

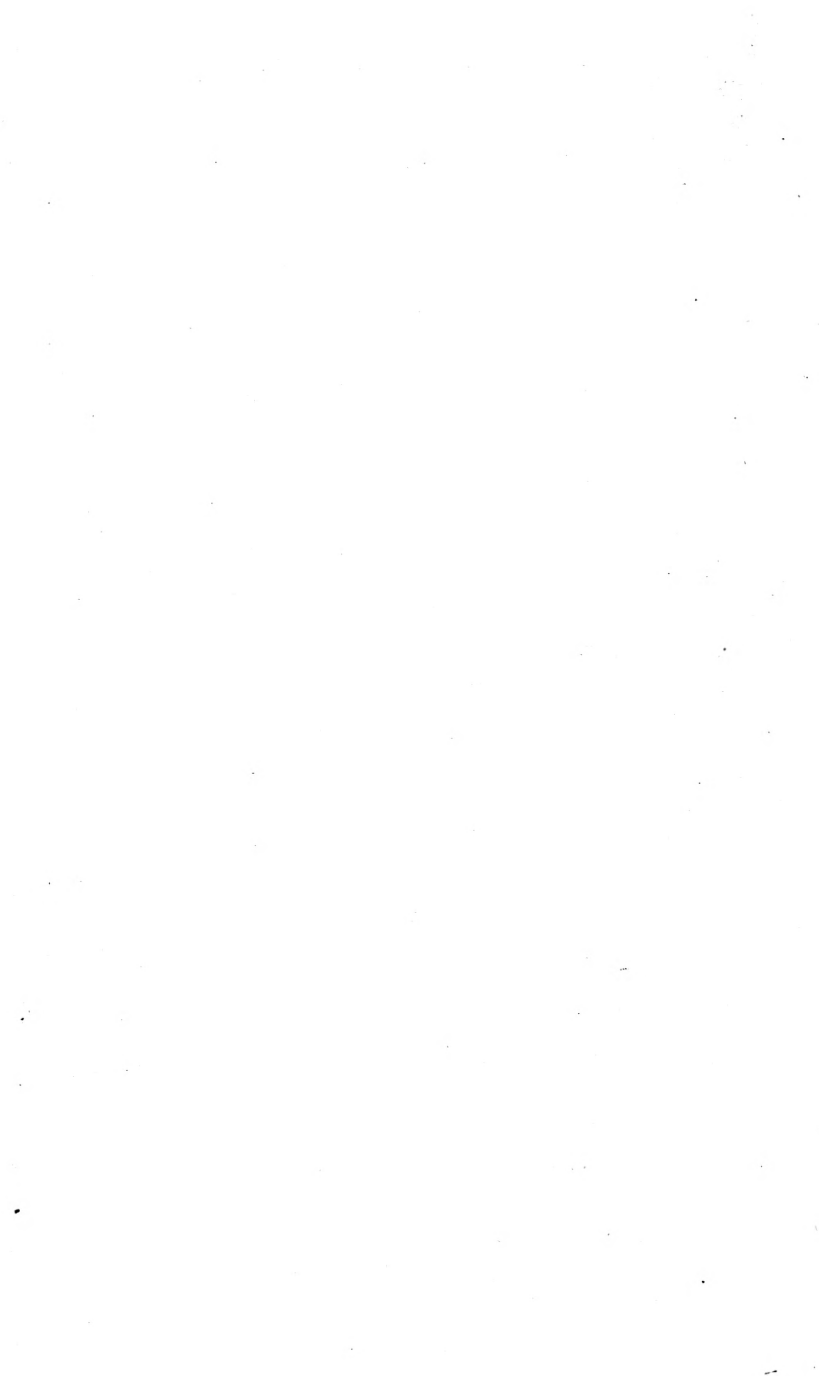
The image shows a close-up of a book cover or endpaper with a complex marbled paper pattern. The pattern consists of dark, swirling, wavy lines that create a sense of movement and depth. The colors range from dark grey to light grey, with some darker spots and speckles scattered throughout. The overall texture is intricate and organic.

D-16
C6923

11.25.05

From the Library of
Professor Samuel Miller
in Memory of
Judge Samuel Miller Breckinridge
Presented by
Samuel Miller Breckinridge Long
to the Library of
Princeton Theological Seminary

5CC
1678



✓
A
PHILOSOPHICAL
INQUIRY
CONCERNING
HUMAN
LIBERTY.

The third Edition corrected.

by

Anthony Collins



L O N D O N :

Printed for R. ROBINSON, at the Golden Lion
in St. Paul's Church-Yard. MDCCXXXV.





P R E F A C E.



