Beausobre, II. p. 416. (P.) L. vi. Ch. ix. S. xvi.

‡ *More Nevochim.* (P.) "Explicabo autem in capitibus quibusdam istius libri sapientiam illam, quâ materiam comparat cum uxore adultera: cur item librum suum obsignet et claudat laudibus mulieris strenuæ, quæ non scortatur, sed ornata domus suæ, et marito suo contenta est." Pref. "Hiuc ergo patet, omnem corruptionem, interitum, aut imperfectionem non nisi propter materiam contingere." Pars III. Cap. viii. p. 345.

§ Vol. II. p. 259. (P.) L. v. Ch. vi. S. xi.

|| Ibid. p. 99. (P.)

¶ Ibid. p. 475. (P.)

all things in it ; and, perhaps with an intended opposition to the principles of the other system, if it existed in his time, he particularly says, Gen. i. 31, "And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good." In opposition to the doctrine of *evil* having a different origin from the *good* that we see in the world, the later prophets constantly speak of God as equally the author of both ; and *punishment*, contrary to the doctrine of the philosophers, is always most expressly ascribed to him. But this doctrine of Moses and the prophets, even when reinforced by that of Christ and the apostles, was not able to stem the torrent of the Oriental philosophy, which went upon a different principle.

That the doctrine of matter being the source of all evil, accords very ill with the Christian doctrine of the *resurrection of the dead*, cannot but be very evident to every person who reflects a moment on the subject. In fact, they are diametrically opposite to one another. On the Christian principles, our only hope is founded upon a resurrection ; whereas, on the philosophical principles, *a re-union to the body* is a thing most of all to be dreaded.

The opposition of these principles was so manifest, that all the first Christians, who adopted the foreign philosophy, absolutely denied, or explained away, the doctrine of a resurrection ; and though the authority of the apostles checked this extravagance, they were not able to prevent the mischief entirely ; and even at this very day the advantage of the Christian resurrection is, in general, rated very low ; and in the eye of reason it must appear an encumbrance upon the philosophical scheme.

The repugnance between these philosophical principles and the doctrine of a resurrection appeared in the Jews as well as in the Christians. For "the Essenes," as Mosheim says, "maintained, that future rewards and punishments extend to the soul alone, and not to the body, which they considered as a mass of malignant matter, and as the prison of the immortal spirit."*

The opinion that matter is the source of all evil, and the contempt that, in consequence of it, was entertained for the body, was capable of two opposite applications, one in favour of sensuality, as a thing that did not affect the mind, and the other of the mortification of the body ; and we find that,

* Ecclesiastical History, I. p. 35. (P.)

in fact, this double use was made of those principles, according as the persons who adopted them were inclined.

The Gnostics, says Mosheim, were always talking of the contemplation of things invisible, and of the Deity, and thought all things lawful to them, that agreeably affected the body.* He also says, that those of the Oriental sects, who were of a voluptuous turn, might consider the actions of the body as having no relation to the state of a soul in communion with God. Some of them even maintained, that the souls were sent into the body that they might indulge in all sensual pleasure, and that they could not arrive at perfection till they had performed their task.† They acknowledged that Christ taught purity, but not to all; that it was proper for the *carnal*, but not the *spiritual* and *perfect*.‡ It is not improbable that the heretics, against whom the apostles, and our Saviour, in the book of Revelation, inveigh so much, were Gnostics of this kind; and that afterwards the same philosophical principles took an opposite turn, and led to mortifications and austerities.§

In various other respects, also, the doctrine of matter being the source of evil, and a clog upon the immaterial soul, has had most pernicious consequences; having introduced maxims and customs contrary to all common sense, the very reverse of the doctrines of the gospel, and that have actually done much mischief in society. Such, more especially, is the influence it has had with respect to the pre-

* Dissertations, p. 243. (P.) † Ecclesiastical History, I. p. 185. (P.)

‡ Mosheim's Dissertations, pp. 247, 248. (P.)

§ Another vice, of most pernicious consequence, the Christians of the second and third centuries seem to have derived from the maxims of the philosophers, but because it does not relate to the subject of this work, except so far as it shews, in general, the hurtful connexion of Christianity and philosophy, I shall insert it in a note. It is the lawfulness of *lying to promote a good cause*.

Timæus Locrus, the master of Pythagoras, says, that as we use poisons to cure mens' bodies, if wholesome remedies will not do, so we restrain mens' minds by falsehoods, if they will not be led with truth. *Mosheim's Dissert.* p. 195. Plato gave into the same vice. *Ibid.* p. 156. And in his book, *De Republica*, he says, the chiefs of a city may deceive the rest for their good, but that others ought to abstain from lying. P. 199.

On this account, when Christianity prevailed, the Platonic philosophers endeavoured, by feigned accounts of Pythagoras, and other early philosophers, to eclipse Christianity, setting up their characters and actions, as if they had been superior to Christ. Hence the writings ascribed to Hermes and Zoroaster, and hence, some think, those of Sanchoniatho, to discredit those of Moses. *Ibid.* p. 199.

But the greatest misfortune was, that those Christians, who embraced the Platonic principles in other respects, received this also, and thought it innocent and commendable to lie for the sake of truth; and hence came so many *forged gospels*, and other writings of a similar nature, which did not appear till after the æra of the incorporation of philosophy with Christianity. *Ibid.* p. 200. Origen, in particular, avowed this principle, p. 203, and also Chrysostom, p. 205. (P.)

vailing notions concerning *marriage, continence, fasting, &c.*; some particulars relating to which, being curious, I shall recite.

That the opinion of the great value and importance of bodily austerities came from the Heathen philosophy, is evident from the known sentiments and practices of the philosophers on the subject.

The custom of *fasting*, says Mosheim, is chiefly to be ascribed to the Platonists. Pythagoras forbade his disciples the use of flesh, and Porphyry imitated him in a book written for that purpose.* The Platonic school, he says, thought it was better to abstain from flesh, especially if persons gave themselves to meditation, and the contemplation of divine things.†

“Some of the philosophers,” says Jortin, “had exercised strange severities upon themselves, and upon their disciples, from the days of Pythagoras down to the time of Lucian, who introduces the philosopher Nigrinus as condemning such practices, and observing, that they had occasioned the deaths of several persons. The Greek philosophers,” he says, “had a particular dress, and affected to appear rough, mean and dirty, for which they were sometimes insulted in the streets by boys, and by the populace; and the Cynics very prudently were armed with a staff to defend themselves from dogs and from the rabble. The Christian monks,” he adds, “imitated the old philosophers in their garb and appearance, and many of them seemed, in the opinion of those who loved them not, to have inherited the rags, the pride and the contentious spirit of the former.”‡

According to Ammonius, the *wise* “were to raise, above all terrestrial things, by the towering efforts of holy contemplation, those souls whose origin was celestial and divine. They were ordered to extenuate by hunger, thirst and other mortifications, the *sluggish body*, which confines the activity, and restrains the liberty of the immortal spirit; that thus, in this life, they might enjoy communion with the Supreme Being, and ascend after death, active and unencumbered, to the Universal Parent, to live in his presence for ever.”§

A very peculiar notion that the philosophers entertained concerning dæmons was the cause of much of their doctrine of the mortification of the body. They taught, says Mo-

* Dissert. p. 177. (P.) † Ibid. p. 177. (P.)

‡ Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, III. pp. 23, 26. (P.) Ed. 1805, II. pp. 168—170.

§ Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. I. p. 141. (P.)

sheim, that the dæmons, being furnished with subtle bodies, were very greedy of carnal pleasures, and possessed men for the sake of enjoying them; and therefore that he who would drive away dæmons, must fast and mortify himself, and that those who were married would do well to abstain from their wives as much as possible. On this account many lived with their wives as with sisters, and called them by that name.*

“The Docetæ—in general condemned marriage altogether,” but others “spake of it as an imperfection only.” This, Beausobre says, “was a consequence of their opinion of the source of evil, which they attributed to matter.”† Marcion also disapproved of marriage, and his disciples were also great fasters.‡ Manes said that concupiscence in general, or the love of the sexes, came from matter, was derived from the bad principle, and was therefore vicious in itself.§

It was the opinion of Bardesanes, that Adam at first had no body, but what was subtle, and agreeable to his nature, and that he had a carnal body given him after his fall. || According to Manes, marriage was the sin of Adam and Eve.¶ That the woman was the tree of knowledge, was the opinion of many of the Rabbins.** And Clemens Alexandrinus says, that the sin of Adam was his anticipating his commerce with Eve.†† Marriage, however, was not absolutely forbidden by the Manicheans; but only to the *elect*, while it was permitted to those they called *auditors*.‡‡

In the very early times of Christianity, the bishops and doctors, notwithstanding the warnings of the apostles on this very head, magnified *celibacy* to the skies, and vilified marriage as much. §§ Justin Martyr believed that Christ was born of a virgin, to shew that God could provide for the continuance of the human race, without the union of the two sexes. Austin was much inclined to the same opinion. He believed that Adam would never have known Eve, if he had continued immortal. Gregory Nyssenus held, that, in a state of innocence, there would have been no *generation*, but that men would have been multiplied by some other means.¶¶ And many of the fathers “were divided upon the question, whether marriage was necessary to the propagation of the human race.”*‡

* Dissert. p. 213. (P.) † Vol. I. pp. 359, 360. (P.) L. ii. Ch. ii. S. ix.

‡ Beausobre, (P.) § Ibid. Vol. I. (P.) || Ibid. (P.)

¶ Ibid. (P.) ** Ibid. (P.) †† Ibid. (P.) ‡‡ Ibid. (P.)

§§ Ibid. (P.) ¶¶ Dupin, Vol. II. p. 177. (P.)

* Beausobre, II. p. 465. (P.) L. vii. Ch. iii. S. xvii.

Justin Martyr says, that Christianity has dissolved marriage, which lust had rendered criminal.* Origen says, that a man cannot approach his wife without defiling himself, and that this impurity does not permit a man to present himself before God, or pray to him. Methodius says, “that since Christ has introduced virginity, the reign of the devil is destroyed; whereas, before, this enemy of the human race held it in captivity, so that none of the ancients could please God. They were all under the empire and dominion of their sins.”†

That all this extravagance was derived from the philosophical notion of matter being the source of evil, is farther evident from the opposition that was always made to these notions by the *Ebionites*, who believed nothing of the philosophical doctrine. Beausobre says, that “they did not approve of professions of continence,” and were always in opposition to the others. He farther says of them, in this place, that they were chiefly Jewish Christians educated in the belief of the Unity of God, which they thought to be violated by the doctrine of the divinity of Christ.‡

Among other consequences of this system of the distinction between matter and spirit, and the doctrine of an intermediate state, depending upon it, we may reckon the Popish doctrines of *purgatory* and the *worship of the dead*, concerning which I shall not, in this place, make any particular observations; contenting myself with only enumerating, from Beausobre, the various honours paid to the dead.

All the honours that the Pagans paid to the false gods were paid to the martyrs in their relics. They were carried in procession. Flowers were presented to them, which thereby contracted a miraculous virtue. Lamps were lighted before them. They were placed upon thrones in churches, in a high situation. People kissed them, the vases that contained them, the gates, the steps, and even the pavement of the churches dedicated to them. Festivals and feasts were appointed in honour of them. Wakes, or nocturnal devotions, in imitation of those for the dead among the Pagans, were instituted to them. Vows and offerings were made to them. Children were called by their names, and prayers were addressed to them.§

* P. 485. (P.) Beausobre ascribes this sentiment to Justin, speaking of Christians who lived as unmarried, in a state of marriage. “Ils ont rompu ce mariage que la concupiscence rend criminel.” L. vii. Ch. iv. S. xi.

† Beausobre, II. p. 484. (P.) L. vii. Ch. iv. S. x.

‡ Vol. I. pp. 358, 377, 378. (P.) L. ii. Ch. ii. S. viii. Ch. iv. S. i.

§ Vol. II. p. 669. (P.) L. ix. Ch. v. S. i.

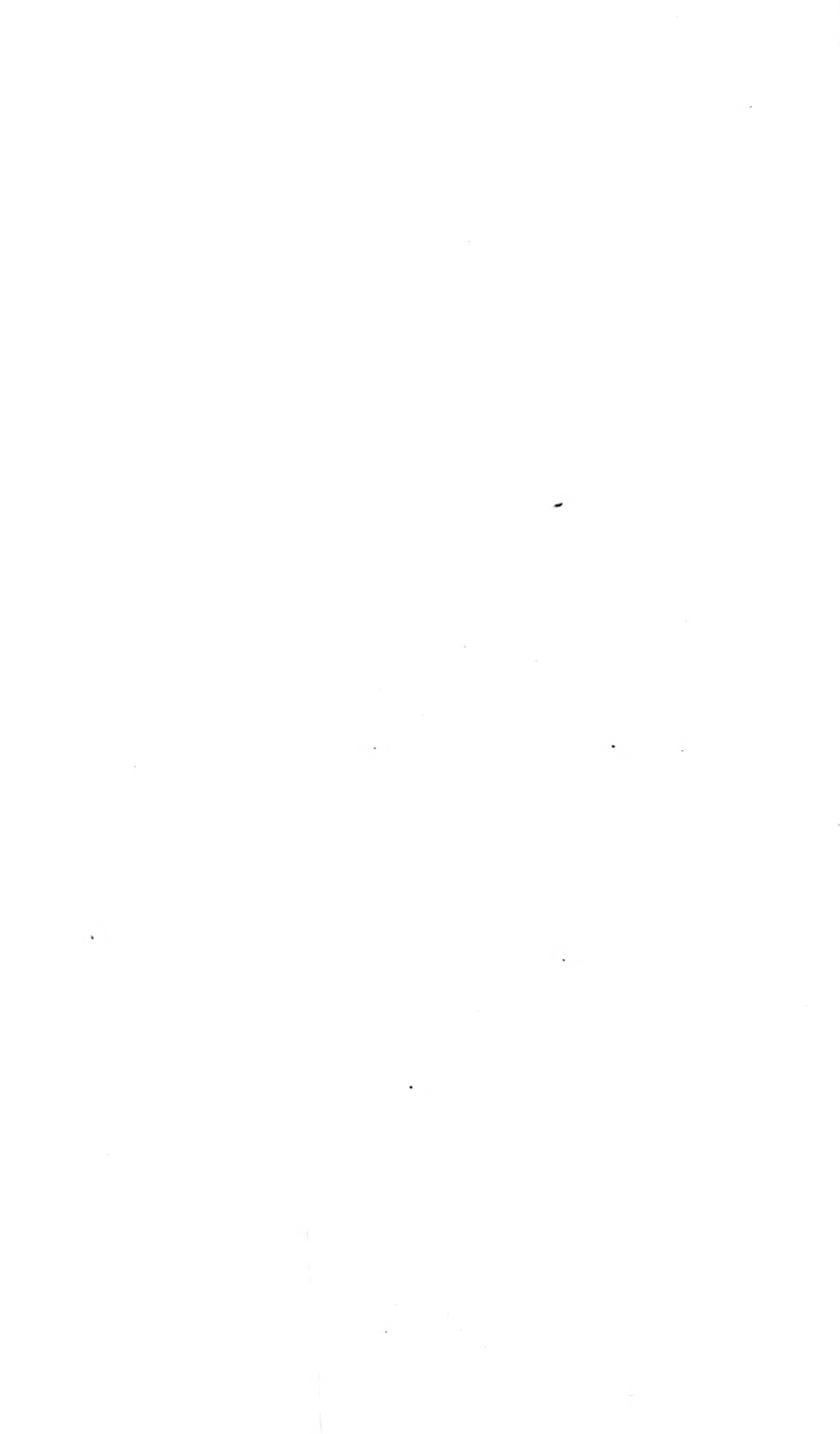
It is remarkable, as is observed by Jortin, in his *Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*, that “the honours paid to the dead and to the relics of the martyrs, were set forward and supported, though not entirely, yet principally, by the Consubstantialists.—Faustus the Manichean, reproaches the Catholic Christians with their endless superstitions of this kind, and tells them they were no better than humble imitators of Pagan idolaters.”*

When, to all these gross corruptions of Christianity, we add the doctrine of the *Trinity*, with all its consequences, all flowing from the philosophical system introduced into our holy religion, I should think that a plain Christian would rejoice in being able to throw off the whole immense load (which must otherwise sink the belief of it) by the easy supposition of *matter being capable of the property of sensation or thought*; an opinion which is so far from being contradicted by any appearance in nature, that it is perfectly agreeable to them all, and peculiarly favoured by the whole system of Revelation.

* Vol. III. p. 17. (*P.*) *Eccles. Hist.* Ed. 1805, II. p. 166. On the origin of Purgatory, one of the subjects just mentioned, the author of *Les Conformités des Cérémonies Modernes avec les Anciennes* has the following remarks: “Il ne faut pas s'étonner si les cérémonies pour les morts sont semblables, puisque les uns et les autres ont les mêmes sentimens de l'état des âmes. Car *Platon* non seulement a jetté tous les fondemens du *Purgatoire*, mais il l'a élevé jusqu' au point où il est aujourd'hui.—Si on veut voir la description du *Purgatoire*, il n'y a qu' à voir celle que cette Poëte (*Virgile*) en fait en ce sixième Livre, et on reconnoitra que c'est de là que le Pape *Gregoire I.* a copié la plupart de ce qu'il dit en ses Dialogues; où il parle des âmes qui se purgent—tout cela est de l'invention de *Virgile* qui veut que les âmes aient contracté plusieurs souillures, se purgent après cette vie avant que d'être recueillies au séjour des bien-heureux.” [*Æneid*, VI. 739—748.] *Les Conform.* Ch. xi. 1668, pp. 229, 230. The author of this work, which is highly praised in Bayle's *Epistles*, and to which Dr. Middleton was much indebted in his *Letter from Rome*, was *Peter Mussard* of Geneva. He was preacher at the French church in the Savoy and died in 1681, aged about 56. The Preface to a Translation of this work was mentioned, Vol. II. p. 163. Note *.

THE
D O C T R I N E
OF
PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY
Illustrated ;
BEING AN
A P P E N D I X
TO THE
DISQUISITIONS RELATING TO MATTER AND SPIRIT.

—◆—
The gen'ral *order*, since the whole began,
Is kept in *nature*, and is kept in *man*. POPE.



TO

JOHN JEBB,* M. D.



DEAR SIR,

I FLATTER myself that you will permit me to take this opportunity of perpetuating, as far as I am able, the very high regard that I entertain for a person who has distinguished himself as you have done, by an attachment to the *unadulterated principles of Christianity*, how unpopular soever they may have become through the prejudices of the weak or the interested part of mankind, and who has made the sacrifice that you have made to the *cause of truth* and the *rights of conscience*.

I think myself happy in concurring, as I hope, with your ardent zeal for the cause of *civil and religious liberty* in their full extent; and I am convinced that to act as you have done is the proper method that a *Christian* ought to take in order to promote it. It is our business, whenever called upon, to bear our testimony to whatever we apprehend to be *truth* and *right*, and upon no occasion to swerve from our real principles (which would be equivalent to denying Christ, or being ashamed of him and his cause before men), whether we see that any good will result from what we may suffer by such a profession, or not. We ought to content ourselves with acting under the *express orders* of one who is the proper judge

* The friend of Lindsey and his associate in the sacrifice of church preferment to Christian consistency. He died in 1786, aged 50, having occupied no common talents in an unwearied promotion of the religious, moral and political interests of mankind. Of Dr. Jebb's public and private virtues, and the high sense of religious obligation under which he acted, there is abundant testimony in Dr. Disney's account prefixed to his friend's works, published in 1787. I have great pleasure in adding the biographer's opinion of this dedication, which he inserted in his *Memoir*, and described as "exhibiting the similarity and connexion of two great minds, uniformly and mutually acting under the influence of the best principles to be derived from the study of true religion and philosophy." Dr. Disney adds, "I will frankly own that I have read this dedication frequently, but never without delight and improvement. Something may be allowed for my personal esteem and friendship for the parties, but I think a stranger to the character of both, (if such an one there be) will not be insensible to its beauties or effect." Mem. I. p. 129.

of what is expedient for his interest and his church, as well as for our happiness ; and we may rest assured, that we can only sustain a *temporary loss* by such an implicit, but reasonable obedience.

Could we only, my friend, expand our minds fully to conceive, and act up to, the great principle asserted in this treatise (of the truth of which we are both of us convinced), nothing more would be wanting to enable us to exert this, and every other effort of *true greatness of mind*.

We ourselves, complex as the structure of our minds and our principles of action are, are links in a great connected chain, parts of an immense whole, a very little of which only we are as yet permitted to see, but from which we collect evidence enough that the whole system (in which we are, at the same time, both *instruments* and *objects*) is under an unerring direction, and that the final result will be most glorious and happy. Whatever men may intend, or execute, all their designs, and all their actions, are subject to the secret influence and guidance of One who is necessarily the best judge of what will most promote his own excellent purposes. To him, and in his works, all seeming *discord* is real *harmony*, and all apparent *evil* ultimate *good*.

This world, we see, is an admirable *nursery for great minds*. Difficulties, opposition, persecution, and evils of every other form, are the necessary *instruments* by which they are made, and even *the captain of our salvation* was himself *made perfect through suffering*. A mixture of pleasing events does, likewise, contribute to the same end ; but of the due proportions in this mixture we are no judges. Considering, however, in whose hands are the several ingredients of the *cup* of mortal life, we may be assured that it will never be more bitter than will be necessary to make it, in the very highest degree, salutary.

You and I, Sir, rejoice in the belief, that the whole human race are under the same *wholesome discipline*, and that they will all certainly derive the most valuable advantages from it, though in different degrees, in different ways, and at different periods ; that even the persecutors are only giving the precedence to the persecuted, and advancing them to a much higher degree of perfection and happiness ; and that they must themselves, for the same benevolent purpose, undergo a more severe discipline than that which they are the means of administering to others.

With this persuasion we cannot but consider every *being*, and every *thing*, in a favourable light. Every person with

whom we have any connexion is a *friend*, and every event in life is a *benefit*; while God is equally the father and the friend of the whole creation.*

I hope, dear Sir, we shall always be careful to strengthen and extend these great and just views of the glorious system to which we belong. It is only by losing sight of these principles that we adopt *mean purposes*, and become slaves to *mean passions*, as also that we are subject to be chagrined and unhinged by seemingly cross accidents in life.

So long as we can practically believe that there is but *one will* in the whole universe; that this one will, exclusive of all *chance*, or the interference of any other will, disposes of all things, even to their minutest circumstances, and always for the best of purposes, it is impossible but that we must rejoice in, and be thankful for, all events, without distinction. And when our will and our wishes shall thus perfectly coincide with those of the Sovereign Disposer of all things, *whose will is always done, in earth, as well as in heaven*, we shall, in fact, attain the summit of perfection and happiness. We shall have a kind of *union with God* himself; his will shall be our will, and even his power our power; being ever employed to execute our wishes and purposes, as well as his; because they will be, in all respects, the same with his.

These heart-reviving and soul-ennobling views we cannot, my friend, in this imperfect state, expect to realize and enjoy, except at intervals; but let us make it our business to make these happy seasons of philosophical and devout contemplation more frequent, and of longer continuance. Let them encroach more and more on the time that we must give to the bustle of a transitory world; till our minds shall have received such a lasting impression, as that its effect may be felt even in the midst of the greatest tumult of life, and inspire a serenity and joy, which *the world can neither give nor take away*.

In these principles alone do we find a perfect coincidence between *true religion* and *philosophy*; and by the help of the latter, we are able to demonstrate the excellence of the moral precepts of the former. And the more we understand of human nature, which is an immense field of speculation, barely opened by our revered master Dr. Hartley, † the more

* This and the foregoing paragraph were quoted by the author in 1791 as applicable to the wrongs he then suffered. See his *Appeal*, 1792, Preface.

† The quotations from Dr. Jebb's private papers, shew that he had been a very attentive student of *Hartley*. See Mem. pp. 124, 125, 136.

clearly, I doubt not, shall we perceive how admirably is the whole system of revealed religion adapted to the nature and circumstances of man, and the better judges shall we be of that most important branch of its evidence, which results from considering the effects which the first promulgation of it had on the minds of those to whom it was proposed, both Jews and Gentiles. Let us then study the *Scriptures*, *Ecclesiastical History*, and the *Theory of the Human Mind*, in conjunction; being satisfied that, from the nature of the things, they must, in time, throw a great and new light upon each other.

Permit me, dear Sir, to flatter myself that, as you have followed the great Dr. Hartley in his application to *theological*, *mathematical* and *philosophical* studies, and also in his profession of the theory and practice of *medicine*, you will still pursue his footsteps, in applying the elements of all these branches of science to the farther investigation of the phenomena of the *human mind*, which is a great and ample field, worthy of your superior talents.

Hoping to enjoy your communications and valuable friendship, together with that of our common and most excellent friend Mr. Lindsey, whose views of these things are the same with ours, and with whom, in *principle* and *object*, we cannot be too strictly united, and that, mindful of the apostolical advice, we shall always *consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works*;

I remain,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate friend,

And fellow-labourer,

J. PRIESTLEY.

Calne, August 1, 1777.

THE
P R E F A C E.



I DID not originally intend to write a separate treatise on the subject of *Philosophical Necessity*, but only to consider the objection made to it from the sentiments of praise and blame, and the use of rewards and punishments, which is generally reckoned to be the greatest difficulty on the subject, in an Appendix to my *Disquisitions relating to Matter and Spirit*. There would have been a sufficient propriety in this; because, if man, as is maintained in that treatise, be wholly a *material*, it will not be denied but that he must be a *mechanical* being. As, therefore, every thing belonging to the doctrine of materialism is, in fact, an argument for the doctrine of necessity, and, consequently, the doctrine of necessity is a direct inference from materialism, the defence of that inference would naturally accompany the proof of the proposition from which it was deduced.

But, for the same reason, I thought there would be a propriety in considering, in that Appendix, the view that has been given of this subject by Dr. Price, in his *Review of the Principles of Morals*, which is a very capital work of its kind. After this I was led to add another Essay on *the Nature of the Will*, and thus was brought, by degrees, to write, in separate Essays, all that is now before the reader; when, finding that it was too much to accompany another work, I distributed it into convenient sections, and reserved it for a volume by itself, but still considering it as an *Appendage to the Disquisitions*.

I am far, however, from giving it out as a *complete treatise* on the subject, though I have considered it in a great variety of views, imagining I could throw some new light upon them, either by suggesting new considerations, or at least expressing myself with greater clearness. Those persons who have not yet entered upon the discussion of this great question, I would refer to such writers as Mr. Collins,

Mr. Jonathan Edwards and Dr. Hartley. They will also find some things very well written on it by Mr. Hume and Lord Kames, especially in his *Sketches on Man*.

Considering the many excellent treatises that have been written on this subject, and with how much clearness and solidity the argument has been handled, it may seem rather extraordinary, that the doctrine of philosophical liberty should have any adherents among persons of a liberal education, and who are at all used to reflection. To repeat what I have said on a former occasion, I can truly say that, "If I were to take my choice of any metaphysical question to defend against all opposers, it should be the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity. There is no truth of which I have less doubt, and of the ground of which I am more fully satisfied. Indeed, there is no absurdity more glaring to my understanding than the notion of Philosophical Liberty."*

It must, therefore, be the *consequences* of the doctrine at which persons are staggered. I have, on this account, discussed more particularly, than I believe has been done before, various things relating to the consequences, real or imaginary, of the doctrine of necessity. And, whereas it has of late been imagined to be the same thing with the Calvinistic doctrine of *predestination*, I have shewn, pretty much at large, the essential difference between the two schemes. I have also endeavoured to state, in a just light, what we are to think of those passages of the *sacred writers* that have been supposed to make for or against the doctrine of necessity.

It is the less wonder, however, at the general hesitation to admit the doctrine of necessity in its full extent, when I consider that there is not, I believe, in the whole compass of human speculation, an instance in which the indisputable consequences, both theoretical and practical, of any simple proposition are so numerous, extensive and important. On this account, though I believe every person, without exception, would not hesitate to admit all the *premises*, there are very few, indeed, who are not staggered, and made to pause, at the prospect of the *conclusions*: and I am well aware that, notwithstanding all that ever can be advanced in favour of these conclusions, great and glorious as they really are in themselves, it requires so much strength of mind to comprehend them, that (I wish to say it with the least offence possible) I cannot help considering the doctrine as that which

* Remarks on Dr. Beattie, &c. p. 169. (P.) See p. 89.

will always distinguish the real moral philosopher from the rest of the world; at the same time that, like all other great and practical truths, even those of Christianity itself, its *actual influence* will not always be so great, as, from theory, it might be expected to be. If the doctrine have any bad effects, it is a proof with me that it was never clearly understood; just as all the mischiefs that have been occasioned by Christianity have arisen from the corruptions and abuses of it.

I have taken some pains to trace the *history* of the controversy concerning liberty and necessity, but I have not been able to succeed to my wish. What the ancients have said on the subject is altogether foreign to the purpose, their *fate* being quite a different thing from the *necessity* of the moderns. For though they had an idea of the certainty of the final event of some things, they had no idea of the necessary connexion of all the preceding means to bring about the designed end; and least of all had they any just idea of the proper *mechanism of the mind* depending upon the certain influence of motives to determine the will, by means of which the whole series of events, from the beginning of the world to the consummation of all things, makes one connected *chain of causes and effects*, originally established by the Deity. Whereas, according to the ancient Heathens, fate was something that even the gods often endeavoured in vain to resist. Whenever they supposed that any particular event was *decreed*, or *determined* upon, by any superior being, their idea was, that, if the event did not come to pass by means of natural causes, that superior being would occasionally and effectually interpose, so as, at any rate, to make sure of the event.

The *predestination* of Christians and Mahometans is the same thing as the *fate* of the Heathens. The Divine Being, they supposed, had determined that a certain train of events should absolutely take place, and that he generally provided supernatural means to accomplish his designs. This also appears to have been the notion of predestination as maintained by Luther, Calvin and all the early reformers; and the same may be affirmed of the Jansenists among the Roman Catholics.

After the most diligent inquiry that I can make, it appears to me that Mr. Hobbes was the first who understood and maintained the proper doctrine of philosophical necessity; and I think it no small honour to this country, that, among so many capital truths of a philosophical nature, this owes

its discovery to England.* And it is truly wonderful, considering that he was probably the first who published this doctrine, that he should have proposed it so clearly, and have defended it so ably, as he has done.

On his first mentioning the subject, which was only occasionally, in his *Leviathan*, he discovers a perfect knowledge of the true principle of it. His short paragraph is so comprehensive of the whole scheme and argument, that I shall in this place quote it entire.

“*Liberty and necessity* are consistent. As in the water, that hath not only *liberty*, but a *necessity* of descending by the channel, so likewise, in the actions which men voluntarily do, which, because they proceed from their will, proceed from *liberty*; and yet, because every act of man’s will, and every desire and inclination, proceedeth from some cause, and that from another cause, in a continual chain (whose first link is in the hand of God, the first of all causes), proceed from *necessity*. So that to him that could see the connexion of those causes, the *necessity* of all men’s voluntary actions would appear manifest. And therefore God, that seeth and disposeth all things, seeth also that the *liberty* of man, in doing what he will, is accompanied with the *necessity* of doing that which God will, and no more nor less.

* That doctrine, though blended with the notions of *predestination* and *perseverance*, since called *Calvinistic*, appears to have been understood long before the age of *Hobbes*, by a scholar who has been omitted, where he well deserved a place, in the *Biographia Britannica*. This was *Thomas Bradwardin*, born, according to Camden, in 1290, at Bradwardin Casile, in Herefordshire. Studying at Oxford, “he made himself perfect master of *Aristotle* and *Plato*; but his chief talent lay in mathematics and theology.” He “for some years sat as Divinity Professor, with the most exalted reputation.” Becoming “personal Chaplain to King Edward III.,” whom he attended, during his wars in France, with a warpleas integrity, rarely found in those who wait on Kings, he made it his business to calm and mitigate the fierceness of his Master’s temper,” and “often preached to the army with such meekness and persuasiveness of wisdom, as restrained them from many of those savage violences which are too frequently the attendants on military success.” *Bradwardin* was chosen Archbishop of Canterbury, and consecrated at Avignon in 1349,” but “died at Lambeth the October following.”

This learned divine, who “was honoured,” says Camden, “with the title of *Doctor Profundus*,” wrote against the Pelagians, his work *De Causâ Dei*. It was printed, 1618, “by the united care” of Archbishop Abbot and Sir Henry Saville. The latter says, “That single volume—is alone sufficient to crown him the most consummate theologian of that century.” On the authority of this Work (*Lib. ii. Cap. ii. per totum*) Mr. Toplady, to whose *Historic Proof* I am indebted for the materials of this note, says (p. 222), “Bradwardin believed, that the human Will, however free in its actings, is not altogether exempt from *Necessity*. He supposed, that what the *Understanding* regards as good, the Will must necessarily desire; and what the *Understanding* represents as evil, the Will must necessarily disapprove.” Judge Cooper also attributes a knowledge of this doctrine to *Bradwardin*, though he refers, by mistake, to “Toplady, in his Treatise on Liberty and Necessity,” where he is not mentioned. See Toplady’s “*Historic Proof of the Doctrinal Calvinism of the Church of England*,” 1774, pp. 199—226. Mem. of Priestley, 1806, II. p. 321.

For though men may do many things which God does not command, nor is therefore author of them, yet they can have no passion nor appetite to any thing, of which appetite God's will is not the cause. And did not his will assure the necessity of man's will, and consequently of all that on man's will dependeth, the *liberty* of men would be a contradiction and impediment to the omnipotence and *liberty* of God." *

I am rather surpris'd that Mr. Locke, who seems to have been so much indebted to Mr. Hobbes † for the clear view that he has given us of several principles of human nature, should have availed himself so little of what he might have learned from him on this subject. It is universally acknowledged that his chapter on *power*, in his *Essay on the Human Understanding*, is remarkably confused; all his *general maxims* being perfectly consistent with, and implying, the doctrine of necessity, and being manifestly inconsistent with the liberty which, after writing a long time exactly like a Necessarian, he attributes to man. ‡

But the obscurity that was thrown on this subject by Mr. Locke was effectually cleared up by Mr. Collins, in his *Philosophical Inquiry concerning Human Liberty*, published in 1715. This treatise is concise and methodical, and is, in my opinion, sufficient to give entire satisfaction to every unprejudiced person. I wish this small tract was reprinted, § and more generally known and read. It will, however, remain, and do the greatest honour to the author's memory, when all the quibbling answers to it shall be forgotten. It was in consequence of reading and studying this treatise, that I was first convinced of the truth of the doctrine of necessity, and that I was enabled to see the fallacy of most of the arguments in favour of philosophical liberty; though I was much more confirmed in this principle by my acquaintance with *Dr. Hartley's Theory of the Human Mind*,

* *Leviathan*, p. 108. (P.) 1651, Pt. ii. Ch. xxi. *ad init.*

† See various passages in his *Humane Nature*, and in *Leviathan*, Pt. i. where "Concerning the thoughts of Man," *Hobbes* says, "the original of them all, is that which we call *sense*; for there is no conception in a man's mind, which hath not, at first, totally, or by parts, been begotten upon the organs of sense. The rest are derived from that original." P. 3. I cannot find, what I would gladly discover, that Mr. Locke acknowledged his *Precursor* either in the *Essay* or his *Defences*. In his "Second Reply to the Bishop of Worcester," he seems to shun the acquaintance; for, referring to some statement of his opponent, he says, "I am not so well read in *Hobbes* or *Spinoza*, as to be able to say what were their opinions in this matter." He presently after alludes to them as "those justly-decried names." See *Locke's Works*, I. p. 598.

‡ In the Latin correspondence between Locke and Limborch, at the close of the *Familiar Letters*, there is an interesting discussion of the Chapter of *Power*. See the Letters, Oct. 30th, 1700.—Oct. 27th, 1702.—*Locke's Works*, III. pp. 663—685.

§ This was done by my author in 1790, as will appear in the next volume.

a work to which I owe much more than I am able to express.

I was not, however, a ready convert to the doctrine of necessity. Like Dr. Hartley himself, I gave up my liberty with great reluctance; * and in a long correspondence, which I once had on the subject, I maintained very strenuously the doctrine of liberty, and did not at all yield to the arguments then proposed to me. My correspondent importuned me to permit him to publish the letters; but though I was at that time very young, not having entered upon a course of academical learning, I had the prudence not to consent to his proposal. †

With these previous remarks, I submit to the candour of the reader what I have been able to advance on the great and glorious, but unpopular doctrine of *Philosophical Necessity*.

* "In respect of the doctrine of *Necessity*, I was not at all aware, that it followed from that of *Association*, for several years after I had begun my inquiries; nor did I admit it at last without the greatest reluctance." *Obs. Pref.* p. iv.

† This correspondent was Mr. Peter Annet, whom the author mentions in the early part of his *Memoirs*, as "an unbeliever in Christianity, and a Necessarian;" and to whose then recent prosecution for a *deistical* work, he refers in his "Essay on a Code of Education." 1765.

THE
 D O C T R I N E
 OF
PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY
 ILLUSTRATED.

SECTION I.

Of the true STATE OF THE QUESTION respecting Liberty and Necessity.

ONE of the chief sources of the difference of opinion respecting the subject of *liberty and necessity*, and likewise of much of the difficulty that has attended the discussion of it, seems to have been a want of attention to the proper *stating of the question*. Hence it has come to pass, that the generality of those who have stood forth in defence of what they have called *liberty*, do, in fact, admit every thing that is requisite to establish the doctrine of necessity; but they have misled themselves and others, by *the use of words*; and also, wanting sufficient *strength of mind*, they have been staggered at the consequences of their own principles. I shall, therefore, begin with some observations which, I hope, may tend to throw light upon the nature of the subject in debate, and help the reader to understand what it is that, as a necessarian, I contend for.

In the first place, I would observe, that I allow to man all the liberty or power that is *possible in itself*, and to which the ideas of mankind in general ever go, which is the *power of doing whatever they will, or please*, both with respect to the operations of their minds and the motions of their bodies, uncontrouled by any foreign principle or cause. Thus, every man is at liberty to turn his thoughts to whatever subject he pleases, to consider the reasons for or against any scheme or proposition, and to reflect upon them as long

as he shall think proper; as well as to walk wherever he pleases, and to do whatever his hands and other limbs are capable of doing.

Mr. Hobbes has given the following clear and happy illustration of this subject: "Liberty," says he, "is the absence of all the impediments to action that are not contained in the nature and intrinsical quality of the agent. As for example, the water is said to descend freely, or to have liberty to descend by the channel of the river, because there is no impediment that way, but not across, because the banks are impediments. And though the water cannot ascend, yet men never say it wants the *liberty* to ascend, but the *faculty* or *power*; because the impediment is *in the nature of the water*, and *intrinsical*. So also we say, he that is tied, wants the liberty to go, because the impediment is not in *him*, but in his *bands*; whereas we say not so of him that is sick or lame, because the impediment is *in himself*."*

In acknowledging in man a liberty to do whatever he pleases, I grant not only all the liberty that the generality of mankind have any idea of, or can be made to understand, but also all that many of the professed advocates for liberty, against the doctrine of necessity, have claimed. "Now needless to me," says Mr. Wollaston, "seem those disputes about *human liberty*, with which men have tired themselves and the world.—Sure it is in a man's power to keep his hand from his mouth. If it is, it is also in his power to forbear excess in eating and drinking. If he has the command of his own feet, so as to go either this way or that, or no whither, as sure he has, it is in his power to abstain from ill company and vicious places, and so on." Again he says, "I can *move* my hand upwards or downwards, &c., *just as I will*. Now, if my hand, &c. were left to be governed by the law of gravitation, or by any motions already impressed upon them, the effects would be *determined* by rules of mechanism, and be *necessary*: the motion, or rest of my hand, would not attend upon *my will*, and be alterable upon a thought, at *my pleasure*. If then I have, as I am sensible I have, a *power* of *moving* my hand, in a manner which it would not move in by those laws that mere bodies, already in motion, or under the force of gravitation, would observe, this motion depends solely upon *my will*, and *begins* there."†

* See Hobbes's Works, p. 483. (*P.*) *Of Liberty and Necessity*, addressed to the Marquis of Newcastle, from Rouen, 1652, in reply to Bishop Bramhall. *Tripes*, 1684, p. 311.

† "Religion of Nature," pp. 111, 112, 346, 347. (*P.*)

I would observe, however, that it by no means follows, that because the motion attends upon the *will*, it therefore *begins* there; the will itself being determined by some motive.

Mr. Locke acknowledges that, properly speaking, freedom does not belong to the *will*, but to the *man*; and agreeable to the definition of liberty given above, he says, "So far as a man has a power to think or not to think, to move or not to move, according to the preference or direction of his own mind, so far is a man *free*." * The will, he acknowledges, is always determined by the most "*pressing uneasiness of desire*;" † as he also acknowledges, that it is "*happiness, and that alone*," that "moves desire." ‡ And all the liberty that he contends for, and for the existence of which he appeals to experience, is a liberty that I am far from disclaiming, viz. a liberty of *suspending our determinations*. "The mind," says he, "having, in most cases, as is evident in experience, a power to suspend the execution and satisfaction of any of its desires, and so of all, one after another, is at liberty to consider the objects of them, examine them on all sides, and weigh them with others. In this lies the liberty man has.— We have a power to suspend the prosecution of this or that desire, as every one daily may experience in himself. This seems to me the source of all liberty. In this seems to consist that which is, as I think, improperly called *free-will*." §

I would only observe with respect to this, that a determination to suspend a volition, is, in fact, *another volition*, and therefore, according to Mr. Locke's own rule, must be determined by the most pressing uneasiness, as well as any other. If any man voluntarily suspends his determination, it is not without some motive or reason; as, for instance, because he is apprehensive of some ill consequence arising from a hasty and inconsiderate resolution. On the other hand, if he determines immediately, it is because he has no such apprehension. In fact, all the liberty that Mr. Locke contends for, is perfectly consistent with the doctrine of philosophical necessity, though he does not seem to have been aware of it.

All the *liberty*, or rather *power*, that I say a man has not, is that of *doing several things when all the previous circumstances* (including the *state of his mind*, and his *views of things*) are precisely the same. What I contend for is, that,

* Essay, I. p. 193. (P.) B. ii. Ch. xxi. S. viii.

† P. 204. (P.) Ibid. S. xxxiii.

‡ P. 209. (P.) Ibid. S. xli.

§ Pp. 213, 214. (P.) Ibid. S. xlv.

with the same state of mind (the same strength of any particular passion, for example) and the same views of things, (as any particular object appearing equally desirable) he would always, voluntarily, make the same choice, and come to the same determination. For instance, if I make any particular choice to-day, I should have done the same yesterday, and shall do the same to-morrow, provided there be no change in the state of my mind respecting the object of the choice.

In other words, I maintain, that there is some *fixed law of nature respecting the will*, as well as the other powers of the mind, and every thing else in the constitution of nature; and, consequently, that it is never determined without some real or apparent *cause*, foreign to itself, i. e. without some *motive of choice*, or that motives influence us in some definite and invariable manner; so that every volition or choice, is constantly regulated and determined by what precedes it. And this *constant* determination of mind, according to the motives presented to it, is all that I mean by its *necessary determination*. This being admitted to be the fact, there will be a necessary connexion between all things past, present and to come, in the way of proper *cause and effect*, as much in the intellectual, as in the natural world; so that, how little soever the bulk of mankind may be apprehensive of it, or staggered by it, according to the established laws of nature, no event could have been otherwise than it *has been, is, or is to be*, and therefore all things past, present and to come, are precisely what the Author of nature really intended them to be, and has made provision for.

SECTION II.

Of the Argument in favour of the Doctrine of Necessity from the consideration of CAUSE AND EFFECT.

To establish the conclusion defined in the preceding Section, nothing is necessary but that, throughout all nature, the same consequences should invariably result from the same circumstances. For, if this be admitted, it will necessarily follow, that at the commencement of any system, since the several parts of it, and their respective situations, were appointed by the Deity, the first change would take place according to a *certain rule*, established by himself, the result of which would be a *new situation*; after which, the same laws continuing, another change would succeed, ac-

ording to the same rules, and so on for ever; every new situation invariably leading to another, and every event, from the commencement to the termination of the system, being strictly connected; so that, unless the fundamental laws of the system were changed, it would be impossible that any event should have been otherwise than it was; just as the precise place where a billiard ball rests, is necessarily determined by the impulse given to it at first, notwithstanding its impinging against ever so many other balls, or the sides of the table.

In all these cases the circumstances preceding any change, are called the *causes* of that change; and since a determinate event, or effect, constantly follows certain circumstances or causes, the connexion between the cause and the effect is concluded to be *invariable*, and therefore *necessary*.

This chain of causes and effects cannot be broken, but by such a provision in the constitution of nature, as, that the same event shall not certainly follow the same preceding circumstances. In this case, indeed, it might be truly said, that any particular event might have been otherwise than it was, there having been no certain provision in the laws of nature for determining it to be *this* rather than *that*. But then this event, not being preceded by any circumstances that determined it to be what it was, would be *an effect without a cause*. For a *cause* cannot be defined to be any thing but *such previous circumstances as are constantly followed by a certain effect*; the *constancy* of the result making us conclude, that there must be a *sufficient reason* in the nature of the things, why it should be produced in those circumstances. So that, in all cases, if the result be different, either the circumstances must have been different, or there were no circumstances whatever corresponding to the difference in the result; and consequently the effect was without any cause at all.

These maxims are universal, being equally applicable to all things that belong to the constitution of nature, corporeal or mental. If, for instance, I take a pair of scales loaded with equal weights, they both remain in equilibrio. By throwing an additional weight into one of the scales, I make a change in the circumstances, which is immediately followed by a *new situation*, viz. a depression of the one, and an elevation of the opposite scale; and having observed the same effect before, I was able to foretell that this depression of the one scale, and elevation of the other, would be the certain consequence. It could not be otherwise while

the same laws of nature were preserved. In order to its being possible for it to have been otherwise, the laws of nature must have been so framed, as that, upon throwing in the additional weight, the scale might, or might not, have been depressed; or it might have been depressed without any additional weight at all. But, in this case, there would have been an effect without a cause; there having been no *change of circumstances* previous to the change of situation, viz. the depression of the scale. In fact, this is the only reason why we say that such an effect would have been produced without a cause.

In every determination of mind, or in cases where volition or choice is concerned, all the previous circumstances to be considered are the *state of mind* (including every thing belonging to the *will itself*) and the *views of things* presented to it; the latter of which is generally called the *motive*, though under this term some writers comprehend them both. To distinguish the *manner* in which events depending upon *will* and *choice* are produced, from those in which no volition is concerned, the former are said to be produced *voluntarily*, and the latter *mechanically*. But the same general maxims apply to them both. We may not be able to determine *a priori* how a man will act in any particular case, but it is because we are not particularly acquainted with his *disposition of mind, precise situation and views of things*. But neither can we tell which way the wind will blow to-morrow, though the *air* is certainly subject to no other than necessary laws of motion.

A particular determination of mind could not have been otherwise than it was, if the laws of nature respecting the mind be such, as that the same determination shall constantly follow the same state of mind, and the same views of things. And it could not be possible for any determination to have been otherwise than it *has been, is, or is to be*, unless the laws of nature had been such, as that, though both the state of mind and the views of things were the same, the determination might, or might not, have taken place. But, in this case, the determination must have been an effect without a cause, because in this case, as in that of the balance, there would have been a *change of situation without any previous change of circumstances*; and there cannot be any other definition of an effect without a cause. The application of the term *voluntary* to mental determinations cannot possibly make the least difference in this case.

If the laws of nature be such, as that, in given circum-

stances, I constantly make a definite choice, my conduct through life is determined by the Being who made me, and placed me in the circumstances in which I first found myself. For the consequence of the first given circumstances was a *definitive voluntary determination*, which, bringing me into other circumstances, was followed by another definite determination, and so on from the beginning of life to the end of it; and upon no scheme whatever can this chain of situations of mind, and consequent mental determinations, or of causes and effects, be broken, but by a constitution which shall provide that, in given circumstances, there shall no definite determination follow; or that, without any change in the previous circumstances, there shall be a subsequent change of situation; which, as was observed before, would be an effect without a cause, a thing impossible, even to *divine power*, because impossible to *power abstractedly considered*. Besides, if *one* effect might take place without a sufficient cause, another, and all effects, might have been without a cause; which entirely takes away the only argument for the being of a God.

It may, perhaps, help to clear up this matter to some persons, to consider that the term *voluntary* is not opposed to *necessary*, but only to *involuntary*, and that nothing can be opposed to necessary, but *contingent*. For a voluntary motion may be regulated by *certain rules* as much as a mechanical one; and if it be regulated by any certain rules, or laws, it is as necessary as any mechanical motion whatever. Though, therefore, a man's determination be *his own*, the causes of it existing and operating within himself, yet, if it be subject to any fixed laws, there cannot be any circumstances in which two different determinations might equally have taken place: for that would exclude the influence of all laws.

There may be circumstances, indeed, in which a variety of determinations, though confined within certain limits, might take place; but those are *general* circumstances. Circumscribe the circumstances, and a number of the possible determinations will be precluded; and when the circumstances are strictly limited, the determination can be no other than precisely one and the same; and whenever those precise circumstances occur again (the inclination of mind being the same, and the views of things precisely the same also), the very same determination, or choice, will certainly be made. The choice is, indeed, a man's own making, and voluntary; but, in voluntarily making it, he follows the

laws of his nature, and invariably makes it in a certain definite manner. To suppose the most perfectly voluntary choice to be made without regard to the laws of nature, so that with the same inclination, and degree of inclination, and the same views of things presented to us, we might be even voluntarily disposed to choose either of two different things at the same moment of time, is just as impossible as that an involuntary or mechanical motion should depend upon no certain law or rule, or that any other effect should exist without an adequate cause.

What is most extraordinary is, that there are persons who admit this indissoluble chain of circumstances and effects, so that nothing could have been otherwise than it is, and yet can imagine that they are defending the doctrine of philosophical liberty, and opposing the doctrine of necessity. The author of *Letters on Materialism* says, that “the moral influence of motives is as *certain*, though not *necessitating*, as is the physical cause.* But this is a distinction merely *verbal*. For the only reason that we can have to believe in any *cause*, and that it acts *necessarily*, is, that it acts *certainly* or *invariably*. If my mind be as *constantly* determined by the influence of motives, as a stone is determined to fall to the ground by the influence of gravity, I am constrained to conclude, that the *cause* in the one case acts as necessarily as that in the other. For there must be an *equally sufficient reason* for equally constant and certain effects.

No less fallacious is it to say, with this writer, that “motives do not impel or determine a man to act; but that a man, from the view of the motives, determines himself to act.”† For if he certainly and constantly determines himself to act according to motives, there must be a sufficient *reason* why motives have this influence over him. If, in fact, he never do act contrary to their influence, it can only be because he has *no power* so to do; and, therefore, he is subject to an absolute necessity, as much upon this as upon any other method of stating the question. By such poor evasions do some persons think to shelter themselves from the force of conviction.‡

I do not think it at all *necessary* to add any thing to what I have advanced above, in illustration of the argument from the nature of *cause and effect*. But because this is the great

* P. 171. (P.) For the author, see p. 215.

† P. 166. (P.)

‡ The remainder of this Section was added to the 2d Edition from the *Illustrations*.

and the most conclusive argument for the doctrine that I contend for, proving the contrary doctrine of *philosophical liberty* to be absolutely *impossible*, and I find that several persons of excellent judgment in other respects seem not to feel the force of it, I shall attempt a farther illustration of it, in order to remove, as far as I am able, the only remaining objection that I can imagine may be made to it; though I must ask pardon of my other readers, for writing what will appear to them so very obvious and superfluous.

It is universally acknowledged, that there can be no effect without an adequate cause. This is even the foundation on which the only proper argument for the being of a God rests. And the necessarian asserts, that if, in any given state of mind, with respect both to *disposition* and *motives*, two different determinations or volitions be possible, it can be so, on no other principle, than that one of them shall come under the description of *an effect without a cause*; just as if the beam of a balance might incline either way, though loaded with equal weights.

It is acknowledged, that the mechanism of the balance is of one kind, and that of the mind of another, and therefore it may be convenient to denominate them by different words; as, for instance, that of the balance may be termed a *physical*, and that of the mind a *moral* mechanism. But still, if there be a *real mechanism* in both cases, so that there can be only one result from the same previous circumstances, there will be a *real necessity*, enforcing an absolute certainty in the event. For it must be understood, that all that is ever meant by *necessity in a cause*, is that which produces *certainty in the effect*.

If, however, the term *necessity* give offence, I, for my part, have no objection to the disuse of it, provided we can express, in any other manner, that property in causes, or the previous circumstances of things, that leads to absolute certainty in the effects that result from them; so that, without a miracle, or an over-ruling of the stated laws of nature, i. e. without the intervention of a higher cause, no determination of the will could have been otherwise than it has been.

To evade the force of this argument from the nature of cause and effect, it is said that, though, in a given state of mind, two different determinations may take place, neither of them can be said to be without a sufficient cause; for that, in this case, the cause is *the mind itself*, which makes

the determination in a manner independent of all influence of motives.

But to this I answer, that the mind itself, independent of the influence of every thing that comes under the description of *motive*, bearing an equal relation to both the determinations, cannot possibly be considered as a cause with respect to either of them, in preference to the other. Because, exclusive of what may properly be called motive, there is no imaginable difference in the circumstances immediately preceding the determinations. Every thing tending to produce the least degree of inclination to one of the determinations more than to the other, must make a difference in the *state of mind* with respect to them, which, by the stating of the case, is expressly excluded. And I will venture to say, that no person, let his bias in favour of a system be ever so great, will choose to say in support of it, that the mind can possibly take one of two determinations, without having for it something that may, at least, be called an *inclination* for it, in preference to the other; and that inclination, or whatever else it be called, must have had a cause producing it, in some previous affection of the mind.

In short, let ever so much ingenuity be shewn in stating this case, it is impossible not to come at length to this conclusion, that, in no case whatever, can the mind be determined to action, i. e. to a volition, without something that may as well be called a *motive* as be expressed in any other manner. For, the reason or proper cause of every determination must necessarily be something either in the state of the mind itself, or in the ideas present to it, immediately before the determination; and these ideas, as they impress the mind, may, strictly speaking, be comprehended in what we mean by the *state of mind*, including whatever there is in it that can lead to any determination whatever. Or, on the other hand, the state of mind may be included in the meaning of the term *motive*, comprehending in the signification of it whatever it be that can *move* or *incline* the mind to any particular determination.

It appears to me, that it may just as well be said that, in the case of the balance above-mentioned, the beam may be the cause why, though equal weights be suspended at the different ends of it, it may nevertheless incline one way or the other. For, exclusive of what necessarily comes under the description either of *motive*, or *state of mind*, the mind itself can no more be the cause of its own determination,

than the beam of a balance can be the cause of its own inclination.

In the case of the beam it is immediately perceived that, bearing an equal relation to both the weights, it cannot possibly favour one of them more than the other; and it is simply on account of its bearing an equal relation to them both that it cannot do this. Now let the structure of the mind be ever so different from that of the balance, it necessarily agrees with it in this, that, exclusive of motives, in the sense explained above, (viz. including both the state of mind and the particular ideas present to it) it bears as equal a relation to any determination, as the beam of a balance bears to any particular inclination; so that as, on account of this circumstance, the balance cannot of itself incline one way or the other, so neither, on account of the same circumstance, can the mind of itself incline, or determine, one way or the other.

In fact, an advocate for the doctrine of philosophical liberty has the choice of no more than *two suppositions*, and neither of them can, in the least degree, answer his purpose. For he must either assert that, in a given state of mind, the determination will certainly be *a* and not *b*; or it may be either *a* or *b*. If he adopts the former, he may just as well say at once, that the determination will *necessarily* be *a*, and that without a miracle it cannot be *b*. For, any other language that he can possibly use, can do no more than serve to hide what might otherwise be obnoxious in the sentiment, and will leave it still true, that, without a miracle, or the intervention of some foreign cause, no volition or action of any man could have been otherwise than it *has been, is, or is to be*, which is all that a necessarian contends for. And if, on the contrary, he chooses to assert that, in the same state of mind, the determinations *a* and *b* are equally possible, one of them must be *an effect without a cause*, a supposition which overturns all reasoning concerning appearances in nature, and especially the foundation of the only proper argument for the being of a God. For if any thing whatever, even a thought in the mind of man, could arise without an adequate cause, any thing else, the mind itself, or the whole universe, might likewise exist without a cause.

I own it is irksome to enter into so minute a discussion of an objection that appears to me to be so little deserving of an answer; and it is only with a view to obviate every thing that *has been*, or that I can foresee *may be* urged, with

the least plausibility, that I have considered it at all. If this do not give satisfaction, I own I do not think it will be in my power to give satisfaction with respect to this argument, or any other. There does not appear to me to be, in the whole compass of reasoning, that I am acquainted with, a more conclusive argument, than that for the doctrine of necessity from the consideration of the nature of *cause and effect*.

SECTION III.

Of the Argument for Necessity from the DIVINE PRESCIENCE.

As it is not within the compass of *power* in the author of any system, that an event should take place without a cause, or that it should be equally possible for two different events to follow the same circumstances, so neither, supposing this to be possible, would it be within the compass of *knowledge* to foresee such a contingent event. So that, upon the doctrine of philosophical liberty, the Divine Being could not possibly foresee what would happen in his own creation, and therefore could not provide for it; which takes away the whole foundation of *Divine Providence* and moral government, as well as all the foundation of *revealed religion*, in which *prophecies* are so much concerned.

That an event truly contingent, or not necessarily depending upon previous circumstances, should be the object of knowledge, has, like other things of a similar nature, in modern systems, been called a *difficulty* and a *mystery*; but in reality there cannot be a greater absurdity or contradiction. For as certainly as nothing can be known *to exist*, but what does exist, so certainly can nothing be known *to arise from what does exist*, but what does arise from it, or depend upon it. But, according to the definition of the terms, a contingent event does not depend upon any previous known circumstances; since some other event might have arisen in the same circumstances.

All that is within the compass of knowledge in this case is, to foresee all the different events that might take place in the same circumstances; but which of them will *actually* take place cannot possibly be known. In this case all degrees of knowledge or sagacity are equal. Did the case admit of *approximation* to certainty, in proportion to the *degree* of knowledge, it would be fully within the compass

of infinite knowledge; but in this case there is no such approximation. To all minds the foretelling of a contingent event is equally a matter of conjecture: consequently, even infinite knowledge makes no difference in this case. For *knowledge* supposes an *object*, which, in this case, does not *exist*, and therefore cannot be *known to exist*.* If man be possessed of a power of proper *self-determination*, the Deity himself cannot controul it (as far as he interferences, it is no self-determination of the man), and if he does not *controul* it, he cannot *foresee* it. Nothing can be known at present, except *itself* or its *necessary cause* exist at present. Yet the whole history of revelation shews, that every determination of the mind of man is certainly fore-known by the Divine Being; determinations that took place from *natural* and *common causes*, where the mind was under no supernatural influence whatever; because men are *censured* and *condemned* for actions that were so foreseen.

The death of our Saviour is a remarkable instance of this kind. This event was certainly foreseen and intended, for it most particularly entered into the plan of Divine Providence; and yet it appears from the history, that it was brought about by causes perfectly natural, and fully adequate to it. It was just such an event as might have been expected from the known malice and prejudice of the Jewish rulers, at the time of his appearance. They certainly needed no supernatural instigation to push them on to their bloody and wicked purpose; and Pilate, disposed and situated as he was, needed no extraordinary impulse to induce him to consent to it, notwithstanding his hesitation, and his conviction of the malice and injustice of the proceedings; and both he and the Jews were righteously condemned and punished for it; which, I doubt not, will have the happiest effect in the system of the divine moral government.

This argument from the divine prescience is briefly, but clearly stated, by Mr. Hobbes. "Denying necessity," says he, "destroyeth both the decrees and the prescience of God Almighty. For whatsoever God hath purposed to bring to pass by man, as an instrument, or foreseeeth shall come to pass; a man, if he have *liberty*,—from *necessitation*, might frustrate, and make not to come to pass; and God should either not *fore-know* it, and not *decree* it, or

* The author here quoted on the "argument from prescience"—the 2d and 3d paragraphs of S. iii. of his answer to Mr. Bryant, which will appear in the next volume.

he should fore-know such things shall be, as shall never be, and decree that which shall never come to pass.”*

Indeed, many of the most zealous advocates for the doctrine of philosophical *liberty*, aware of its inconsistency with the doctrine of *divine prescience*, have not scrupled to give up the latter altogether. With respect to such persons, I can only repeat what I have said upon this subject in my *Examination of the Writings of Dr. Beattie, &c.*

“ Thus our author, in the blind rage of disputation, hesitates not to deprive the ever-blessed God of that very attribute, by which, in the books of scripture, he expressly distinguishes himself from all false gods, and than which nothing can be more essentially necessary to the government of the universe, rather than relinquish his fond claim to the fancied privilege of *self-determination*; a claim which appears to me to be just as absurd as that of *self-existence*, and which could not possibly do him any good if he had it.” †

What is more extraordinary, this power of *self-determination* he arrogates to himself, without pretending to advance a single rational argument in favour of his claim: but expects it will be admitted on the authority of his *instinctive common sense* only. And yet, if a man express the least indignation at such new and unheard of arrogance, and in an argument of such high importance as this, what *exclamation* and *abuse* must he not expect?

SECTION IV.

Of the cause of VOLITION and the nature of the WILL.

IN all investigations relating to human nature, the philosopher will apply the same rules by which his inquiries have been conducted upon all other subjects. He will attentively consider *appearances*, and will not have recourse to more *causes* than are necessary to account for them.

He sees a stone whirled round in a string, and the planets perform their revolutions in circular orbits, and he judges, from *similar appearances*, that they are all retained in their orbits by powers that draw them towards the centres of their respective motions. Again, a stone tends towards the

* Works, p. 485. (P.) “Of Liberty and Necessity,” *ad fin. Triplos.* p. 317.

† See this passage, p. 91.

earth by a power which is called *gravity*, and because, supposing the planets to have the same tendency to the sun that the stone has to the earth, and to have been projected in tangents to their present orbits, they would revolve exactly as they are now observed to do, the philosopher, for that reason, concludes, that the force which retains them in their orbits is the very same power of gravity; and on this account only, viz. *not to multiply causes without necessity*, he refuses to admit any other cause of the celestial motions.

Let us then consider the actions of men in the same natural and simple view, without any apprehension of being misled by it; and let it be inquired by what *rule* they are determined, or what are their *causes*.

Whenever any person makes a choice, or comes to any resolution, there are two circumstances which are evidently concerned in it, viz. what we call the *previous disposition of the mind*, with respect to love or hatred, for example, approbation or disapprobation, of certain objects, &c. and the ideas of external objects then present to the mind, that is, *the view of the objects* which the choice or resolution respects.

Let the objects be two kinds of fruit, *apples* and *peaches*. Let it be supposed that I am fond of the former, and have an aversion to the latter, and that I am disposed to eat fruit. In these circumstances, the moment that they are presented to me, I take the apples and leave the peaches. If it be asked, *why* I made this choice, or what was the *reason*, *cause*, or *motive* of it, it is sufficient to say, that I was fond of apples, but did not like peaches. In the same disposition to eat fruit, and retaining my predilection for apples, I should always, infallibly, do the same thing. The *cause* then of this choice was evidently my liking of apples, and my disliking of peaches; and though an inclination, or affection of mind, be not gravity, it *influences* me, and *acts upon* me as certainly and necessarily as this power does upon a stone. *Affection* determines my choice of the apples, and *gravity* determines the fall of the stone. Through custom we make use of different terms in these cases, but our ideas are exactly similar; the connexion between the two things, as *cause* and *effect*, being equally strict and necessary.

As a philosopher, therefore, I ought to acquiesce in this, and consider *motives* as the proper *causes* of volitions and actions. And the more I examine my own actions, or those

of others, the more reason I see to be satisfied, that all volitions and actions are preceded by corresponding motives.

In all *regular deliberations* concerning any choice, every reason or motive is distinctly attended to, and whatever appears to be the stronger, or the better reason, always determines us. In these cases, the *choice* and the *motive* correspond precisely to an *effect* and its *cause*. In cases that do not require a formal deliberation, i. e. in cases similar to those in which I have often determined before, the moment I perceive my situation, I determine instantly, without attending distinctly, as before, to all the motives or reasons. But this *instantaneous determination* cannot be said not to be produced by motives, because it is, in fact, only the same *mental process abridged*, the action which was formerly connected, or associated, with the ideas presented to it by means of motives, being now itself immediately connected with those ideas, without the distinct perception of the motives which formerly intervened.

This process is exactly similar to the assent of the mind to geometrical propositions that are not self-evident; for example, that *all the inward angles of a right-lined triangle are equal to two right angles*. I do not perceive the truth of this, till the reason of it is explained to me; but, when this has been once done, I afterwards, without attending to the reason, and even, perhaps, without being able to assign it, if it were demanded of me, habitually consider the two expressions as denoting the same quantity, and I argue from them accordingly.

Besides, since every *deliberate choice* is regulated by motives, we ought, as philosophers, to take it for granted, that *every choice* is made in the same manner, and is subject to the same rules, and therefore determined by motives, by something that may be called liking or disliking, approving or disapproving, &c. depending upon the previous state of the mind with respect to the object of choice; since the mere *facility*, or *readiness*, with which a choice is made, cannot make it to be a thing *different in kind* from a choice made with the greatest deliberation, and which took up so much time, that every circumstance attending it could be distinctly perceived.

Moreover, we see evidently, not only that men are determined to act by certain motives, but that the *vigour* of their actions corresponds also to, what may be called, the *intensity* of their motives. If a master be actuated simply by his anger, he will beat his servant more violently, and continue

the correction longer, in proportion to the *degree* of his anger, or the apprehended cause of his displeasure; and kindness operates exactly in the same manner, a stronger affection prompting to greater and more kind offices, than a weaker.

Also opposite motives, as causes of love and hatred, are known to balance one another, exactly like weights in opposite scales. According to all appearance, nothing can act more invariably or mechanically. Is it possible then, that a philosopher, observing these constant and uniform appearances, should not conclude, that the proper cause of a man's actions, are the motives by which he is influenced? Strengthen the motive, and the action is more vigorous; diminish it, and its vigour is abated; change the motive and the action is changed; entirely withdraw it and the action ceases; introduce an opposite motive of equal weight and all action is suspended, just as a limb is kept motionless by the equal action of antagonist muscles. As far as we can judge, *motives* and *actions* do, in all possible cases, strictly correspond to each other.

It cannot but be allowed by the most strenuous advocates for metaphysical liberty, that motives have *some real influence upon the mind*. It would be too manifest a contradiction to all experience to assert, that all objects are indifferent to us, that there is nothing in any of them that can excite *desire* or *aversion*, or that desire or aversion have no influence upon the *will*, and do not *incline us* to decide on what is proposed to us. Now can it be supposed that the will, whatever it be, should be of such a nature, as both to be properly influenced, or acted upon, by motives, and likewise by something that bears *no sort of relation to motive*, and consequently has a mode of action entirely different from that of motive? This cannot but appear exceedingly improbable, if not impossible.

Every other faculty of the mind has one uniform mode of operation or affection. The *passions* are all excited by the view of proper objects; the *memory* is employed in retaining the ideas of things formerly impressed upon the mind; and the *judgment* in distinguishing the agreement or disagreement of ideas: whereas, according to the modern metaphysical hypothesis, the *will* is of such a nature, as to be influenced sometimes by the passions or motives, and sometimes in a manner in which neither passion nor motive have any thing to do, and of which it is not pretended that any idea can be given, but by saying, that it is *self-determined*,

which, in fact, gives no idea at all, or rather implies an absurdity; viz. that a *determination*, which is an *effect*, takes place without any *cause* at all. For, exclusive of every thing that comes under the denomination of *motive*, there is really nothing at all left that can produce the determination. Let a man use what *words* he pleases, he can have no more *conception* how we can sometimes be determined by motives, and sometimes without any motive, than he can have of a scale being sometimes weighed down by weights, and sometimes by a kind of substance that has no weight at all, which, whatever it be in itself, must, with respect to the scale, be *nothing*.

Another argument for the necessary determination of the will, may be drawn from the analogy that it bears to the *judgment*. It is universally acknowledged, that the judgment is necessarily determined by the perceived agreement or disagreement of ideas. Now the *will* is but a kind of judgment, depending upon the perceived *preferableness* of things proposed to the mind; which apparent preferableness results as necessarily from the perception of the ideas themselves, as that of their agreement or disagreement. In fact, all the difference between judgment and will is, that, in the former case, the determination relates to *opinions*, and in the latter to *actions*. The faculties of the mind, as the ancients have well observed, are only different modes in which the same principle acts, the judgment being the *mind judging*, and the will the *mind willing*; and it would be very extraordinary indeed, if the same mind should not be determined in a *similar manner* in these two very similar cases, and that, if there be a *self-determining will*, there should not be a *self-determining judgment* also. In reality, the latter is not more absurd and contrary to all appearances than the former.

All that is advanced above goes upon the common supposition of the will being a *distinct faculty* of the mind, and not of its being, according to Dr. Hartley's theory, together with all the other faculties, a particular case of the general property of the *association of ideas*, which is necessarily of a mechanical nature, or of its being included in the idea of *desire*, which Dr. Price considers as only a motive with respect to the will.

But what is *desire*, besides a *wish* to obtain some apprehended good? And is not every wish a *volition*? Now, is it possible, that an apprehended good should not be the object of desire, whether controuled by some other desire, &c. or

not? For the same reason that a present good gives present pleasure, an absent good excites *desire*, which, like any other of the passions, is universally allowed to be a perfectly mechanical thing. Since, therefore, desire necessarily implies volition, we have here a clear case of the will being necessarily determined by the circumstances which the mind is in: and if in *one case*, why not in *all others*; especially as, in fact, every volition is nothing more than a desire, viz. a desire to accomplish some *end*, which end may be considered as the *object* of the passion or affection?

That the determinations of what we call the will are, in fact, nothing more than a particular case of the general doctrine of association of ideas, and, therefore, a perfectly mechanical thing, I endeavoured to shew in the *Essay prefixed to my Examination of the Scotch Writers*.* I shall in this place go over the argument again more minutely.

Till the mind has been affected with a sense of pleasure or pain, all objects are alike indifferent to it; but some, in consequence of being always accompanied with a perception of pleasure, become pleasing to us, while others, in consequence of being accompanied with a sense of pain, become displeasing; and to effect this, nothing can be requisite but the association of agreeable sensations and ideas with the one, and of disagreeable ones with the other. Admitting, therefore, the doctrine of association, or that two ideas often occurring together, will afterwards introduce one another, we have all that is requisite to the formation of all our *passions* or *affections*, or of some things being the objects of love, and others of hatred to us.

The manner in which actions, adapted to secure a favourite object, become associated with the idea of it, has been explained at large by Dr. Hartley; and it being universally admitted, that the view of a favourite object (of an apple to a child, for instance) is immediately followed by an attempt to seize it, I shall here take it for granted that there is such a necessary connexion of these ideas and motions; and that, in the same manner, whenever the idea of any favourite object is presented to us, we endeavour to get it into our power.

If the favourite object be within our *immediate reach*, it will, upon these principles, be immediately seized; so that there will be no *interval* between the prospect and the enjoyment, except what was necessarily taken up in the bodily

* See *Introductory Observations*, pp. 15—24.

motions, &c. But this interruption being nothing more than what must always have been experienced, will occasion no pain or uneasiness; for all the parts of the whole process being intimately connected in the mind, the enjoyment will, in fact, commence the moment that the object comes in view. Thus we see that persons exceedingly hungry, are perfectly easy and happy all the time of a necessary and expeditious preparation for dinner, and are never impatient or uneasy, till the delay begins to be more than they had expected. An attentive observer of this process, may call this state of mind that of *certain expectation*, which is always pleasurable, from the perfect association of all the stages of it with the final issue.

Let us now suppose this connected train of ideas to be interrupted. Let an apple, for instance, be shewn to a child, and immediately withdrawn, and thrown quite away; signs of uneasiness will be immediately perceived, the evident consequence of the interruption of a train of associated ideas, which had begun to take place in the mind; and the stronger the association had been, in consequence of its having been frequently repeated, and seldom interrupted before, the greater pain will be felt by the interruption. This painful state of mind may be termed *disappointment* and *despair*.

Let us, in the next place, suppose the object to be known to be capable *in itself* of giving a person great pleasure, but to be entirely out of our reach, as the possession of a great estate to a poor man, or of a kingdom to a private gentleman. Having never had any *enjoyment*, or *hope* of it, this connected train of ideas, leading from the object to the enjoyment (the interruption of which would have given him pain) never took place, and consequently it is regarded with perfect *indifference*.

If we be in circumstances in which the favourite object has been known to be sometimes obtained, and sometimes not, the mind will be held in a kind of *middle state* between certain expectation and despair, which will be called *hope*, if we apprehend the chances to be in favour of our obtaining it, and *fear* if it be more probable that we shall not obtain it. To this state of mind, viz. within the extreme limits of hope and fear, we apply the term *desire*; and it is in this state, which is of some continuance, that we distinctly perceive that affection of the mind to which we give the name of *wishing*, or *willing*.

But what is more properly called a *volition*, is most distinctly perceived when the object does not appear, at first

sight, to be desirable or not, but requires that several circumstances be considered and compared. When a child sees an apple, and immediately catches at it, it is a simple case of the association of ideas; and if no other cases had been known, the term *volition*, or *will*, would hardly have been thought of. But when the mind is kept in suspence, between desiring and not desiring an object, the final *preponderancy of desire* is called a *will*, or *wish to obtain it*, and the *prevalence of aversion* is called a *will*, or *wish to decline it*. This case, however, of a proper *volition* succeeding a deliberation, though more complex, is not less mechanical and dependent upon preceding ideas, and on the state of mind, than the others. It is still nothing more than association of ideas, though the final and prevailing association has been for some time prevented from taking place, by a variety of inferior associations.

The term *will* is as little applicable to determinations and actions *secondarily automatic*, as to those that are *originally* so; of which I shall give an explanation, together with a case.

The first motions of the fingers or legs of a child are called *automatic*, being the immediate and mechanical effect of an external impression, and not arising from any *idea* in the mind. To these motions the term *volition*, or *will*, is certainly not at all applicable.

Afterwards the same motions become associated with ideas, at which time they begin to be called *voluntary*, as when a child reaches out his hand to take an apple. But the motion is called *more perfectly voluntary*, in proportion as the ideas with which it is connected are more numerous and complex, and when other ideas, present to the mind at the same time, have a connexion with opposite motions, so that it shall be some time before the prevailing association takes place.

But when the motion shall be as perfectly associated with this *complex set of ideas*, or *state of mind*, as it was with a *single idea*, so that the one shall immediately follow the other, it is called *secondarily automatic*; and this being as instantaneous as an originally automatic motion, the term *volition* ceases to be applied to it. This is the case when a person walks without attending to the motion of his legs, or plays on a musical instrument without thinking of the particular position of his fingers; each of which motions and positions, having been dependent upon ideas, was before performed with deliberation and an express volition.

As it is evident, from the observation of the fact, that automatic motions pass into voluntary ones, and these again into those that are secondarily automatic, it is evident that they are all equally mechanical; the last process, in particular, being nothing but the second *shortened*, or, which is the same thing, the second or the perfectly voluntary motion being the last, or the secondarily automatic, *extended*. As, therefore, the last is evidently mechanical, no attention of mind being employed in it, the second must be so too, though an express attention be given to it.

In every view of the subject, therefore, whether the will be considered in a popular or a philosophical sense, it appears that its determinations must be directed by certain invariable laws, depending upon the previous state of mind, and the ideas present to it, at the moment of forming any resolution; so that, in no case whatever, could they have been otherwise than they actually were.

SECTION V.

Of the supposed CONSCIOUSNESS OF LIBERTY, and the use of the term AGENT.

THE greatest difficulties in the consideration of the subject of liberty and necessity have arisen from *ambiguities in the use of terms*. To contribute, therefore, all that may be in my power to clear this important subject of the obscurity in which it has been involved, I shall consider the meaning of such terms as appear to me to have had the greatest share in perplexing it; and, in doing this, I shall take an opportunity of replying to what that excellent man, and very able metaphysician, Dr. Price, has advanced upon this subject, in his *Review of the Principles of Morals*, because it appears to me that he has been misled by the use of such words.

“We have, in truth,” says he, “the same constant and necessary consciousness of liberty that we have that we *think, choose, will, or even exist*; and whatever to the contrary any persons may say, it is impossible for them, in earnest, to think they have no *active self-moving powers*, and are not the causes of their own volitions, or not to ascribe to *themselves* what they must be conscious they *think and do*.—A man’s choosing to follow his judgment and desires, or his actually doing what he is inclined to do, is what we mean when we say *motives determine him*. Though at the

same time, it is very plain, that motives can have no concern in effecting his determination, or that there is no *physical connexion* between his judgment and views, and the actions consequent upon them. What would be more absurd than to say, that *our inclinations act upon us or compel us*, that *our desires and fears put us into motion*, or *produce our volitions*, that is, are *agents*; and yet what is more conceivable, than that they may be the *occasions* of our putting ourselves into motion? What sense would there be in saying, that the situation of a body, which may properly be the *occasion* or *account* of its being struck by another body, is the *efficient* of its motion, or its *impeller*?"*

I do not think that this objection to the doctrine of necessity can be expressed in a stronger or better manner, and I have purposely made this quotation, in order to meet the difficulty in its greatest force; being confident that, when the ideas are attended to, it will appear that the writer is, in fact, a Necessarian; and, though unperceived by himself, is, *in words only*, an advocate for the doctrine of metaphysical liberty. In order to avoid all ambiguity myself, I shall describe the *fact*, with respect to human nature, in such a manner as, I think, it shall hardly be possible to be misled by words.

Man is a being of such a make, that when certain things, two kinds of fruit, for instance, are proposed to him, they become the objects of desire, in different degrees, according to his experience of their different qualities, their wholesomeness, the pleasure they give to his taste, and various other considerations. As the *desirableness*, in this case, is complex, and the impression that each circumstance belonging to it makes upon the mind is also various, depending upon the momentary state of it, the presence or absence of other ideas, &c. it is possible that the comparative desirableness of the two fruits may vary much in a short space of time, sometimes the one, and sometimes the other, having the ascendant. But, provided the man were obliged to make a choice at any one moment of time, it will not be denied, that he would certainly choose that which appeared to him, for that moment, the more desirable. If he were under no restraint whatever, it is possible that, on some accounts, he might choose to make no choice at all, and he

* *Review*, p. 302. (*P.*) Ch. viii. Ed. 3, 1787, pp. 306—308, Notes, where Dr. Price refers for "a particular discussion of this question," to his published *Correspondence with Dr. Priestley*, for which see the next volume.

might neglect both the kinds of fruit. But still it would be because that conduct appeared *more desirable* than the other, i. e. *preferable* to it.

This, I will venture to say, is all that a man can possibly be *conscious of*, viz. that nothing hinders his choosing or taking whichever of the fruits appears to him more desirable, or his not making any choice at all, according as the one or the other shall appear to him preferable upon the whole. But there is always some *reason* for any object, or any conduct, appearing desirable or preferable; a reason existing either in a man's own previous *disposition of mind*, or in his *idea of the things* proposed to him. In things of small consequence, or in a very quick succession of ideas, the reason may be forgotten, or even not be explicitly attended to; but it did exist, and actually contributed to make the thing, or the conduct, appear desirable at the time.

As this is all that any man can be conscious of with respect to himself, so it is all that he can observe with respect to others. Agreeably to this, whenever we either reflect upon our own conduct, or speculate concerning that of others, we never fail to consider or ask what could be the *motive* of such or such a choice; always taking for granted, that there must have been some motive or other for it; and we never suppose, in such cases, that any choice could be made without some motive, some *apparent reason* or other.

When it is said, that a man acts from *mere will* (though this is not common language), the word is never used in a strict metaphysical sense, or for will under the influence of no motive; but the meaning is, that, in such a case, a man acts from *wilfulness*, or *obstinacy*, i. e. to resist the controul of others; the motive being to *shew his liberty and independence*, which is far from being a case in which a man is supposed to act without any motive at all.

The *consciousness of freedom*, therefore, is an ambiguous expression, and cannot prove any thing in favour of philosophical or metaphysical liberty; but, when rightly understood, appears to decide in favour of the doctrine of necessity, or the necessary influence of motives to determine the choice.

If what has been stated be the fact, and the whole fact, (and for the truth of the representation I appeal to every man's own feeling and persuasion,) it must be quite arbitrary, and can have no sort of consequence, except what is merely verbal, whether I say, that the *cause* of the choice was the

motive for it (which Dr. Price very properly defines to be the *judgment*, or the *desire*) or the *mind*, in which that choice takes place, that is, *myself*, or some other person; and to this cause it is that we ascribe the *agency*, or *determining power*. In the former case it is the power or force of the motive, and in the latter that of the person. In either case there is a certain *effect*, and the concurrence of two circumstances, viz. a *motive* and a *mind*, to which that motive is presented, or in which it exists, for the *cause* of the effect.

If, according to the description given above, any person will maintain, that, notwithstanding there be a real effect and a sufficient cause, there is no proper *agency* at all, merely because the will is necessarily determined by motives, nothing follows but that, out of complaisance, I may substitute some other word in its place. For if it be asserted, that we have a consciousness of any other kind of agency than has been described, the fact is denied, and I challenge any person to do more than merely assert it. Without any other kind of agency than I have described, the whole business of human life, consisting of a succession of volitions and corresponding actions, goes on, just as we observe it to do, and every just rule of life, respecting the regulation of the will and the conduct has a perfect propriety and use; but no propriety or use at all on any other hypothesis.

However, I have no objection to meet Dr. Price upon his own ground in this instance, viz. appealing to the established *use of words*, with respect to the proper *cause* of volitions and actions. He says, "What would be more absurd than to say, that our *inclinations act upon us*, or *compel us*, that our *desires and fears put us into motion*, or *produce our volitions?*" Absurd as this language appears to Dr. Price, it is, in fact, the common style in which the conduct of men is described, and certainly proves that, if men have any ideas really corresponding to their words, they do consider the motives of men's actions to be, in a proper sense, the *causes* of them, more properly than the mind, which is *determined by the motives*. This also is common popular language, and therefore must have a foundation in the common apprehension of mankind.

Dr. Price says, If *our inclinations compel us* to act, if *our desires and fears put us into motion*, they are the *agents*; whereas they are, properly, only *the occasions of our putting ourselves into motion*. But what can this be, besides a mere

verbal distinction? If it be universally true that the action certainly follows the motive, i. e. the inclination of the mind, and the views of things presented to it, it is all that a Necessarian can wish for; all his *conclusions* follow, and he leaves it to others to ring changes upon words and vary their expressions at pleasure.

Dr. Price, however, is particularly unhappy in what he advances in support of this arbitrary and verbal distinction. "What sense," says he, "would there be in saying that the situation of a body, which may properly be the *occasion* or *account* of its being struck by another body, is the *efficient* of its motion, or its *impeller*?" Whereas according to his own definition of *motive*, it includes both the inclination or *disposition of the mind* and the *views of things presented to it*; and this manifestly takes in both the *impelling body* and the *situation* in which the body impelled by it is found; which, according to his own description, includes the *whole cause* of the impulse, or every thing that contributes to its being impelled. And of these two circumstances, viz. the inclination of the mind and the view of an object, it is the *latter* that is generally, and in a more especial sense, called the *motive*, and compared to the *impeller* (to use Dr. Price's language) while the inclination or disposition of the mind is only considered as a *circumstance* which gives the motive an opportunity of acting upon it, or impelling it, and producing its proper effect. In this I appeal, as before, to the common sense of mankind.

But without regard to popular ideas, which Dr. Price may say are often founded on prejudice and false views of things, I would consider this matter with him as a *mathematician* and a *philosopher*; and I think I can shew him that, according to the mode of reasoning universally received by the most *speculative*, as well as the *vulgar*, we ought to consider *motives* as the proper *causes* of human actions, though it is the *man* that is called the *agent*.

Suppose a philosopher to be entirely ignorant of the constitution of the human mind, but to see, as Dr. Price acknowledges, that men do, in fact, act according to their *affections* and *desires*, i. e. in one word, according to *motives*, would he not, as in a case of the doctrine of chances, immediately infer that there must be a *fixed cause* for this coincidence of motives and actions? Would he not say that, though he could not see into the man, the connexion was *natural* and *necessary*, because *constant*? And since the *motives*, in all cases, *precede* the actions, would he not

naturally, i. e. according to the custom of philosophers in similar cases, say that the motive was the *cause* of the action? And would he not be led by the obvious analogy, to compare the mind to a balance, which was inclined this way or that, according to the motives presented to it?

It makes no difference to say, that the motive does not *immediately* produce the action. It is enough if it necessarily produce the immediate cause of the action, or the cause of the immediate cause, &c.; for example, if the motive excite the *desire*, the desire determine the *will*, and the will produce the *action*. For, contrive as many mediums of this kind as you please, it will still follow, that the action is *ultimately* according to the motive, *flows from it*, or *depends upon it*; and, therefore, in proper philosophical language, the motive ought to be called the *proper cause* of the action. It is as much so, as any thing in nature is the cause of any thing else.

Since the common language of men corresponds to this view of the subject, it is a proof that, in fact, men do see it in this light. And if they do not pursue this doctrine to its distant and necessary consequences, it is for want of sufficient reflection or strength of mind. Indeed, this one simple truth, respecting the necessary influence of motives on the human mind, leads us much beyond the apprehensions of the *vulgar*, but not to any thing that ought to alarm the *philosopher* or the *Christian*. The foundation is a truth grounded on universal experience and observation, and we have no need to fear any fair consequences from it.

SECTION VI.

Whether Liberty be essential to PRACTICAL VIRTUE; and of MORAL and PHYSICAL NECESSITY.

IT is on a mere verbal distinction, also, on which every thing that Dr. Price has advanced, in proof of *liberty being essential to practical virtue*, turns. "Practical virtue," he says, "supposes liberty. A being who cannot *act* at all, most certainly cannot act virtuously or viciously.* As far as it is true of a being, that he acts, so far he must *himself* be the cause of the action, and therefore *not necessarily determined* to act. Determination requires an *efficient cause*."

* This sentence was thus altered in the 3d Edition, 1787: "The *liberty* I here mean, is the same with the power of *acting* and *determining*: and it is self-evident, that where such a power is wanting, there can be no moral capacities."

If this cause be the being himself, I plead for no more. If not, then it is no longer *his* determination, i. e. he is no longer the *determiner*, but the motive, or whatever else any one will say to be the cause of the determination. In short, who must not feel the absurdity of saying, *my volitions are produced by a foreign cause*, i. e. are not mine? *I determine voluntarily and yet necessarily.*”*

Here we have the same arbitrary account of *agency* that has been considered before. For this is the very same, whether the object of choice be of a *moral* nature or not, whether it relates to two different kinds of fruit, or to virtuous or vicious actions. In fact, if a virtuous resolution be formed, the person by whom it is formed is the object of my complacence and reward; and if a vicious choice be made, the person is the object of my abhorrence, and there is the greatest propriety and use in punishing him. And I appeal to the common sense of mankind, if it would make any difference in the case, whether it be said that the proper cause of the action was the *motive*, or the *being himself* actuated by the motive, since both were necessary to the action; and, as will be shewn in a following Section, a person supposed to act without the influence of any motive, would not be considered as the object of praise or blame, reward or punishment at all.

Dr. Price is as unfortunate in his appeal to the common use of words in this case, as on the two former occasions. “Who,” says he, “must not feel the absurdity of saying, *my volitions are produced by a foreign cause?*” meaning a *motive*. Now this is actually the common language of all the world, and nobody feels any absurdity in it; because the consequences he draws from it, by no means follow, viz. that then the volition is not *my own*. It is *my volition*, whatever was the motive that produced it, if it was a volition that took place in *my mind*.

The distinction which this writer makes between a *moral* and a *physical necessity*, is equally useless as that concerning the proper seat of agency or causation. If a man’s mind be so formed, whether it be by *nature* or *art*, that he shall, in all cases, accede to every virtuous proposal, and decline every thing vicious; if the choice be really *his own*, and not that of any other for him, we love and approve his character, and see the greatest propriety in rewarding him. And the case is not at all altered by saying, that the necessity by which

* *Review*, p. 302. (P.) Ch. viii. Ed. 3, pp. 305, 306.

he acts is a *physical* or *moral* one. These are but words. If the choice be certain and truly necessary, it is a proof that, with that disposition of mind, no other choice could be made; and, whatever consequences are drawn from the consideration of the impossibility of any other choice being made, applies to this case, if to any. And yet, in the following extract, Dr. Price considers actions as *truly necessary*, and yet, in the highest degree *virtuous*; and not directly treating of *agency* in this place, and therefore being, perhaps, a little off his guard, it is remarkable, that he expresses himself in a manner by no means suited to his system, but as if the proper cause of the actions was the motives that led to them; though a little before he had represented it as the greatest absurdity to say that a man can determine *voluntarily* and yet *necessarily*.

“By the necessity which is said to diminish the merit of good actions must be meant not a *natural* (which would take away the whole idea of *action* and *will*) but a *moral necessity*, or such as arises from the *influence of motives and affections on the mind*, or that *certainty* of determining one way, which may take place upon supposition of certain views, circumstances and principles of an agent. Now, it is undeniable, that the very greatest *necessity* of this sort is consistent with, nay is implied in, the idea of the most *perfect and meritorious virtue*, and, consequently, can by no means lessen it. The more confidently we may depend on a being's doing an action, when convinced of its propriety, whatever obstacles may lie in his way, that is, the *more efficacious and unconquerable the influence of conscience* is within him, the more amiable we must think him.

“In like manner, the most abandoned and detestable state of wickedness, implies the greatest *necessity of sinning* and the greatest degree of moral impotence. He is the most vicious man who is most enslaved by vicious habits, or in whom appetite has gained so far the ascendant, and the regard to virtue and duty is so far weakened, that we can at any time *with certainty* foretell, that he will do evil, when tempted to it. Let me, therefore, by the way remark, that every idea of liberty must be very erroneous, which makes it inconsistent with the most absolute and complete certainty or *necessity* of the kind I have now taken notice of, or which supposes it to overthrow all steadiness of character and conduct. The greatest influence of motives that can rationally be conceived, or which it is possible for any one to maintain, without running into the palpable and into-

lerable absurdity of making them *physical* *efficient*s and *agents*, can no way affect liberty. And it is surely very surprising, that our *most willing determinations* should be imagined to have most of the appearance of not proceeding from *ourselves*, or that what a man does with the fullest consent of his will, with the least reluctance, and the greatest desire and resolution, he should, for this very reason, be suspected not to do *freely*, i. e. *not to do at all*.”*

As a professed Necessarian, I would not wish to use any other language than this. But it does not appear to me to be the proper language of an advocate for metaphysical liberty, and of that kind of liberty being essential to virtue, to talk of virtue *arising from the influence of motives and affections of mind*, or of the *efficacious and unconquerable influence of conscience*. What evidence is there in all this of a *self-determining power*, acting *independently of all motives*, of all *judgment or desire*, and of the importance of this power to virtue? Here we have the most *perfect virtue* established on principles, on which it must be allowed, that it could never be *proved or made to appear* that any such self-determining power existed.

Dr. Price allows, that were all men perfectly virtuous, or perfectly vicious, all their actions would be *necessary*, and might with certainty be foretold, their inward disposition and situation being together sufficient to account for all their conduct. It is plain, therefore, that when he does not use the language of a *system*, a *full consent of the will*, though produced by the *efficacious and unconquerable influence of conscience*, that is, of *motives*, is sufficient to constitute virtue. Here, therefore, we see the most perfect virtue arising from the most absolute necessity, that is, if there be any meaning in words, virtue, without a possibility of a man's acting otherwise than he does, i. e. without his having a power, *disposed as he was*, to act otherwise. If this be not a just inference, I do not know what is. But how this agrees with what he observes in another place, I do not see. He says, “It has always been the *general*, and it is evidently the *natural* sense of mankind, that they cannot be accountable for what they have no power to avoid. Nothing can be more glaringly absurd, than applauding or reproaching ourselves for what we were no more the causes of than of our own beings, and what it was no more possible for us to pre-

* *Review*, Ch. ix. Ed. 3, pp. 358—360.

vent than the returns of the seasons or the revolutions of the planets.”*

This is so expressed, as if the *disposition of mind*, which is one necessary cause of men’s resolutions and actions, was not at all concerned; but, taking in this circumstance, to which Dr. Price himself allows a *certain and necessary operation*, that which he here calls a *glaring absurdity* is precisely his own principle, unless he will say, that a man is not accountable for the most *abandoned and detestable wickedness*, which, he expressly says, implies the greatest *necessity of sinning*. In fact, it is only where the necessity of sinning arises from some *other cause* than a *man’s own disposition of mind*, that we ever say there is any impropriety in punishing a man for his conduct. If the impossibility of acting well has arisen from a *bad disposition or habit*, its having been impossible, *with that disposition or habit*, to act virtuously, is never any reason for our forbearing punishment: because we know that punishment is proper to correct that disposition and that habit, and that we thereby both reform the sinner and warn others, which are all the just ends of punishment; every thing else deserving no other name than *vengeance*, and being manifestly absurd, because answering no good purpose. At the same time, punishment, used with this view, will be administered with the utmost tenderness and compassion.

I would farther take the liberty to observe, that Dr. Price’s opinion of *liberty being essential to virtue*, has led him to adopt an idea of it, that is inconsistent with what he himself has acknowledged, concerning the most perfect virtue arising from the *influence of motives and affections of mind*. “Instinctive benevolence,” he says, “is no principle of virtue, nor are any actions, flowing merely from it, virtuous. As far as this influences, so far something else than *reason* and *goodness* influences, and so much, I think, is to be subtracted from the moral worth of any action or character. This observation agrees perfectly with the common sentiments and determinations of mankind.” And again, “The conclusion I would establish is, that the virtue of an agent is always *less* in proportion to the degree in which *natural temper* and *propensities* fall in with his actions, *instinctive principles* operate, and *rational reflection on what is right* to be done is wanting.” †

* *Review*, p. 303. (P.) Ch. viii. Ed. 3, p. 307.

Ibid. pp. 318, 324. (P.) Ch. viii. Ed. 3, pp. 323, 324, 330, 331.

Now what is the difference between *affections of mind*, from which, he says, arises the most perfect and meritorious virtue, and *instinctive benevolence, natural temper and propensity*? For my own part, I see no difference, but that the former comprehends the latter. For what is *instinctive benevolence, or natural temper and propensity*, but *particular affections of mind*? Also the language of the former paragraph, and not of this, which is the very reverse of it, is, I am confident, agreeable to the common sentiments and determinations of mankind.

Mankind, in general, do not refine so much as Dr. Price. Whatever it is *within a man* that leads him to virtue, and that will certainly and necessarily incline him to act right, or to do what they approve, they deem to be a *virtuous principle*, to be the *foundation of merit*, and to *entitle to reward*. If they allow a man more merit for having *acquired* this disposition or propensity, than upon the supposition of his having been *born* with it, it is because they suppose some *prior disposition* to acquire it, and so strong as to have overcome considerable obstacles to the acquiring of it. But this is only carrying the principle of virtue, the foundation of merit and of a title to reward, a little higher. The *nature* of it is still the very same. Men are charmed with a virtuous conduct, with the principle that was the cause of it, with the principle that was the cause of that principle, and so on, as far as you please to go.

The only reason why we are less struck with a virtuous action, proceeding from what is called *natural temper*, is because we consider it as a *fickle principle*, on which we can have no sufficient dependence for the future. But let that principle be supposed to be really *fixed* and *stable*, and wherein does it differ from that disposition of mind which is the result of the greatest labour and attention?

If two men be in all respects *the same inwardly*, if they *feel* and *act* precisely in the same manner, upon all occasions; how, in the sight of God or man, can there be more virtue in the *present conduct* of the one than in that of the other, whatever difference there may *have been* with respect to the *acquisition* of that temper? Every thing that is so confirmed as to become *habitual*, operates exactly like what is called *instinct* (for my own part, I believe them to be, in all cases, the very same thing); but does a course of virtue become less virtuous, in consequence of being *persisted in*, and, consequently, being a more *easy* and *mechanical thing*? Yet this is the natural conclusion from Dr. Price's prin-

inciples. Velleius Paterculus, as is observed by Mr. Hobbes, praises Cato because "he was good *by nature, et quia aliter esse non potuit.*"*

These maxims take away all virtue, goodness and merit, from the *greatest and best of all Beings*, and likewise make it absurd to *pray for virtue*, since nothing that is *communicated* can be entitled to that appellation. And surely the common ideas and practices of mankind, at least of Christians, reprobate the notion. In fact, it is mere *Heathen Stoicism*, which allows men to pray for *external things*, but admonishes them that, as for *virtue*, it is our own, and must arise from *within ourselves*, if we have it at all. And yet Dr. Price, I know, prays, like other Christians, and with the *humility* of a Necessarian, who considers every thing belonging to him, *temper, will and conduct*, as the gift of God, and himself as nothing more than the *instrument* (though at the same time the *object*) of his gracious designs. And as I am not alarmed at the *moral influence* of *his* opinions, I hope he will not be alarmed at that of *mine*.

I wish Dr. Price would consider for a few minutes (and a very few, I should think, would suffice) what this *self-determining power*, of which he makes so great a boast, can be. By his own confession it is not *judgment*, it is not *conscience*, it is not *affection*, it is not *desire*, it is not *hope* or *fear*, nor consequently any of the *passions*. It must, therefore, be *mere will*, under no direction or guidance, because under no *influence* whatever; and of what *value* or *use* can such a principle be? Supposing the thing possible (as I deem it to be absolutely impossible that the will should act without judgment, conscience, affection, or any other motive), the determination, though dignified with the appellation of *self*, cannot be any thing but a mere *random decision*, which may be good or bad, favourable or unfavourable to us, like the chance of a die, and cannot possibly be of a nature to be entitled to praise or blame, merit or demerit, reward or punishment. I cannot, therefore, persuade myself, that a wise and benevolent author would have given man a power so entirely *insignificant to every valuable purpose*, and of such a nature too, that *himself*, that *wisdom* and *power in the abstract*, could not controul it.

I also wish Dr. Price would consider in what sense a determination of his mind can be said to be more *his own*, on account of its not having been produced by previous *motives*,

* Works, p. 476. (P.) *Of Liberty, &c. Triplos.* p. 291.

but in a manner independent of all motives, or reasons, for choice. For my part, I own that, supposing the thing to be *possible*, as I conceive it to be naturally impossible, I cannot see either any thing to *boast* of in such a determination, or any foundation for *property* in it. If nothing in the preceding state of his mind (which would come under the description of *motive*) contributed to it, how did *he* contribute to it; and, therefore, in what sense can he call it *his*? If he reject a determination produced by motives, because motives are *no part of himself*, he must likewise give up all claim to a determination produced without motives, because that also would be produced without the help of any thing belonging to himself. If the former have a *foreign cause*, and therefore he cannot claim it, the latter has *no cause at all*, and is, therefore, what neither himself nor any other person can claim.

But the thing itself is absolutely chimerical; a power of determining *without motive*, or a proper *self-determining* power, without any regard to judgment, conscience, or affection, is impossible. It is to suppose an *effect* without a *cause*. The supposition is contrary to all experience and observation: and if we only admit this one undeniable *fact*, viz. that the will cannot properly determine *itself*, but is always determined by *motives*, that is, by the present disposition of the mind, and the views of things presented to it, it cannot be any other than a *necessary* determination, subject to laws as strict and invariable as those of mechanics. There cannot possibly be any medium in the case. If we always choose that object, or that action, which, *on whatever account*, appears *preferable* at the moment of making the choice, it will always be determined by some *invariable rule*, depending upon the *state of the mind*, and the *ideas present to it*; and it will never be equally in our power to choose two things, when all the previous circumstances are the very same.

SECTION VII.

Of the Propriety of REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS, and the Foundation of Praise and Blame, on the Scheme of Necessity.

THE objection to the doctrine of necessity that has weighed the most with those who have considered the subject, is that, if men's determinations and actions flow necessarily from the previous state of their minds, and the motives or in-

fluences to which they are exposed, the idea of *responsibility* or *accountableness* vanishes, and there can be no propriety or use of *rewards* or *punishments*.

Now I hope to make it appear that when the case is rightly understood, there can be no use or propriety of rewards or punishments on any other scheme, but the greatest possible upon this.

In order to make this clearly apprehended, let us suppose two minds constructed, as I may say, upon the principles of the two opposite schemes of *necessity* and *liberty*, all the determinations of the one being invariably directed by its previous dispositions, and the motives presented to it, while the other shall have a power of determining, in all cases, in a manner independent of any such previous disposition or motives; which is precisely the difference between the systems of necessity and liberty, philosophically and strictly defined. To avoid circumlocution, let us call the former A and the latter B. I will farther suppose myself to be a father, and these two my children; and, knowing their inward make and constitution, let us consider how I should treat them.

My object is to make them virtuous and happy. All my precepts, and the whole of my discipline, are directed to that end. For the use of discipline is by the hope of something which the subjects of it know to be good, or the fear of something which they know to be evil, to engage them to act in such a manner as the person who has the conduct of that discipline well knows to be for their good *ultimately*, though they cannot see it. In other words, I must make use of *present good* and *present evil* in order to secure their *future* and *greatest good*; the former being within the apprehension of my children, and the latter lying beyond it, and being known to myself only. This I take to be precisely the nature of *discipline*, the person who conducts it being supposed to have more knowledge, experience and judgment, than those who are subject to it.

Now, since motives have a certain and necessary influence on the mind of A, I know that the prospect of good will certainly incline him to do what I recommend to him, and the fear of evil will deter him from any thing that I wish to dissuade him from; and therefore I bring him under the course of discipline above described, with the greatest hope of success. Other influences, indeed, to which he may be exposed, and that I am not aware of, may counteract my views, and thereby my object *may* be frustrated; but, not-

withstanding this, my discipline will, likewise, have its *certain* and *necessary effect*, counteracting in part, at least, all foreign and unfavourable influence, and therefore cannot be wholly lost upon him. Every promise and every threatening, every reward and every punishment, judiciously administered, works to my end. If this discipline be sufficient to overcome any foreign influence, I engage my son in a *train of proper actions*, which, by means of the *mechanical structure of his mind*, will, at length, form a stable *habit*, which insures my success.

But in my son B, I have to do with a creature of quite another make; motives have no necessary or certain influence upon his determinations, and in all cases, where the principle of *freedom from the certain influence of motives* takes place, it is exactly an equal chance whether my promises or threatenings, my rewards or punishments, determine his actions or not. The *self-determining power* is not at all of the nature of any mechanical influence, that may be counteracted by influences equally mechanical, but is a thing with respect to which I can make no sort of calculation, and against which I can make no provision. Even the longest continued series of proper actions will form no *habit* that can be depended upon, and, therefore, after all my labour and anxiety, my object is quite precarious and uncertain.

If we suppose that B is *in some degree* determined by motives, in that very degree, and no other, is he a proper subject of discipline; and he can never become *wholly so*, till his self-determining power be entirely discharged, and he comes to be the same kind of being with A, on whom motives of all kinds have a certain and necessary influence. Had I the making of my own children, they should certainly be all constituted like A, and none of them like B.

Besides, the discipline of A will have a suitable influence on all that are constituted like him, so that *for their sakes*, as well as on the account of A himself, I ought to bring him under this salutary treatment. And thus all the ends of discipline are answered, and rewards and punishments have the greatest *propriety*, because they have the fullest *effect*, upon the doctrine of necessity; whereas it is evident they are absolutely lost, having no effect whatever, upon the opposite scheme.

This appears to me to be the fairest and the most unexceptionable view of the subject; by which it appears, that the Divine Being, the father of us all, in order to make us

the proper subjects of discipline, and thereby secure our greatest happiness (which is all that, philosophically speaking, is really meant by making us *accountable creatures*), must constitute us in such a manner, as that motives shall have a certain and necessary influence upon our minds, and must not leave us at liberty to be influenced by them, or not, at our arbitrary pleasure.

I do not think it is properly *necessary* to add any thing more on this subject; but, because this question has (perhaps more than any other in the whole compass of philosophical discussion) been rendered obscure by an unfair and improper manner of stating, I shall give another view of it; by which, I hope, it will appear, that there is all the foundation that we can wish, for a proper *accountableness*, and for *praise* and *blame*, upon the doctrine of necessity, and not so much as a shadow of any real foundation for them upon any other supposition, the boasted advantage of the doctrine of *liberty* belonging in fact, to the doctrine of *necessity* only; and I am confident that my ideas on this subject are, at the same time, those of the *vulgar*, and agreeable to *sound philosophy*, while those of the metaphysicians, who have adopted a contrary opinion, are founded on a mere *fallacy*.

When I, or the world at large *praise* my son A, we tell him we admire his *excellent disposition*, in consequence of which all good motives have a certain and never-failing influence upon his mind, always determining his choice to what is virtuous and honourable, and that his conduct is not directed either by mere *will*, or the *authority of any other person*, but proceeds from his own virtuous disposition only, and that his good habits are so confirmed, that neither promises nor threatenings are able to draw him aside from his duty.

In this representation I am confident that I keep back nothing that is essential. The ideas of mankind in general never go beyond this, when they praise any person, nor, philosophically speaking, *ought* they to do it. Praise that is founded on any other principles is really *absurd*, and, if it was understood by the vulgar, would be reprobated by them, as entirely repugnant to their conceptions of it. This will clearly appear by considering the case of my son B.

We have supposed that A has done a virtuous action, and has been *commended*, because it proceeded from the *bent of his mind to virtue*, so that whenever proper circumstances occurred, he *necessarily* did what we wished him to

have done. Let us now suppose that B does the very same thing; but let it be fully understood, that the *cause* of his right determination was not any bias or *disposition of mind* in favour of virtue, or because a good *motive* influenced him to do it; but that his determination was produced by something within him (call it by what name you please) of a quite *different nature*, with respect to which motives of any kind have no sort of influence or effect, a mere *arbitrary pleasure*, without any reason whatever, (for a *reason* is a *motive*.) and I apprehend he would no more be thought a proper subject of praise, notwithstanding he should do what was *right in itself*, than the dice which, by a fortunate throw, should give a man an estate. It is true, the action was right, but there was not the *proper principle and motive*, which are the only just foundations of praise.

In short, where the proper *influence of motives* ceases, the proper foundation of praise and blame disappears with it; and a *self-determining power*, supposed to act in a manner independent of motive, and even contrary to every thing that comes under that description, is a thing quite foreign to every idea that bears the least relation to praise or blame. A good action produced in this manner, is no indication of a *good disposition of mind*, inclined to yield to the influence of good impressions, and, therefore, is nothing on which I can depend for the future. Even a series of good actions, produced in this manner, gives no security for a proper conduct in future instances, because such actions can form no *habit*, i. e. *no necessary tendency to a particular conduct*; but every thing is liable to be reversed by this self-determining principle, which can turn a deaf ear to all motives and all reasons.

So difficult is it to get out of the road of common sense, that even philosophical persons will farther deceive themselves, by saying, that the self-determining power is influenced by motives, and does not determine *absolutely at random*. But if this be a *proper influence*, there can be no proper self-determining power, except by self-determination be understood what the world in general always does understand by it, viz. a power of determination not subject to the controul of *others*, but produced by causes operating within a man's self only. If, when the *state of mind*, and every *idea* present to it, are precisely the same, there be a power of forming either of two contrary resolutions (which is the case, if *necessary determination* be excluded), it is plain that the proper *cause* of the resolution, that which actually

decided in the case, could not be any thing either in the *state of the mind* itself, or any *idea* present to it, (because, notwithstanding these circumstances, there is a power of determining either agreeable, or contrary to their natural influence,) and, therefore, could not be any thing to which mankind have ever attributed either praise or blame. It is never the *action*, but the *disposition of mind*, and the *motive*, that makes any thing *meritorious*; and here the determination was not caused either by the state of mind, or any motive whatever.

I will venture to say that, let this case be stated with ever so much address and refinement, it will still be found that there cannot be any just foundation for praise, but upon a scheme which supposes the mind to be so disposed, as that just views of things will necessarily determine the will to right action. The two schemes of liberty and necessity admit of no medium between them. But if any kind of medium be supposed, in which something shall be allowed to the influence of *motive*, and something to the *self-determining power*, acting independently of motive, still all the *virtue* and *merit*, all the foundation for *praise*, takes place just so far as necessity takes place, and fails just so far as this imaginary *liberty of choice*, acting independently of motives, interferes to obstruct it.

It has been seen that *punishment* would have no propriety or use upon the doctrine of philosophical liberty; *blame* also, upon the same scheme, would be equally absurd and ill-founded. If my child A acts wrong, I tell him that I am exceedingly displeased, because he has shewn a *disposition of mind*, on which motives to virtue have no sufficient influence; that he appears to have such a *propensity to vicious indulgences*, that I am afraid he is irreclaimable, and that his utter ruin will be the consequence of it. This is the proper language of blame, and, upon a mind constituted like that of A, may have a good effect, as well as the discipline of punishment.

But if the constitution of the mind of B be attended to, it will be seen that blame is equally absurd, as punishment is unavailing. If he has acted the same part that A has done, the language which I addressed to A will not apply to him. It is true, that he has done what is wrong, and it must have bad consequences; but it was not from any *bad disposition of mind*, that made him subject to be influenced by bad impressions. No, his determination had a cause of quite *another nature*. It was a choice directed by *no bad*

motive whatever, but a mere *will*, acting independently of any motive, and which, though it has been on the side of vice to-day, may be on the side of virtue to-morrow. My blame or reproaches, therefore, being ill-founded, and incapable of having any effect, it is my wisdom to withhold them, and wait the uncertain issue with patience.

If this be not a just, impartial and philosophical state of this case, I do not know what is so; and by this means it appears, that the doctrine of the *necessary influence of motives* upon the mind of man, makes him the proper subject of discipline, reward and punishment, praise and blame, both in the common and philosophical use of the words; and the doctrine of *self-determination*, independent of the influence of motives, entirely disqualifies a man from being the proper subject of them.

It is said, that the nature of *remorse* implies a self-determining power. I answer, that this is no other than the same deception that I have explained before. For blaming *ourselves*, or blaming *another*, are things of the very same nature, and depend upon the same principles. The sense of *self-reproach* and *shame*, is excited by our finding that we have a disposition of mind leading to vice, and on which motives to virtue, in particular cases, have had no influence.

If I blame myself for any thing else, viz. for not exerting a *self-determining power*, by which I may suppose that I might have acted otherwise, independently of the previous disposition of mind, and the motives then present to it, the idea is not at all adapted to excite any proper remorse. For it has been shewn to afford no foundation for blame whatever, and, in the nature of things, cannot possibly do it. For on this supposition there is nothing *vicious* or blame-worthy that is the proper *cause* of the action, but something that bears *no sort of relation to morality*. Morals depend upon *inward dispositions of mind*, and *good or bad habits*; but this *self-determination* is a thing capable of counteracting all dispositions, and all habits, and not by means of *contrary dispositions* and *contrary habits*, but by a *power of quite another nature*, to which the properties of dispositions and habits, such as approbation or disapprobation, in a moral sense, or praise or blame, cannot possibly belong.

A man, indeed, when he reproaches himself for any *particular action* in his past conduct, may fancy that, if he was in the same situation again, he would have acted differently. But this is a mere *deception*; and, if he examines himself *strictly*, and takes in all circumstances, he may be

satisfied that, with the *same inward disposition of mind*, and with precisely *the same views of things* that he had then, and exclusive of all others that he has acquired by reflection *since*, he could not have acted otherwise than he did.

But will this conviction at all lessen his sense of *grief* or *shame*? On the contrary, it will only more fully satisfy him, that his dispositions and habit of mind, *at that time* were so bad, that the vicious action was *unavoidable*. And the sense he now has of this deplorable state of his mind, and the alarming tendency of it, will operate so as to make him act better, and become better disposed for the future; so that, upon another similar occasion, he would not do what he did before. And is not this all the benefit that a man can possibly derive from a sense of shame and self-reproach, commonly called remorse of conscience? Thus, I hope, I have made good what I advanced on this subject, in my *Examination of the Writings of Drs. Reid, Beattie, and Oswald*.*

As different representations of the same thing, and different views of it, affect the mind differently, and a view that does not at all strike one person may strike another, I shall conclude this Section with some just observations of Mr. Hume, and others of Mr. Search and Lord Kames, relating to the subject of it.

“Actions,” says Mr. Hume, “are, by their very nature, temporary and perishing; and where they proceed not from some *cause* in the *character* and *disposition* of the person who performed them, they can neither redound to his honour, if good, nor infamy, if evil. The *actions* themselves may be blameable, they may be contrary to the rules of morality and religion, but the person is not responsible for them. And as they proceeded from nothing in him that is *durable* and *constant*, and leave nothing of that nature behind them, it is impossible he can, on that account, become the object of punishment or vengeance. According to the principle, therefore, which denies *necessity*, and consequently *causes*, a man is as pure and untainted after having committed the most horrid crime, as at the first moment of his birth; nor is his *character* any way concerned in his *actions*, since they are not derived from it, and the wickedness of the one can never be used as a proof of the depravity of the other.” †

* See the paragraph on *Self-determining Power*, p. 93.

† Philosophical Essays, p. 155. (P.) 1750, Ess. viii. Pt. 2.

“Men are not blamed,” he says, “for such actions as they perform *ignorantly*, and *casually*, whatever may be the consequences. Why? but because the principles of these actions are only *momentary*, and terminate in them alone. Men are less blamed for such evil actions as they perform *hastily* and *unpremeditatedly*, than for such as proceed from *thought* and *deliberation*. For what reason? but because a hasty temper, though a constant cause or principle in the mind, operates only by *intervals*, and infects not the *whole character*.” *

“Freedom of action,” says Mr. Search, “and so much understanding as may make the party sensible for what the punishment was inflicted, are always esteemed necessary requisites to render him obnoxious thereto; because punishment operating upon the *imagination*, and through that upon the *will*, where either of these two channels are wanting, becomes useless, and consequently unjust. Therefore, sly revenges, which may be mistaken for accidents, and nobody can know they were the effect of resentment, though sometimes practised by spiteful persons, have never been holden warrantable by the judicious. Nor will a righteous man punish where the transgressor had not liberty of choice, nor where the reason of his punishing cannot be understood.” †

“In none of the works of Providence,” says Lord Kames, “as far as we can penetrate, is there displayed a deeper reach of art and wisdom, than in the laws of action peculiar to man, as a thinking and rational being. Were he let loose, to act in contradiction to motives, there would be no place for prudence, foresight, nor for adjusting means to an end. It could not be foreseen by others what a man would do the next hour, nay, it could not be foreseen even by himself. Man would not be capable of rewards and punishments, he would not be fitted either for divine or for human govern-

* Phil. Ess. p. 156. (P.) 1750, Ess. viii. Pt. 2.

† “The Light of Nature pursued,” 1768, V. p. 233. (P.) The author, under the name of *Edward Search*, was Abraham Tucker, Esq. a learned country gentleman of Surry, who had been bred to the law. Mr. Lindsey, who appears to have known Mr. Tucker well, describes the grand purpose of this work to have been the “inculcating that glorious truth, that all things flow from and are constituted by the will and appointment, and are under the absolute, unerring direction of a Being of boundless wisdom, power and goodness, the benevolent Parent of the universe, and are tending to, and will not fail of terminating in the virtue and final endless happiness of all his rational offspring.” Mr. Tucker was an *Unitarian*, but “became an advocate for retaining the *Trinitarian* forms in the service of the church—by labouring all he could to put an *Unitarian* sense upon them.” He died in 1776. See Lindsey’s *Hist. View*, 1788, pp. 406, 407.

ment, he would be a creature that has no resemblance to the human race. But man is not let loose : for though he is at liberty to act according to his own will, yet his will is regulated by desire, and desire by what pleases and displeases. This connexion preserves uniformity of conduct, and confines human actions within the great chain of causes and effects. By this admirable system, liberty and necessity, seemingly incompatible, are made perfectly concordant, fitting us for society and for government, both human and divine.*

“ How hard is the lot of the human species to be thus tied down and fixed by motives, subjected by a necessary law to the choice of evil, if evil happen to be the prevailing motive, or if it mislead us, under the form of our greatest interest or good ! How happy to have had a free independent power of acting contrary to motives, when the prevailing motive hath a bad tendency ! By this power we might have pushed our way to virtue and happiness, whatever motives were suggested by vice and folly to draw us back ; or we might by arbitrary will have refrained from acting the bad part, though all the power of motives concurred to urge us on. So far well ; but let us see whither this will carry us. This arbitrary power being once supposed, may it not be exerted against good motives as well as against bad ones ? If it do us good by accident, in restraining us from vice, may it not do us ill by accident, in restraining us from virtue ? And so shall we not be thrown loose altogether ? At this rate no man could be depended upon. Promises, oaths, vows, would be vain : for nothing can ever bind or fix a man who is influenced by no motive. The distinction of characters would be at an end : for a person cannot have a character, who hath no fixed or uniform principle of action. Nay, moral virtue itself, and all the force of law, rule and obligation, would, upon this hypothesis, be nothing. For no creature can be the subject of rational or moral government, whose actions, by the constitution of its nature, are independent of motives, whose will is capricious and arbitrary. To exhort, to instruct, to promise, to threaten, would be to no purpose. In short, such a creature, if such could exist, would be a most *bizarre* and unaccountable being, a mere absurdity in nature, whose existence could serve no end. Were we so constituted as always to be determined by the moral sense, even against the strongest counter-motives,

* Sketches on Man, II. p. 300. (P.) 1807, III. pp. 184, 185.

this would be consistent with human nature; because it would preserve entire the connexion that, by an unalterable law, is established betwixt the will and the prevailing motive. But to break this connexion altogether, to introduce an unbounded arbitrary liberty, in opposition to which motives should not have influence, would be, instead of amending, to deform and unhinge the human constitution. No reason have we, therefore, to regret that we find the will necessarily subjected to motives. The truth of this general position must coincide with our wish, unless we would rather have man to be a whimsical and ridiculous, than a rational and moral being.”*

SECTION VIII.

How far Men's GENERAL CONDUCT will be influenced by the Belief of the Doctrine of Necessity.

It is imagined by some, that the apprehension of all the actions of men depending upon motives which necessarily influence their determinations, so that no action or event could possibly be otherwise than it *has been, is, or is to be*, would make men indifferent with respect to their conduct, or to what befalls them in life. I answer, so it would, if their *own actions* and *determinations* were not necessary links in this chain of causes and events, and if their good or bad success did not, in the strictest sense of the word, *depend upon themselves*.

But this being the case, the apprehension that their endeavours to promote their own happiness will have a certain and necessary effect, and that no well-judged effort of theirs will be lost, instead of disposing them to remit their labour, will encourage them to exert themselves with redoubled vigour; and the *desire of happiness* cannot but be allowed to have the same influence upon all systems.

With respect to the temper and disposition of mind, considered in a *moral respect*, a man has, certainly, more encouragement to take pains to improve it, when he is sensible that, according to the settled constitution and established laws of nature, it depends *entirely upon himself* whether it be improved or not; that his negligence will be followed by necessary and certain ruin, whereas his circum-

* *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*, p. 177. (P.) Ed. 3, 1779, pp. 169—171. By Lord Kames. See p. 96. *Note*.

spection, resolution and perseverance, will be attended with as certain and necessary success ; things *foreign to himself* not interfering here, as they sometimes do in the conduct of *civil affairs*, to disappoint the best concerted schemes.

All this may, perhaps, be made more intelligible by an example. I shall therefore endeavour to give one. No man entertains a doubt, but that every thing relating to *vegetation* is subject to the *established laws of nature* ; and supposing this to be the case, with respect to the human mind and its operations, a Being of perfect intelligence and foresight will know how we shall be provided for the next or any future year ; so that, in fact, our provision for the next year, and all the events of it, are absolutely fixed, and nothing can interfere to make it otherwise than it is to be. But will any farmer, believing this ever so firmly, neglect on this account to sow his fields, and content himself with saying, “ God knows how I shall be provided for the next year ; I cannot change his decree, and let his will be done” ? We see, in fact, that such a persuasion never operates in this manner ; because, though the chain of events is necessary, our *own determinations* and *actions* are necessary links of that chain. This gives the farmer the fullest assurance that, if it be decreed for him to starve, it is likewise decreed for him to neglect to sow his fields ; but if he *do* sow his fields, which depends entirely upon himself, that then, since the laws of nature are invariable, it will be evident that no such unfavourable decree had gone forth.

In fact, the system of necessity makes every man the *maker of his own fortune*, in a stricter sense than any other system whatever ; and the belief of this gives a man greater confidence of success in all his labours, since none of them can be in vain. On the contrary, wherever this chain of the necessary connexion of causes and effects is broken there *uncertainty* enters, and the idea of this is always accompanied with *indifference* or *despair*.

As our persuasion concerning the doctrine of necessity cannot make any change in our conduct with respect to *men*, whom we know we must gain to our interest by proper conduct and address, so neither can it affect our behaviour with respect to God ; the mode and object of our address to both being exactly similar.

Indeed, it is impossible to suppose there can be any difficulty attending the subject of *prayer*, or any branch of it,

upon the supposition of the doctrine of necessity, that does not equally affect it, on the general supposition of God's knowing all our wants, and being disposed to supply them, as far as it is proper that he should do it. And, with respect to this, it is sufficient to say, that the whole of our intercourse with the Deity is founded upon the idea of his condescending, for our good, to be considered by us in the familiar light of a *parent* or *governor*. And having, for our good, assumed these characters, he will certainly *realize* them, by requiring of us such behaviour as wise parents require of their children, and wise governors of their subjects. Now, wise parents often justly refuse to supply the wants of their children, till they solicit for it with a proper temper of mind. But this subject I have considered more largely, in my *Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion*.* I shall, therefore, in this place, only present my reader with a different view that Mr. Hobbes has given of it, on the supposition of prayer not being the *cause*, or the proper *means*, of procuring any favour from God; his conduct towards us being determined on other accounts.

“Thanksgiving,” says he, “is no cause of the blessing past, and that which is past is *sure* and *necessary*; yet even amongst men, thanks is in use, as an acknowledgment of the benefit past, though we should expect no new benefit for our gratitude; and prayer to God Almighty is but thanksgiving for God's blessings in general; and though it precede the particular thing we ask, yet it is not a *cause*, or *means* of it, but a signification that we expect nothing but from God, in such manner as he, not as we, will.” †

Upon the whole, I am satisfied, that it can only be in consequence of some gross *mis-stating of the case*, if the belief of the doctrine of necessity appear to have, in any respect, an unfavourable influence upon the mind; and, in a variety of respects, it cannot but be apparent, that it must have the happiest and noblest effects imaginable. But I purposely confine myself to what has been thought most *unpromising* in the system that I have adopted, and what is generally esteemed to be the *dark* and *dangerous side* of the principle. And, if even this view of it, when it is considered fairly and impartially, be really favourable to it, what may we not expect from other views of this doctrine, which all the world must allow to be highly advantageous?

* See Vol. II. pp. 56, 57.

† Works, p. 477. (P.) *Of Liberty, &c. Tripos.* p. 293.

SECTION IX.

Of the Moral Influence of the Doctrine of Necessity.

It has been said, that the principles on which the doctrine of necessity is founded, are equally those of the vulgar, and of true philosophy. Mankind, in general, have no idea of volition, but as preceded and directed by motives; and if they were told of any determination of the mind, not produced by motives, good or bad, they would never be brought to think there could be any thing *moral*, any thing *virtuous* or *vicious* in it, any thing that could be the proper object of *praise* or *blame*, *reward* or *punishment*.

All the idea that the generality of mankind have of liberty, is perfectly consistent with, and, in fact, flows from, the principles of moral necessity; for they mean no more by it, than a freedom from the controul of others, and that their volitions are determined only by their own views of things, and influenced or guided by motives operating within themselves. Beyond this their ideas do not go, nor does the business of human life require that they should. They have, therefore, no apprehension of the real and unavoidable consequences of the principles they every day act upon. They would even be alarmed and staggered, if those consequences were pointed out to them; and, perhaps, from their unwillingness to admit the consequences, would be tempted to disguise their daily feelings and experience, imagining them to be different from what they really are. This, I doubt not, is the real source of all the objections that have been made to the doctrine of necessity.

Mankind, in general, have also no difficulty in admitting other principles, that are not deduced from their own experience, which yet are equally incompatible with the doctrine of metaphysical liberty. They would not hesitate, for example, to admit, that future events, depending upon human resolutions, may be fore-known and foretold by a being of competent knowledge, and that there can be no effect without a cause. But when they are told that, in consequence of these concessions, they must admit, that nothing *could have been* otherwise than *it has been*, that every thing comes to pass in consequence of an established constitution of things, a constitution established by the author of nature, and, therefore, that God is to be considered as the proper

and sole cause of all things, good and evil, natural and moral, they are staggered, and withhold their assent.

From this place, therefore, the philosopher must be content to proceed by himself. But we shall see that his more comprehensive views of the system of nature are not less, but much more favourable to his improvement in virtue and happiness, than the more limited views of the bulk of mankind. They look no farther for the causes of men's actions than to *men*; whereas the philosopher considers them as necessary instruments in the hands of the first cause. Let us now fairly trace the consequences of this more enlarged and juster view of things.

But, previous to this, I would observe, that the practical use of these philosophical views is confined to a man's *cooler moments*, when the mind is not under the influence of any violent emotion or passion. For, since the mind of a philosopher is formed, and the associations by which it is influenced are fixed, exactly like those of other men, he will not be able, in the general tumult and hurry of life, to feel, think, or act, in a manner different from other men. A provocation will fix his resentment upon the person from whom it immediately proceeds; and a grateful or kind action will, in like manner, direct his love and gratitude to the person from whom it immediately comes. His own actions also, will be considered with the same mechanical feelings of *self-applause* or *remorse*, as if he had not been a philosopher.

What we are now to consider, therefore, are the feelings of the philosopher *retired from the world*, under the influence of no violent emotion, and therefore contemplating nothing very recent. Or, allowing that his philosophical views should gradually modify his feelings (as undoubtedly they will do, in proportion as they are attended to, and have an opportunity of impressing the mind), let us consider what alteration in a man's sentiments and conduct they will tend to produce; whether the change will be favourable or unfavourable, whether his philosophy will make him the better or the worse man, the better or the worse citizen.

Now, in my opinion, his philosophical views will give an elevation and force to his piety, and to virtue in all its branches, that could not have been acquired in any other way. And this may be perceived in those persons whose general views of things have approached the nearest to those that are truly philosophical, by which I mean those who, from a *principle of religion*, have ascribed more to God, and less to man, than

other persons; which appears to me to have been the case very remarkably with the sacred writers, and with other persons who have imbibed their devotional spirit from an intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures.

That the spirit of *devotion* in general must be greatly promoted by the persuasion that God is the proper and sole cause of all things, needs no arguing. Upon this scheme we see God in every thing, and may be said to see every thing in God; because we continually view every thing as in connexion with him, the author of it. By this means the idea of God will become associated with every other idea, heightening all our pleasures, and diminishing, nay, absorbing and annihilating, all our pains. Also the influence of this constant and lively sense of the Divine presence and energy, attending to, disposing and over-ruling all things, cannot but, in a variety of other respects, be most favourable and happy. It must produce the deepest *humility*, the most entire *resignation* to the will of God, and the most unreserved *confidence* in his goodness and providential care.

With this disposition of mind towards God, it will not be possible to bear ill-will to any of our brethren, his offspring, or to indulge any passion or habit that is forbidden by God. In short, this one leading principle of devotion cannot fail to regulate the whole temper and conduct. It necessarily implies, or begets, every thing in a man's temper that is truly amiable and valuable.

Also, the full persuasion that nothing can come to pass without the knowledge and express appointment of the greatest and best of Beings, must tend to diffuse a joyful *serenity* over the mind, producing a conviction that, notwithstanding all present unfavourable appearances, *whatever is, is right*; that even all *evils*, respecting individuals or societies, any part, or the whole of the human race, will terminate in *good*; and that the greatest sum of good could not, in the nature of things, be attained by any other means.

No other than a Necessarian can possibly attain to the full persuasion of this great and invaluable truth, the only *sure anchor of the soul* in time of adversity and distress, and a never-failing source of consolation under the most gloomy prospects. Upon any other hypothesis, it will be believed, that many things in which the independent, uncontrolled determinations of fallible men take place, are continually *going wrong*, and that much actual evil, unconnected with, and unproductive of, good, does exist. Whereas, in the eye of a Necessarian, the idea of *real absolute evil* wholly

disappears: since, in the contemplation of a mind possessed of a sufficient degree of comprehension, capable of considering as *one thing, one whole*, whatever is necessarily connected, all partial evils are infinitely overbalanced by, and are therefore really and truly *annihilated*, in the idea of the greater good to which they are subservient, and which, when properly disposed (as by infinite wisdom they undoubtedly are), they really heighten. To a person well acquainted with the doctrine of the association of ideas, this will be no paradox, but a most important and necessary truth.

The connexion that all persons, and all things, necessarily have, as parts of an immense, glorious and happy *system* (and of which we ourselves are a part, however small and inconsiderable), with the great Author of this system, makes us regard every person, and every thing, in a friendly and pleasing light. The whole is but *one family*. We have all *one God and Father*, whose affection for us is intense, impartial and everlasting. He *despises nothing that he has made*, and by ways unknown to us, and often by methods the most unpromising, he provides for our greatest good. We are all training up in the same school of moral discipline, and are likewise *joint heirs of eternal life*, revealed to us in the gospel.

With such sublime views of the system, and of the Author of it, as these, vice is absolutely incompatible; and more especially *hatred, envy and malice* are wholly excluded. I cannot, as a Necessarian, hate any man, because I consider him as *being*, in all respects, just what God has made him to be, and also as *doing*, with respect to me, nothing but what he was expressly designed and appointed to do; God being the only cause, and men nothing more than the instruments in his hands to execute all his pleasure. And by the extinction of all hatred and malice, room is made for the growth and display of every social virtue. If I no longer love men as the proper ultimate causes of the good they do me, I love and respect them as the instruments of it. I also love the amiable disposition from which it flows, both on account of its beneficial influence, and its resemblance to the disposition of the Parent of all good.

If, as a Necessarian, I cease to *blame* men for their vices in the ultimate sense of the word, though, in the common and proper sense of it, I continue to do so as much as other persons (for how necessarily soever they act, they are influenced by a base and mischievous disposition of mind, against which I must guard myself and others, in proportion as I

love myself and others), I, on my system, cannot help viewing them with a *tenderness* and *compassion* that will have an infinitely finer and happier effect, as it must make me more earnest and unwearied in my endeavours to reclaim them, without suffering myself to be offended, and desist from my labour, through provocation, disgust or despair.

The natures of the most vicious of mankind being the same with my own, they are as improveable as mine, and, whatever their disposition be at present, it is capable of being changed for the better, by means naturally adapted to that end; and under the discipline of the Universal Parent, they will, no doubt, be reclaimed sooner or later. Looking, therefore, beyond the present temporary scene, to a future period, and their final destination, we may consider them as *brethren*, even in virtue and happiness. Their sufferings, however, in the mean time, will be in proportion to their depravity; and, for this reason, I cannot but feel myself most earnestly concerned to lessen it.

What I am describing can only take place, in proportion to our *comprehension of mind*, which, however, is extended by frequent contemplations of this kind, but must remain very narrow and limited, after all the attention we can give to the subject; and, therefore, the Divine Being, whose comprehension is infinite, is alone *perfectly good* and *perfectly happy*. To him nothing is seen as an *evil*, but as a necessary and useful part of a perfect whole.

As far as these great and just views of things can be entertained and indulged, they have the happiest effect upon the mind; and where they fail, the Necessarian is but like the rest of mankind, who stop at *second causes*, and thereby comes under the influence of such motives to virtue as are common to the rest of mankind.

SECTION X.

In what Sense GOD may be considered as THE AUTHOR OF SIN, and of the Objection to the Doctrine of Necessity, on that account.

WHEN it is considered, that the distinction between things *natural* and *moral* entirely ceases on the scheme of necessity, the vices of men come under the class of common evils, producing misery for a time; but, like all other evils in the same great system, are ultimately subservient to greater good. In this light, therefore, every thing, without distinction, may be safely ascribed to God. Whatever termi-

nates in good, philosophically speaking, is good. But this is a view of moral evil, which, though innocent, and even useful in speculation, no wise man can or would choose to act upon, himself, because our understandings are too limited for the application of such a means of good ; though a Being of infinite knowledge may introduce it with the greatest advantage.

Vice is productive not of good, but of evil to us, both here and hereafter, and probably during the whole of our existence, though good may result from it to the whole system. While our natures, therefore, are what they are, and what association has necessarily made them, and so long as we see every thing in its true light, we must shun vice as any other evil, and indeed the greatest of all evils, and choose virtue as the greatest good. Nay, we shall cultivate good dispositions with more care and attention, since, according to the fixed laws of nature, our present and future happiness necessarily depends upon it. And as to the *good of the whole universe*, or of *all mankind*, it can be no object, except to a mind capable of comprehending it. Whether we be virtuous or vicious, and consequently happy or miserable, it will be equally a necessary part of the whole ; so that this consideration, were we so absurd as to pretend to govern our conduct by it, should not bias us one way more than another.

Our supposing that God is the *author of sin* (as, upon the scheme of necessity, he must, in fact, be the author of all things) by no means implies that he is a *sinful being*; for it is the *disposition of mind* and the *design* that constitutes the sinfulness of an action. If, therefore, his disposition and design be good, what he does is morally good. It was wicked in Joseph's brethren to sell him into Egypt, because they acted from envy, hatred and covetousness ; but it was not wicked in God to ordain it to be so, because, in appointing it, he was not actuated by any such principle. In him it was gracious and good, because he did it, as we read, to *preserve life*, and to answer other great and excellent purposes in the extensive plan of his providence.

If it was proper upon the whole (and of that propriety God himself is certainly the only judge), that so important an event should be brought about by the low passions and interested views of men, it was right and wise in him to appoint that it should be brought about in that very manner, rather than any other ; and if it be right and wise that those vices, when they have answered the great and good purposes

of him who appoints and over-rules all things for good, should be restrained, the sufferings which he inflicts for that purpose are right and *just punishments*. That God might have made all men sinless and happy, might, for any thing that we know, have been as impossible as his making them not finite, but *infinite beings*, in all respects equal to himself.

Mr. Hume, who, in general, discusses the question concerning liberty and necessity with great clearness, entirely abandons the doctrine of necessity to the most immoral and shocking consequences; a conduct which must have tended to create a prejudice against it: but how ill-founded has, I hope, been sufficiently shewn.

He says, that upon the scheme of necessity, "human actions can either have no turpitude at all, as proceeding from so good a cause" (the Deity), "or if they can have any moral turpitude, they must involve our Creator in the same guilt, while he is acknowledged to be their ultimate cause and author." "Nor is it possible," says he again, "to explain distinctly how the Deity can be the mediate cause of all the actions of men, without being the author of sin and moral turpitude."* But did not this writer know, what is known to all the world, that the *motive* or *intention* with which a thing is done, is the circumstance that principally constitutes its *morality*? Men who act from a bad intention are certainly vicious; but, though God may be the ultimate cause of that bad disposition, yet, since he produces it from a *good motive*, in order to bring good out of it, he is certainly not vicious, but good and holy in that respect.

Mr. Hobbes, also, fails in his solution of this difficulty, justifying the Divine conduct, not upon the principle of the *goodness of his ultimate designs* in every thing that he appoints, but on account of his *power* only. "Power irresistible," says he, "justifies all actions, really and properly, in whomsoever it be found. Less power does not, and because such power is in God only, he must needs be just in all actions; and we, that not comprehending his counsels, call him to the bar, commit injustice in it."† It is possible, however, that Mr. Hobbes might not mean power simply: for when he blames men for censuring the conduct of God, when they do not comprehend his counsels, he seems to intimate that, could we see the *designs* of God, in appointing and over-ruling the vices of men, we might see reason to

* Philosophical Essays, pp. 157, 162. (P.) Ess. viii. p. 2.

† Works, p. 474. (P.) *On Liberty*, &c. *Tripes*. p. 284.

approve and admire them, on account of the wisdom and goodness on which they are founded.

I would observe farther, with respect to this question, that the proper *foundation*, or rather the *ultimate object*, of virtue, is *general utility*, since it consists of such conduct as tends to make intelligent creatures the most truly happy, in the whole of their existence; though, with respect to the *agent*, no action is denominated virtuous that is not *voluntary*, and that does not proceed from some *good motive*, as a regard to the will of God and the good of others, or the dictates of conscience. If, therefore, the Divine Being be influenced by a disinterested regard to the happiness of his creatures, and adopt such measures as are best calculated to secure that great and glorious end, this end will certainly sanctify the means that are really necessary to accomplish it, with respect to him, who chooses those means only with a view to that end, and who cannot be mistaken in his application of them. The reason why it is wrong in man, a finite creature, to *do any evil that good may come of it*, is, that our understandings being limited, the good that we project may not come of it, and, therefore, it is best that we, and all finite creatures, should govern our conduct by certain *inviolable rules*, whatever advantage may seem to us to be derived from occasional deviations from them.

Upon the whole, *natural good* is to be considered as the object and end, and virtue as being, at the same time, a *means* to that end, and likewise a *part* of it. It is, therefore, well observed by a writer who calls himself *Search*, “moral evil were no evil, if there were no natural; because, how could I do wrong, if no hurt or damage could ensue therefrom to any body; and is no greater than the mischiefs whereof it may be productive? Therefore, it is natural evil which creates the difficulty, and the quantity of this evil is the same from whatever causes arising.” *

Though Mr. Edwards has many valuable remarks on this subject, and, upon the whole, has satisfactorily answered the objection to the doctrine of necessity, which arises from the consideration of *God being the author of sin*, yet, in treating of it, he has made one observation which, I think, is not well-founded, and which seems to shew that he was not willing to encounter the difficulty in its greatest strength.

He says of sin, “There is a great difference between God’s being—the *orderer* of its certain existence, by *not*

* See his *Light of Nature*, V. p. 238. (P.) See p. 500.

hindering it, under certain circumstances, and his being the proper actor or author of it, by a *positive agency* or *efficiency*. —Sin," says he, again, "is not the fruit of any positive agency, or influence of the Most High, but, on the contrary, arises from the withholding of his action and energy."* He also says, that, though the absence of the sun is the cause of darkness, it would be improper to call the sun the *source of darkness*, as it is of *light*.†

But if there be any foundation for the doctrine of necessity, i. e. if all events arise from preceding situations, and the *original situations* of all things, together with the *laws* by which all changes of situation take place, were fixed by the Divine Being, there can be no difference whatever with respect to his *causation* of one thing more than another. And even whatever takes place in consequence of his withholding his special and extraordinary influence, is as much agreeable to his *will*, as what comes to pass in consequence of the general laws of nature.

It may, however, justly be said, and this is the proper answer to the difficulty, that the Divine Being may adopt some things which he would not have chosen *on their own account*, but for the sake of other things with which they were necessarily connected. And if he prefers that scheme in which there is the greatest prevalence of virtue and happiness, we have all the evidence that can be given of his being infinitely holy and benevolent, notwithstanding the mixture of vice and misery there may be in it. For, supposing such a necessary connexion of things, good and evil, the most wise, holy and good Being, would not have made any other choice; nor do I see that it is possible to vindicate the *moral attributes*, or the *benevolence* of God, of which they are only *modifications*, upon any other supposition than that of the necessary connexion, in the nature of things, between good and evil, both natural and moral. And this necessary connexion is very manifest in a variety of instances.

According to the most fundamental laws of nature, and indeed the very *nature of things*, great virtues in some could not be generated, or exist, but in conjunction with great vices in others; for it is this opposition that not only ex-

* Inquiry, pp. 363, 364. (P.)

† This sentence, though marked in both the author's editions as a quotation, is not found in the *Inquiry*. It was probably designed as the sense of a passage in which Mr. Edwards remarks, how strange "it would be to argue, because it is always dark when the sun is gone, and never dark when the sun is present, that, therefore, all darkness is from the sun, and that his disk and beams must needs be black." Inquiry, p. 365.

hibits them to advantage, but even, properly speaking, *creates* them. Where could there be clemency, fortitude, elevation of soul, and deep resignation to the will of God, which form the most glorious and excellent of characters, but in struggling with difficulties that arise from injustice, ingratitude and *vice*, of all other kinds, as well as from *outward adversity* and distress; so that even the supposition of there being no *general laws of nature* (which would, probably, be the greatest of all evils) but of God doing every thing *singly*, and in a manner independent of every thing else, would not be of any advantage in this case.

If any person, notwithstanding this representation, should be alarmed at the idea of God's being the proper cause of all evil, natural and moral, he should consider that, upon any scheme that admits of the divine *prescience*, the same consequences follow. For still God is supposed to foresee and *permit*, what it was in his power to have prevented, which is the very same thing as *willing* and directly *causing* it. If I certainly know that my child, if left to his liberty, will fall into a river and be drowned, and I do not restrain him, I certainly *mean* that he should be drowned; and my conduct cannot admit of any other construction. Upon all schemes, therefore, that admit of the divine prescience, and consequently the *permission* of evil, natural and moral, the supposition of God's virtually *willing* and *causing* it, is unavoidable, so that upon any scheme, the origin and existence of evil can only be accounted for on the supposition of its being ultimately *subservient to good*, which is a more immediate consequence of the system of necessity, than of any other.

The doctrine of necessity certainly enforces the belief of the greatest possible good with respect to the whole system, admitting the goodness of God in general, and cannot well be reconciled with the everlasting misery of any.* We are, therefore, naturally led, by the principles of it, to consider all future evils in the same light as the present, i. e. as corrective and salutary, terminating in good, which is also sufficiently agreeable to the language of the Scriptures, with respect to all punishment, present or future. The Necessarian, therefore, though he *may* admit the annihilation of the wicked, yet since they are to have the benefit of the *general*

* "God is to be called good only in so far as he wills and does good to his creatures; but he is good to all, or universally; therefore he must will and do good to all, or universally; i. e. he must work or decree the good or happiness of all, in general, and every one, individually, of all his creatures." *Universal Restitution, a Scripture Doctrine* (by Stonehouse), 1761, p. 137, Note.

resurrection, together with the righteous, and we have no account of any death afterwards, but are assured, on the contrary, that all will be equally immortal, he will lean strongly to the belief of the everlasting ultimate happiness of all; and this is an idea most sublime and glorious, and which cannot but have the happiest effect upon the mind at present.

On this subject I shall not enlarge, but content myself with quoting the first paragraph of the conclusion of Dr. Hartley's *Observations on Man*, in which will be seen what an impression this idea made upon his mind. If it be perused with attention, and without prejudice, it must, I think, prepossess the reader in favour both of the *system* and of the *man*.

“I have now gone through with my observations on the frame, duty and expectations of man, finishing them with the doctrine of ultimate, unlimited, *happiness to all*. This doctrine, if it be true, ought at once to dispel all gloominess, anxiety and sorrow, from our hearts, and raise them to the highest pitch of love, adoration and gratitude, towards God, our most bountiful Creator, and merciful Father, and the inexhaustible source of all happiness and perfection. Here self-interest, benevolence and piety, all concur to move and exalt our affections. How happy in himself, how benevolent to others, and how thankful to God, ought that man to be, who believes both himself and others born to an infinite expectation! Since God has bid us rejoice, what can make us sorrowful? Since he has created us for happiness, what misery can we fear? If we be really intended for ultimate, unlimited happiness, it is no matter to a truly-resigned person, *when*, or *where*, or *how*. Nay, could any of us fully conceive, and be duly influenced by this glorious expectation, this infinite balance in our favour, it would be sufficient to deprive all present evils of their sting and bitterness. It would be a sufficient answer to the *πῶθεν τὸ κακόν*, to all our difficulties and anxieties, from the folly, vice and misery, which we experience in ourselves, and see in others, to say, that they will all end in unbounded knowledge, virtue and happiness; and that the progress of every individual in his passage through an eternal life, is from imperfect to perfect, particular to general, less to greater, finite to infinite, and from the creature to the Creator.”

SECTION XI. *

Of the Nature of REMORSE OF CONSCIENCE, and of PRAYING FOR THE PARDON OF SIN, on the Doctrine of Necessity.

SEVERAL persons, firmly persuaded of the truth of the doctrine of necessity, yet say, that it is not possible to *act upon it*; and to put, what they think, a peculiarly difficult case, they ask, how it is possible for a Necessarian to pray for the pardon of sin.

I answer, in general, that Dr. Hartley appears to me to have advanced what is quite sufficient to obviate any difficulty that can arise from this view of the subject, when he admonishes us carefully to distinguish between the *popular* and *philosophical language*, as corresponding to two very different views of human actions; according to one of which, the bulk of mankind refer their actions to themselves only, without having any distinct idea of the Divine agency being, directly or indirectly, the cause of them: whereas, according to the other, we look beyond all second causes, and consider the agency of the first and proper cause, exclusive of every thing subordinate to it.

These very different views of things must be attended with very different *feelings*; and, when separated from each other, they will, in several respects, lead to a different *conduct*, as well as require a different *language*. Now, such are the influences to which all mankind, without distinction, are exposed, that they necessarily refer actions (I mean, refer them ultimately) first of all to themselves and others; and it is a long time before they begin to consider themselves, and others, as *instruments* in the hand of a superior agent. Consequently, the associations which refer actions to themselves get so confirmed, that they are never entirely obliterated; and, therefore, the common language, and the common feelings of mankind, will be adapted to the first, the limited and imperfect, or rather erroneous view of things.

The Divine Being could not be unapprised of this circumstance, or unattentive to it; and he has wisely adapted the system of religion that he has prescribed to us, the

* Added to the 2d Ed. from the *Illustrations*.

modes of our religious worship, and every thing belonging to it, to this imperfect view of things. It is a system calculated for the *bulk of mankind*, and of philosophers as partaking of the feelings of the bulk of mankind ; and therefore would, we may suppose, have been different, if the bulk of mankind had been speculatively and practically philosophers, in some such manner as the modes of worship varied in the Jewish and Christian churches.

But it is of prime consequence in this business, that, in whatever *sense* or *degree*, any particular sentiment, or feeling, is felt as improper by a Necessarian, in the same sense and degree his principles will make that sentiment, or feeling, to be of no use to him. Thus, to apply this to the case in hand : if the sentiments of self-applause on the one hand, and of self-reproach on the other, be, in any sense or degree, impossible to be felt by a Necessarian, in the same sense or degree (while he feels and acts like a Necessarian) he will have no occasion for those sentiments, his mind being possessed by a sentiment of a much higher nature, that will entirely supersede them, and answer their end in a much more effectual manner. And whenever his strength of mind fails him, whenever he ceases to look to the first cause only, and rests in second causes, he will then necessarily feel the sentiments of self-applause and self-reproach, which were originally suggested by that imperfect view of things into which he is relapsed.

Every man's feelings will necessarily be uniform. To be a Necessarian in *speculation*, and not in *practice*, is impossible, except in that sense in which it is possible for a man to be a Christian in speculation, and a libertine in practice. In one sense, a speculative Christian, or Necessarian, may feel and act in a manner inconsistent with his principles ; but, if his faith be what Dr. Hartley calls a *practical* one, either in the doctrine of necessity, or the principles of Christianity, that is, if he really *feels* the principles, and if his affections and conduct be really directed by them, so that they have their natural influence on his mind, it will be impossible for him to be a bad man. What I mean, therefore, is, that a *truly practical Necessarian* will stand in no need of the sentiments either of self-applause or self-reproach. He will be under the influence of a much superior principle, *loving God and his fellow-creatures* (which is the sum and object of all religion, and leading to every thing excellent in conduct), from motives altogether independent of any consideration relating to himself. On this I need

not enlarge in this place, if what I have advanced on the *moral influence of the doctrine of necessity* be considered.

It is acknowledged that a Necessarian, who, as such, believes that, strictly speaking, *nothing goes wrong*, but that every thing is under the best direction possible, himself and his conduct, as part of an immense and *perfect whole*, included, cannot accuse himself of having done wrong, in the ultimate sense of the words. He has, therefore, in this strict sense, nothing to do with repentance, confession, or pardon, which are all adapted to a different, imperfect and fallacious view of things. But then, if he be really capable of steadily viewing the great system, and his own conduct as a part of it, in this true light, his supreme regard to God, as the great, wise and benevolent author of all things, his intimate communion with him, and devotedness to him, will necessarily be such, that he can have no will but God's. In the sublime, but accurate language of the apostle John, he will *dwell in love*, he will *dwell in God*, and *God in him*; so that, *not committing any sin*, he will have nothing to repent of. He will be *perfect*, as his heavenly Father is *perfect*.

But as no man is capable of this degree of perfection in the present state, because the influences to which we are all exposed will prevent this constant referring of every thing to its primary cause, the speculative Necessarian will, in a general way, refer actions to himself and others; and consequently he will necessarily, let him use what efforts he will, feel the sentiments of shame, remorse and repentance, which arise mechanically from his referring actions to himself. And, oppressed with a sense of *guilt*, he will have recourse to that *mercy* of which he will stand in need. These things must necessarily accompany one another, and there is no reason to be solicitous about their separation.

It is, alas! only in occasional seasons of retirement from the world, in the happy hours of devout contemplation, that, I believe, the most perfect of our race can fully indulge the enlarged views, and lay himself open to the genuine feelings of the Necessarian principles; that is, that he can *see every thing in God*, or in its relation to him. Habitually, and constantly, to realize these views, would be always to *live in the house of God*, and within the *gate of heaven*; seeing the plain finger of God in all events, and as if the angels of God were constantly descending to earth, and ascending to heaven, before our eyes. Such enlarged and exalted sentiments are sometimes apparent in the sacred writers, and also in

the histories of Christian and Protestant martyrs ; but the best of men, in the general course of their lives, fall far short of this standard of perfection.

We are too apt to lose sight of God, and of his universal uncontrouled agency ; and then, falling from a situation in which we were equally strangers to *vice* and *solicitude*, from a state truly *paradisical*, in which we were incapable of *knowing* or *feeling* any evil, as such, conversing daily with God, enjoying his presence, and contemplating his works, as all infinitely good and perfect, we look no higher than ourselves or beings on a level with ourselves, and of course find ourselves involved in a thousand perplexities, follies and vices ; and we now want, and ought to fly to, the proper remedy in our case, viz. self-abasement, contrition and supplication.

Moreover, well knowing what we generally are, how imperfect our *views*, and consequently how imperfect our *conduct*, it is our wisdom and our interest freely to indulge these feelings till they have produced their proper effect ; till the sense of guilt has been discharged by the feelings of contrition, and a humble trust in the Divine mercy. Thus, *gradually* attaining to purer intentions, and a more upright conduct, we shall find less obstruction in enlarging our views to comprehend the true plan of Providence ; when, having less to reflect upon ourselves for, the sentiment of reproach shall easily and naturally vanish ; and we shall then fully conceive, and rejoice in, the belief that in all things we *are*, and *have been*, *workers together with God*, and that *he works all his works in us, by us, and for us*.

The improvement of our natures, and consequently the advancement of our happiness, by enlarging the comprehension of our minds (chiefly by means of a more distinct view of the hand of God in all things and all events), is, in its own nature, a gradual thing, and our attempts to accelerate this natural progress may possibly be attended with some inconvenience ; though I own I apprehend but little danger from this quarter.

What we have most to dread, is the almost irrecoverable debasement of our minds by *looking off from God*, *living without him*, without a due regard to his presence and providence, and *idolizing ourselves and the world*, considering other things as *proper agents and causes* ; whereas, strictly speaking, there is but *one cause*, but *one sole agent* in universal nature. Thus (but I feel myself in danger of going beyond the bounds of the question I am now discussing) all vice is reducible to *idolatry* ; and we can only be com-

pletely virtuous and happy in the worship of the one only living and true God, the idea usually annexed to the word *worship* but faintly shadowing out what the intelligent reader will perceive I *now* mean by it.

In all this it must be remembered that I am addressing myself to *professed Necessarians*; and I must inform them, that if they cannot accompany me in this speculation, or find much difficulty in doing it, they are no more than *nominal Necessarians*, and have no more feeling of the real *energy of their principles*, than the merely nominal Christian has of those of Christianity. It requires much reflection, meditation and strength of mind, to convert *speculative principles* into *practical ones*; and till any principle be properly *felt*, it is not easy to judge of its real *tendency and power*. It is common with unbelievers to declaim on the subject of the mischief that Christianity has done in the world, as it is with the opponents of the doctrine of necessity to dwell upon the dangerous tendency of it; but the real Necessarian and true Christian, know and *feel*, that their principles tend to make them better men in all respects, and that it can only be something that is very improperly called either *Christianity*, or *the doctrine of necessity*, that can tend to make them worse.

I think, however, that a mere speculatist may be satisfied that the feeling of remorse, and the practice of supplication for pardon, have still less foundation on the doctrine of philosophical liberty, than on that of necessity, as I presume has been demonstrated already. Indeed, what can a man have to blame himself for, when he acted *without motive*, and from *no fixed principle*, good or bad; and what occasion has he for pardon who never meant to give offence? And, as I have shewn at large, unless the mental determinations take place without regard to motive, there is no evidence whatever of the mind being free from its necessary influence. But it seems to be taken for granted, that whatever a Necessarian cannot feel, or do, his opponent can; whereas, in fact, the doctrine of repentance, as defined by the advocates of liberty themselves, has much less place on their principles than on ours.

The whole doctrine of *second causes* being *primary ones*, is certainly a mistake, though a mistake that all imperfect beings *must* be subject to. Whatever, therefore, is built upon that mistake can have no place in a truly philosophical system. But I will farther advance, that while men continue in this mistake, and, consequently, while their

reflections on their own conduct, as well as on that of others, shall be modified by it, they will derive considerable advantage even from an imperfect view of the true philosophical doctrine, viz. that of necessity; whereas a man, in the same circumstances, must receive some injury from the opposite sentiment of philosophical liberty, so much may it be depended upon, that a knowledge of this truth can do no harm, but must do some good.

Remorse for past misconduct, implies a deep sense of depravity of heart, or a wrong bias of mind, by which temptations to sin will have much more influence with us than they ought to have. This is the sentiment that will be fully felt by what I now call the *imperfect Necessarian*, a character which, as I observed before, applies to all mankind. As a Necessarian, he considers his bad conduct as necessarily arising from his bad disposition. It is *bad fruit* growing from a *bad tree*. And, as he knows that, unless the tree be made good, it will be impossible to make the fruit good, so he is sensible that unless he can, by the use of proper discipline, bring his mind into a better state, he can never depend upon himself for acting more properly on future occasions. He, therefore, from that principle by which we universally seek our own happiness and improvement, labours to correct his vicious disposition; and, expecting no miraculous assistance, he applies to the proper remedies indicated by the consideration of his case.

At the same time, his regard to God as the author of all good, and who has appointed *meditation* and *prayer* as a means of attaining it, will make him constantly look up to him for his favour and blessing. And if, as he becomes more philosophical, his devotions have in them less of *supplication*, and rather take the form of *praise*, *thanksgiving*, and a joyful firm *confidence* in the Divine care and providence, respecting equally the things of time and eternity, it will not contribute the less to his moral improvement and happiness. But the best of men will not, in fact, get beyond that state of mind, in which direct and fervent *prayer*, properly so called, will be as *unavoidable* as it will be *useful* to them. What I now say will not be well understood by all persons, but I speak to those who have some experience in matters of religion, and who are accustomed to reflection on their natural feelings.

Let us now consider what the doctrine of philosophical liberty can do for a man in the circumstances above-mentioned. He, like the Necessarian, finds himself involved

in guilt, and he also begins to speculate concerning the causes of it; but overlooking the secret mechanism of his mind, he ascribes the whole to the mere *obstinacy of his will*, which, *of itself*, and not necessarily influenced by any motives, has turned a deaf ear to every thing that better principles could suggest. But in what manner can such men's *uncontroullable will* be rectified? As far as we have recourse to *motives* and *principles*, we depend upon the doctrine of *mechanism*; and without that we have nothing to do but sit with folded hands, waiting the arbitrary decisions of this same *sovereign will*.

If he speculates farther, and considers how little his real temper and character are concerned in such unaccountable motions of his self-determined will, I should think him in some danger of making himself very easy about his vices. And this would be the case, if men were not necessarily influenced by sounder principles than they always distinctly perceive. Now, it appears to me, that if a man's speculations take this turn, it would have been much better for him never to have speculated at all, and that they only tend to bewilder and hurt him.

Again, supposing a man to have attained to some degree of a virtuous character and conduct, his farther progress will be accelerated by the belief of the doctrine of necessity, and retarded by that of philosophical liberty.

The conviction that God is the author of all *good*, will always much more readily take firm hold of the mind than the idea of his being, likewise, the author of all *evil*, though all evil ultimately terminates in good, because it requires more strength of mind to see and believe this. A long time, therefore, before we suspect that our evil dispositions come from God, as well as our good ones, and that all things that exist, ultimately considered, equally promote the divine purposes, we shall ascribe all evil to ourselves, and all good to God; and this persuasion will be so rivetted, in a long course of time, that after we are convinced that God is really and truly the author of *all things*, without distinction, we shall ascribe evil to him only in an unsteady and confused manner; while the persuasion that he is the sole author of all good will have received a great accession of strength, from our new philosophical principles coinciding with, and confirming our former general notions.

Now no sentiment whatever is so favourable to every thing amiable, good and great, in the heart of man, as a sense of *deep humility*, grounded on disclaiming all our ex-

cellencies and referring them to their proper source, that feeling which Dr. Hartley very expressively calls *self-annihilation*, joined with that which naturally and necessarily accompanies it, *joy and confidence in God as working all our good works in us and for us*. This is the disposition that inspires all the writers of the books of scripture, and is observable in all truly serious and devout persons to this day, whether their speculative opinions be favourable to it or not. Nay, it has given such a turn to the *established language of devotion* in all countries and all ages, that the contrary sentiment, or that of claiming the merit of our good works to ourselves, would have the appearance of something absolutely impious and blasphemous. Now, it must be acknowledged that this disposition of mind, viz. that of ascribing every thing that is good in us to God, is greatly favoured and promoted by the belief of the doctrine of necessity. It may even operate this way to the greatest advantage, at the same time that through our imperfect comprehension of things, we continue to ascribe evil to ourselves, and are affected with the deepest sentiments of remorse and contrition.

On the contrary, as far as the doctrine of philosophical liberty operates, it tends to check humility and rather flatters the pride of man, by leading him to consider himself as being, independently of his Maker, the primary author of his own good dispositions and good works. This opinion, which, without being able to perceive *why*, every truly pious person dreads and cannot bring himself expressly to avow, is apprehended to be just,* according to the doctrine of philosophical liberty, which represents man as endued with the faculty of free-will, acting independently of any controul from without himself, even that of the Divine Being; and that just so far as any superior being directly or indirectly influences his will, he can pretend to no such thing as real virtue or goodness; though the virtue that answers to this description is certainly not that which animated the prophets of the Old Testament, or our Saviour and the apostles in the New, but is mere heathen *Stoicism*.

* I say *apprehended to be just*, which is all that my argument requires, though strictly speaking, as I have shewn at large, the claim of *merit or demerit* is equally ill-founded on the doctrine of philosophical liberty. The sentiments of merit and demerit are certainly *natural* and found in all mankind; but they have not, therefore, any connexion with the doctrine of philosophical liberty. On the contrary, I maintain that the *common opinion* is the doctrine of necessity, though not come to its proper extent. No man, for instance, has any idea but that *the will is always determined by some motive*, which is the great hinge on which the doctrine of necessity turns; nor has any man in common life any idea of *virtue*, but as something belonging to *character* and *fixed principle* constantly influencing the will. (P.)

When this temper is much indulged, it is even possible, contradictory as it seems, to ascribe all moral good to a man's self, and all moral evil to the instigation of the devil, or some other wicked spirit that has access to our minds: whereas, without the intervention of this doctrine of the *independency of the will*, and especially with a little aid from the doctrine of *mechanism*, we should rather, as was shewn before, though inconsistently still, ascribe all good to God and all evil to ourselves.

Constantly to ascribe *all* to God is an attainment too great for humanity. To be able to do it *at intervals* in the seasons of retirement and meditation, but so as considerably to influence our general feelings and conduct in life, is a happy and glorious advantage. Sweet, indeed, are the moments in which these great and just views of the system to which we belong can be fully indulged. If, however, we cannot habitually ascribe *all* to God, but a part only, let it be (and so indeed it naturally will be) that which is *good*; and if we must ascribe any thing to ourselves, let it be that which is *evil*.

Thus have I given a frank and ingenuous account of my own ideas and impressions on this subject. How far they will give satisfaction to others I cannot tell.

SECTION XII.

How far the Scriptures are favourable to the Doctrine of Necessity.

SUCH is the connexion between the principle of *devotion* and the doctrine of *necessity*, that with which soever of them a man begins, he is unavoidably led in some degree towards the other, whether he be distinctly aware of it or not.

The man who believes that the government of the world is in the hands of God, and that this God has great and gracious designs in every thing that he does, cannot believe that any thing happens unknown to him or unforeseen by him, or that he will permit any thing to come to pass that will not *in fact* and *ultimately* promote his own designs, and even more effectually than any thing else. This is so near to the doctrine of absolute *decrees* and the express *appointment* of every thing that comes to pass, even with respect to the vices of men, that they are not easily distinguished. Consequently, a person who sees in a strong light the doctrine of Divine Providence, cannot avoid speaking like a

Necessarian on the subject, and considering God himself as having *done* what he *permits* and *avails himself* of, in the good that results from it. And such, in fact, as no man can deny, is the language of the sacred writers.

In the Scriptures, Ps. lxxvi. 10, we not only meet with such language as this: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain," (which is strongly expressive of the subserviency of the most malignant passions of the human heart to the divine purposes, and implies, that nothing more of vice will be permitted than is of use to that end,) but many particular events, which were wholly brought about by the vices of men, are said to be expressly *appointed* by God; and even the very temper and disposition by which the agents were actuated, are said to be inspired by God, for that very purpose. At the same time, however, it appears, from the circumstances of the history, that there was no proper *interposition* of the Divine Being in the case, no real *miracle*, but every thing took place according to the common established course of nature; since what those wicked persons did may easily be accounted for on principles by which men are actuated every day; and they did nothing but what such men would naturally do again, in the same circumstances.

In like manner, the good designs and actions of men are, in the Scriptures, frequently ascribed to God, though there be no reason, from the circumstances of the facts, to suppose that there was any supernatural influence upon their minds, but that they acted as well-disposed persons would naturally do in their situations.

Also, the common operations of nature are described in such language, both in the Old and New Testament, as evidently shews, that the writers considered all the laws of the system as if they were executed immediately by the author of them, and, consequently, that all events whatever are properly his own agency, just as if no second causes had intervened. A mind habitually pious looks beyond all second causes, to the first and proper cause of all things, and rests only there.

Good men, in the Scriptures, frequently ascribe their own good works to God, as the proper author of them, *the giver of every good and every perfect gift*, and are the farthest in the world from having the least idea of their having any *merit* or claim upon God in consequence of it; which, upon the doctrine of philosophical free-will, they suppose themselves to

have. But their language is utterly irreconcilable with this doctrine.

Lastly, both the present and the future destination of men is generally spoken of as fixed and ordained by God, as if he from the first intended, that whatever *is to be should be*, with respect to happiness or misery here or hereafter.

Not that I think the sacred writers were, strictly speaking, *Necessarians*, for they were not *philosophers*, not even our Saviour himself, as far as appears, but their habitual devotion naturally led them to refer all things to God, without reflecting on the rigorous meaning of their language; and very probably had they been interrogated on the subject they would have appeared not to be apprised of the proper extent of the *Necessarian* scheme, and would have answered in a manner unfavourable to it.

For the greater satisfaction of my reader I shall produce a few examples of each of the particulars I have mentioned, though in a different order, and I beg that he would give a deliberate attention to them, and then I cannot help thinking he will be disposed to view them in the light in which I have represented them.

That God was considered by the sacred writers as the author of the good dispositions and good works of men, is evident from the following passages.

Deut. xxx. 6: "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

Jer. xxiv. 7: "And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, and they shall return unto me with their whole heart." xxxii. 39: "And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them.—I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

Ezek. xi. 19: "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you, and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and I will give them a heart of flesh."

Ezek. xxxvi. 27: "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

It is said of Lydia, Acts xvi. 14, "Whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul."

With respect to the *reception of the gospel*, our Saviour says, John vi. 37, 44, 65, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.—No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him:" and again, "No man can come unto me except it were given to him of my Father."

To the same purpose the Apostle Paul says, 1 Cor. iii. 6, &c., "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase; so then neither is he that planted any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." He also says, Philip. i. 6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Philip. ii. 12, 13: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure."

We find the same sentiment in Jude, ver. 24: "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, and our Saviour, be glory and majesty," &c.

All prayers for good dispositions go upon the same principles, and these are frequent in the Scriptures. Thus Solomon, at the solemn dedication of the temple, prays in the following manner, 1 Chron. xxix. 18: "O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel our Fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the hearts of thy people, and prepare their hearts unto thee."

David says, Ps. li. x, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

The Apostle Paul prays to the same purpose, Rom. xv. 13: "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." Ephes. iii. 16, 17: "That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might, by his spirit, in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love," &c. 1 Thess. v. 23: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." Heb. xiii. 20, 21: "Now the God of peace—make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ."

In the same manner prays the Apostle Peter, 1 Pet. v. 10: "But the God of all grace—make you perfect, establish, strengthen, settle you."

Such, also, is the usual style of prayer to this day, as the following expressions from the book of Common Prayer; “O God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed.” And again, “Almighty and ever-living God, who makest us both to will and to do those things that be acceptable to thy divine majesty.”

That the evil actions of men, also, which necessarily imply bad dispositions, do, in the language of Scripture, take place in consequence of the particular appointment of God, and especially such actions as terminate in great good or just punishment, which is the same thing, the following passages abundantly prove. The selling of Joseph into Egypt was certainly a most base action of his brethren; but observe how this pious man speaks of it, addressing himself to his brethren afterwards, Gen. xlv. 5: “Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you, to preserve life.” And again, ver. 8, “It was not you that sent me hither, but God.”

The manner in which God is said to have hardened the heart of Pharaoh, for which, however, he was justly punished, is very express, Exod. iv. 21: “I will harden his heart that he shall not let the people go;” and the expression is frequently repeated in the course of the history.

It is also said of the Canaanites, Josh. ix. 20, “It was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly.”

When the men of Sechem, who had unjustly taken the part of Abimelech, afterwards quarrelled with him, it is said, Judges ix. 23, “Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Sechem, and the men of Sechem dealt treacherously with Abimelech.”

It is said of the sons of Eli, 1 Sam. ii. 25, that “they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them.”

When Ahab for his wickedness and obstinacy was justly devoted to destruction, it is said, 2 Chron. xviii., that “God sent a lying spirit into the mouths of his prophets, in order to deceive him.”

Our Saviour seems to have considered both the rejection of the gospel by those who boasted of their wisdom, and the reception of it by the more despised part of mankind, as being the consequence of the express appointment of God. Matt. xi. 25: “At that time Jesus answered, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because

thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

Speaking, upon another occasion, concerning the unbelief of the Jews, he says, John xii. 39, "Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias hath said again. 'He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.'"

Moses, also, speaking of the obstinacy of the Jews, says, Deut. xxix. 4, "Yet the Lord hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day." Isaiah, also, in his address to God, says, lxiii. 17, "O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?"

With respect to the apostacy of the latter times, the apostle Paul says, 2 Thess. ii. 11, 12, "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

We know of no act of more atrocious wickedness, or one for which a more just and severe punishment was inflicted, than the death of Christ, and yet it is always spoken of as most expressly *decreed*, and *appointed by God*; and, as was observed before, it entered, in a most remarkable manner, into the plan of Divine Providence. It is thus spoken of in the book of Acts, ii. 23: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain;" and again, Acts iv. 27, 28: "Of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done."

That God is considered as the sovereign dispenser both of gospel privileges here, and future happiness hereafter, appears in such passages as these; 2 Thess. ii. 13: "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth."

The language of St. Paul, in the ninth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, relates, at the same time, to external privileges, moral virtue and future happiness, as having a very near connexion with one another. Ver. 15—24: "He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have

compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump, to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?"

In the following passage, also, the same apostle speaks of the whole process, from being first called to the knowledge of God, to a state of future glory, as equally the work of God. Rom. viii. 29—31: "For whom he did fore-know, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

That such things as come to pass in the common course of providence, were considered by the pious writers of the Scriptures as more immediately administered by himself, overlooking second causes, and regarding only the first and proper cause of all things, the following passages, among many others, abundantly testify.

With respect to the general *constitution of nature*, the Psalmist says, Ps. lxxv. 9, 10, "Thou visitest the earth, and waterest it: thou greatly enrichest it with the river of God, which is full of water: thou preparest them corn, when thou hast so provided for it: thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof." Ps. civ. 27—30: "These wait all upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them, they gather: thou openest thine hand.

they are filled with good: thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust: thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth."

What we call the *common events* and *accidents* of life, are all, in the language of Scripture, the express appointment of God. Exod. xxi. 13: "If a man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand." Prov. xvi. 33: "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."

Matt. x. 29: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father."

I Sam. ii. 6, 8: "The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up:—he raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill."

Dan. ii. 21: "He changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding."

Amos iv. 7—10: "I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city.—I have smitten you with blasting and mildew.—I have sent among you the pestilence.—Your young men have I slain with the sword."

The *thoughts* and *dispositions of men* are also represented as being under the secret direction of God. Prov. xxi. 1: "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water. He turneth it whithersoever he will."

Ambitious and wicked men are often spoken of as the instruments of Divine Providence. Ps. xvii. 13: "Arise, O Lord,—deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword."

The subserviency of the proud king of Assyria to the designs of Divine Providence is described by the prophet Isaiah in a manner that is peculiarly emphatical and sublime. Isa. x. 5—15: "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so, but it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few. For he saith,—By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom; for I am prudent: and I have removed

the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man.— Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith, or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? As if the rod should shake itself against him that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood,” &c.

Of another conqueror also, God says, Jer. li. 20, 21, “Thou art my battle-axe and weapons of war: for with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms; and with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider,” &c.

From the whole of this subject, and these passages compared with others, I do not, as I observed before, infer that the sacred writers were, philosophically speaking, *Necessarians*. But they were such good and pious men, set God so much before them, and had such high and just ideas of his uncontrollable power and providence, that they overlooked all second causes, and had respect to God only, as the proper and ultimate cause of all.

SECTION XIII.

The Calvinistic Doctrine of PREDESTINATION compared with the Philosophical Doctrine of NECESSITY.

THE philosophical doctrine of *necessity* so much resembles the Calvinistic doctrine of *predestination*, in some views of it, that it may be worth while to point out distinctly in what they agree and in what they differ. I shall therefore do it, and with as much fairness as I possibly can.

The scheme of philosophical necessity has been shewn to imply a chain of *causes and effects*, established by infinite wisdom, and terminating in the greatest good of the whole universe: evils of all kinds natural and moral being admitted, as far as they contribute to that end, or may be in the nature of things inseparable from it. No Necessarian, however, supposes that any of the human race will suffer eternally, but that future punishments will answer the same purpose as temporal ones are found to do, all of which tend to good and are evidently admitted for that purpose; so that God, the author of all, is as much to be adored and loved for what we *suffer* as for what we *enjoy*; his *intention* being equally kind in both, since both are equally parts, and

equally necessary parts of the same plan.* Upon the doctrine of necessity also, the most indifferent actions of men are equally necessary with the most important; since every volition, like any other *effect*, must have an adequate *cause*, depending upon the previous state of the mind and the influence to which it is exposed.

On the other hand, the consistent, the moderate, or *sublapsarian* Calvinist, supposes that God created the first man absolutely free to sin, or not to sin, capable of sinless obedience to all the commands of God; but that without being predestinated to it, he fell from this state of innocence by eating the forbidden fruit; and from that time became and all his posterity with him (he being their federal head) liable to the eternal wrath of God, and that their whole natures were at the same time so vitiated, that they are naturally incapable of thinking a good thought or doing a good action.

The whole race of mankind being thus liable to everlasting damnation, God was pleased for *his own glory* and sovereign good will, and without any reason of *preference*, to reserve a small number† in comparison with the rest of mankind, and predestinate them to everlasting happiness, on condition that his Son, the second person in the Trinity, in power, glory, and all other respects equal to himself, should become man, submit in their stead to death, and bear that infinite punishment of divine wrath which every sin against an infinite Being had deserved, and which infinite justice could not remit; while all the rest of the corrupted mass of mankind, not being redeemed by the death of Christ, remained necessarily doomed to sin here and to misery for ever hereafter.

The elect being like other persons born in *original sin*, have their natures equally depraved, and of course are as incapable of all good thoughts or good works as the reprobate, till God, by a *miraculous interposition*, produces a change in their disposition, and, by his immediate agency on their

* Yet probably there are a few Christian Necessarians, who admit the doctrine of the final destruction, rather than the restoration of the wicked; though no Necessarian who is not a Calvinist can suppose that any of the human race will suffer eternally. See p. 514.

† *Lewis du Moulin*, a Divine and M. D. published, according to *Wood*, in 1680, "Moral Reflexions upon the Number of the Elect; proving plainly from Scripture Evidence that not one in a hundred thousand (nay, probably, not one in a million) from Adam down to our times shall be saved." *Athen. Oxon.* II. 754. Under the influence of that *good will to men* which, happily, no system can extinguish, some Calvinists have formed a calculation far more favourable to the human race. See, especially, Mr. Toplady's *qualified Calvinism*, *infra*, p. 537.

minds, enables them to think and act so as to please him. But after this miraculous change or *new birth*, though an elected person may sin, and always will do so when he is *left to himself*, he will not finally fall away and perish; but God will, some time before his death, renew him again by repentance, and he shall certainly be happy for ever. Whereas, the reprobate (the grace of repentance and of the new birth not being vouchsafed to them) are under a necessity of sinning and of sinning only. Though their actions should to all appearance be ever so praise-worthy in the sight of men, they are in fact *of the nature of sin*,* and only serve to aggravate their certain and final condemnation. Moreover, though many of them die in infancy, before they were capable of committing *actual sin*, they are nevertheless liable to the eternal wrath of God, on account of the sin of their forefather and federal head. †

Now, in comparing these two schemes, I can see no sort of resemblance, except that the future happiness or misery of all men is certainly fore-known and appointed by God. In all other respects they are most essentially different; and even where they agree in the *end*, the difference in the *manner* by which that end is accomplished is so very great, that the *influence* of the two systems on the minds of those that adopt and act upon them, is the reverse of one another, exceedingly favourable to virtue in the Necessarian, and as unfavourable to it in the Calvinist.

For, the essential difference between the two schemes is this: the Necessarian believes that his own dispositions and actions are the necessary and sole means of his present and future happiness; so that in the most proper sense of the words, it depends entirely upon *himself* whether he be vir-

* See Art. xiii. of the *Church of England*, and Burnet's *Expos. in loco*.

† *Calvin* says, what I would be spared the horror of translating, "Infantes quoque ipsi suam secum damnationem à matris utero afferunt: quia tametsi suæ iniquitatis fructus nondum protulerint, habent tamen in se inclusum semen. Imò tota eorum natura, quoddam est peccati semen: ideo non odiosa et abominabilis Deo esse non potest." *Instit. L. iv. C. xv. S. x.* He then states the deliverance of the *faithful*, seeming to leave those who die, at an age incapable of faith, to the *damnation* of their birth. Yet in another place he speaks of infants *qui servandi sint*, and adds, *ut certè ex ea ætate omnino aliqui servantur. L. iv. C. xvi. S. xvii.* Even *Baxter*, who has been supposed to have softened the rigours of *Calvinism*, appears to have admitted the *damnation* of a large proportion of those who die in infancy, by making their salvation to depend on the regeneration of their parents. To the *objection*, "How shall *infants* be judged by the gospel, that were incapable of it;" he answers, "for ought I find in Scripture, they stand or fall with their parents; but I leave each to their own thoughts." *A Sermon of Judgment, preached at Paul's before the Honourable Lord Major, &c. By Rich. Baxter. 18mo. 1655, p. 33.* It is unnecessary to refer to the *Creeeds* of Established Churches or Calvinistic Nonconformists.

tuous or vicious, happy or miserable, just as much as it depends upon the farmer himself sowing his fields and weeding them, whether he will have a good crop; except that in favour of the doctrine of necessity where *morals* are concerned, his endeavours in the former case are much more certain in their effect than in the latter; which view of things cannot but operate to make him exert himself to the utmost in proportion to his regard for his own happiness, his success being certain in proportion to his exertion of himself. With this exertion he cannot miscarry, but without it he must, unless the laws of nature should change, be inevitably miserable. As far as any system of faith can induce men to cultivate virtuous principles and habits, this doctrine of necessity must do it.

On the other hand, I do not see what motive a Calvinist can have to give any attention to his moral conduct. So long as he is unregenerate, all his thoughts, words and actions are necessarily sinful, and in the act of *regeneration* he is altogether passive. On this account the most consistent Calvinists never address any exhortations to sinners, considering them as *dead in trespasses and sins*, and therefore that there would be as much sense and propriety in speaking to the dead as to them. On the other hand, if a man be in the happy number of the *elect*, he is sure that God will some time or other, and at the most proper time (for which the last moment of his life is not too late) work upon him his miraculous work of *saving and sanctifying grace*. Though he should be ever so wicked immediately before this divine and *effectual calling*, it makes nothing against him. Nay, some think that, this being a more signal display of the wonders of divine grace, it is rather the more probable that God will take this opportunity to display it. If any system of speculative principles can operate as an axe at the root of all virtue and goodness, it is this.

The Necessarian also believes nothing of the posterity of Adam sinning in him, and of their being liable to the wrath of God on that account, or of the necessity of an infinite being making atonement for them by suffering in their stead, and thus making the Deity propitious to them. He believes nothing of all the actions of any men being necessarily sinful; but, on the contrary, thinks that the very worst of men are capable of benevolent and worthy intentions in many things that they do; and likewise that very good men are capable of falling from virtue, and consequently of sinking into final perdition. The opinions of the Calvinist on

these heads he considers as equally absurd and dangerous. Upon the principles of the Necessarian also, all *late repentance*, and especially after long and confirmed habits of vice, is altogether and necessarily ineffectual; there not being sufficient time left to produce a *change of disposition* and character, which can only be done by a change of conduct and of proportionably long continuance.

Besides, before Mr. Edwards, no Calvinist, I think I may venture to say, considered every particular volition and action of men as determined by preceding motives. The Calvinists, together with the rest of mankind who speculated at all upon the subject, maintained what was called the doctrine of *indifference* with respect to particular actions; and though they considered all who were unregenerate as incapable of thinking a good thought, and as under a necessity of continually committing sin, they would not say that every particular sinful action was necessary, 'exclusive of every other sinful action. Also, except the *Supralapsarians*, no Calvinists ever considered Adam *before his fall* as being under any necessity of sinning; so that the doctrine of the proper *mechanism of the human mind*, from which no volition is exempt, was certainly unknown to them. Also, their belief of a divine interposition both in the work of regeneration, and upon almost every occasion with respect to the elect afterwards, is such, that, according to them, the proper laws of nature are perpetually violated; so that the most perfect knowledge of them could be of little use for regulating our expectations, with regard to any event in which the affections of the human mind are concerned. In this the creed of the Necessarian is the very reverse of that of the Calvinist.

Farther, the Calvinistic system entirely excludes the *popular notion* of free-will, viz. the liberty or power of doing what we please, virtuous or vicious, as belonging to every person in every situation, which is perfectly consistent with the doctrine of philosophical necessity, and indeed results from it. And in this respect it is that the language of Scripture cannot be reconciled with the tenets of Calvinism. In the Scriptures, all sinners are most earnestly exhorted to forsake their sins and return to their duty; and all, without exception, have the fullest assurances given to them of pardon and favour upon their return. Ezek. xxxiii. 11: "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, why will ye die, O house of Israel?" is the uniform tenour of the Scripture calls to repentance; and the Divine Being is represented as de-

claring, in the most solemn manner, that "he hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but had rather that he would turn from his way and live." Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

Such expostulations as these have the greatest propriety upon the scheme of necessity, which supposes a necessary and mechanical influence of motives upon the human mind, but can have no propriety at all with respect to men who are so far *dead in sin*, as to be incapable of being excited to virtue by any motive whatever. And it is only tantalizing men to propose to them motives that cannot possibly influence them, and when nothing but a divine power, operating miraculously, and consequently in a manner *independent of all natural means*, is able to effect that very change which they are exhorted to make in themselves.

That I do not misrepresent the proper Calvinistic principles, I am very confident. They are held, indeed, with considerable variation; but what I have described is what is most generally meant by Calvinism, and is the most consistent, and at the same time the most favourable scheme of the kind, and is that to which I was formerly as much attached myself as any person can be now.

The doctrine of philosophical necessity is, in reality, a modern thing, not older, I believe, than Mr. Hobbes.* Of the Calvinists, I believe Mr. Jonathan Edwards to be the first. Others have followed his steps, especially Mr. Toplady. But the inconsistency of his scheme with what is properly Calvinism, appears by his dropping several of the essential parts of that system, and his silence with respect to others. And when the doctrine of necessity shall be thoroughly understood and well considered by Calvinists, it will be found to militate against almost all their peculiar tenets. Mr. Toplady believes that all children dying in infancy are happy, and that much the greater part of mankind are elected; that undoubtedly there are *elect Mahometans*, and *elect Pagans*, and he seems to think the torments of hell will not be eternal.† But this is departing very

* See, however, the claim of *Bradwardin*, at p. 456. Note.

† See his "Scheme of Christian Philosophical Necessity asserted," 1775, pp. 120, 121. (P.) The passage to which my author refers, is a note, chiefly consisting of the extract of a letter which Mr. Toplady addressed to *him* in 1774, as "a very eminent Anti-Calvinian Philosopher." At the close of this extract he says, "with respect to the few reprobates, we *may*, and we *ought* to resign the disposal of them, implicitly, to the will of that only King who can do no wrong." Mr. T. having written the letter for the purpose of shewing that "Calvin's doctrines" are unjustly "represented as gloomy," Dr. P. might fairly consider him as designing to express a doubt as to *endless torments*. He, however, was unwilling to appear among the *merciful Doctors*, and expostulated in a letter, dated Jan. 20th, 1778, the year in which he

widely indeed from the proper doctrines of Calvinism ; and more attention to the principles of the Necessarian scheme cannot fail to draw him, and all philosophizing Calvinists, farther and farther from that system: nor will they be able to rest any where but in what I call the simple and unadulterated doctrine of revelation, and which they brand with the obnoxious name of *Socinianism*, in which, after being what they now are, I joyfully and thankfully acquiesce ; reflecting with a kind of horror on what I was and what I felt, when I endeavoured to think and act, as I most conscientiously did, upon those principles.

I cannot, however, conclude this Section without acknowledging (and I do it with particular satisfaction), that though I consider the proper Calvinistic system as a most *gloomy* one, and peculiarly unfavourable to virtue, it is only so when *consistently pursued*, and when every part of it equally impresses the mind. But this is never, in fact, the case with any system. If there be in our minds a *prevalence of good principles* and good dispositions, we naturally turn our eyes from every thing in our respective systems that, even by a just construction, is unfavourable to virtue and goodness, and we reflect with pleasure, and act upon those parts of them only that have a good tendency. Now, the doctrine of a general and a most particular Providence is so leading a feature in every scheme of predestination, it brings God so much into every thing, and the ideas of justice and goodness are so inseparable from the idea of the Divine Being, that, in spite of every thing else in the system, an habitual and animated devotion will be the result, and from this principle no evil is to be dreaded.

But where a disposition to vice has pre-occupied the mind, I am very well satisfied, and but too many facts might be alleged in proof of it, that the doctrines of Calvinism have been actually fatal to the *remains of virtue*, and have driven men into the most desperate and abandoned course of wickedness ; whereas, the doctrine of necessity, properly understood, cannot possibly have any such effect, but the contrary.

In fact, if, from a good education, or any other source, the general bias of the mind be in favour of virtue, a man may be safely trusted with any speculative principles. But

died, at the age of 38. Both letters will be found in Dr. P.'s *Correspondence*. It appears from Mr. Toplady's life, prefixed to his Works, 1794, that he had designed to write against the *Disquisitions*, on which he differed from the author, as fully as he agreed with him on the point of *Necessity*.

if the bias be in favour of vice, it is of great importance that the speculative principles be right and sound; that, when viewed in every just light, they may operate as a motive for reforming the life and manners. The connexion between virtue and happiness, and between vice and misery, is upon no principles whatever so certain and demonstrable as on those of philosophical necessity.

Whether it be owing to my Calvinistical education, or my considering the principles of Calvinism as generally favourable to that leading virtue, *devotion*, or to their being something akin to the doctrine of necessity, I cannot but acknowledge that, notwithstanding what I have occasionally written against that system, and which I am far from wishing to retract, I feel myself disposed to look upon Calvinists with a kind of *respect*, and could never join in the contempt and insult with which I have often heard them treated in conversation. From my long and intimate acquaintance with the very *straitest of that sect*, I have seen but too much reason to believe that, though there is often among them great malignity of heart, concealed under all the external forms of devotion, I have been, and am still acquainted with many, whose hearts and lives, I believe, are, in all respects, truly Christian, and whose Christian tempers are really promoted by *their own views* of their system.

It is true that the treatment I have met with from Calvinists, *as such*, must have had a tendency to exasperate me against them; but every thing of this kind has been balanced by the kindness I have met with from others of them. And I shall ever reflect with gratitude, that the person to whom, in this world, I have been under the greatest obligation, was at the same time a strict Calvinist, and in all respects as perfect a human character as I have yet been acquainted with. I had the fairest opportunity of observing and studying it, and I now frequently reflect upon it with satisfaction and improvement. All who knew me in the early part of life will know whom I mean, and all who knew *her* will know that I do not exaggerate.*

* Those who know the author's history need not be informed that he here refers to his aunt, Mrs. Keighley, described by him at the beginning of his *Memoirs*, as a "truly pious and excellent woman, who knew no other use of wealth, or of talents of any kind, than to do good, and who never spared herself for this purpose." Happily, Dr. Priestley was by no means singular in having discovered and in gratefully acknowledging how some of the best and kindest virtues have, by the early influence of human systems, been connected with that *worst-natured* creed, which, indeed, the most intelligent and reflecting professors of it are constrained to *qualify*, if not to *explain away*.

Upon the whole, however, the acquaintance I have had with Calvinists convinces me, that their principles, in the minds of calm, sober-thinking persons, will always leave some room for doubt and uncertainty with respect to the evidence of their conversion, and what is called the *work of grace in the heart*, in which much must necessarily be left to the imagination, and, therefore, that at times a gloom will be spread over the soul. Consequently, unless this effect be counteracted by something either in the natural temper, or opinions of a more liberal cast, their principles do not admit of that perfect *serenity* and *cheerfulness*, with which it is to be wished that a life of real piety and virtue might ever be attended.

END OF VOLUME III.