Too much care cannot be taken, to prevent being misunderstood and prejudg'd, in handling questions of such nice speculation, as those of Liberty and Necessity: and therefore, tho' I might in justice expect to be read before any judgment be pass'd on me, I think it proper to premise the following observations.

I. First, tho' I deny liberty in a certain meaning of that word; yet I contend for liberty, as it signifies, a power in man, to do as he wills, or pleases; which is the notion of liberty maintain'd by ARISTOTLE, CICERO, Mr. LOCK, and several other Philosophers, antient and modern. And indeed after a careful examination of the best authors who have treated of

of liberty, I may affirm, that however opposite they appear in words to one another, and how much soever some of them seem to maintain another notion of liberty; yet at the bottom, there is an almost universal agreement in the notion defended by me, and all that they say, when examin'd, will be found to amount to no more.

2. *Secondly, when I affirm necessity; I contend only for what is call'd moral necessity, meaning thereby, that man, who is an intelligent and sensible being, is determin'd by his reason and his senses; and I deny man to be subject to such necessity, as is in clocks, watches, and such other beings, which for want of sensation and intelligence are subject to an absolute, physical, or mechanical necessity. And here also I have the concurrence of almost all the greatest Asserters of liberty, who either expressly maintain moral necessity, or the thing signified by those words.*

3. *Thirdly, I have undertaken to shew, that the notions, I advance, are so far from being inconsistent with, that they are the sole foundations of morality and laws, and of rewards and punishments in society; and*

and that the notions, I explode, are subversive of them. This I judg'd necessary to make out, in treating a subject that has relation to morality: because nothing can be true which subverts those things; and all discourse must be defective, wherein the Reader perceives any disagreement to moral truth; which is as evident as any speculative truth, and much more necessary to be render'd clear to the Reader's mind, than truth in all other sciences.

4. Fourthly, I have intituled my discourse, a Philosophical Inquiry, &c; because I propose only to prove my point by experience and by reason, omitting all considerations strictly theological. By this method I have reduc'd the matter to a short compass: and hope, I shall give no less satisfaction, than if I had consider'd it also Theologically; for all but Enthusiasts, must think true Theology consistent with reason, and with experience.

5. Fifthly, if any should ask, Of what use such a Discourse is? I might offer to their consideration, first, the usefulness of truth in general: and secondly, the usefulness of the truths I maintain towards

establiſhing laws and morality, rewards and puniſhments in ſociety: but ſhall content myſelf with obſerving, that it may be of uſe to all thoſe who deſire to know the truth in the queſtions I handle, and that think examination the proper means to arrive at that knowledge. As for thoſe, who either make no Inquiries at all, and concern not themſelves about any ſpeculations; or who take up with ſpeculations; without any examination; or who read only books to confirm themſelves in the ſpeculations they have receiv'd; I allow my book to be of no uſe to them: but yet think they may allow others to enjoy a taſte different from their own.

CON-



CONTENTS.

THE *Introduction*, shewing that men may express their Thoughts and Opinions with equal clearness upon all subjects. page 10.

The question, *whether man be a free or a necessary agent*, explain'd. p. 16.

I. First Argument, wherein our experience is consider'd. p. 17.

Under this head are,

First, several considerations on the argument of *experience*. *Ib.*

Secondly, an account of our experience in the exercise of the Power of *Perceiving*, of *Judging*, *Willing*, and *Doing as we will*. p. 32.

And lastly, the Actions of men and inferior intelligent agents are *compared*. p. 49.

II. Second Argument, to prove man a necessary agent, taken from the *impossibility of liberty*. p. 52.


III. Third

C O N T E N T S.

- III. Third Argument, taken from the *imperfection* of liberty, and the *perfection* of necessity. p. 56.
- IV. Fourth Argument, taken from the consideration of the *divine Prescience*. p. 71.
- V. Fifth Argument, taken from the nature and *use* of rewards and *punishments* in society. p. 75.
- VI. Sixth Argument, taken from the nature of *morality*. p. 77.
- Several Objections consider'd. p. 78.
1. That if men are necessary agents, punishments are unjust, Ib.
 2. That if men are necessary agents, punishments are useless, p. 82
 3. That if men are necessary agents, reasoning, intreaties, admonitions, blame, and praise are useless, p. 85.
 4. That if the period of man's life be fix'd, physick, &c. is useless, p. 87.
 5. How can a man act against his conscience, and how can his conscience accuse him, if he knows he acts necessarily, &c. p. 89.
 6. How can such an action as the murder of Julius Caesar in the senate be necessary, &c. p. 90.
- Authorities* for what has been advanc'd. p. 91.
- The notion of *Liberty* maintained by the Author. p. 97.

A
 PHILOSOPHICAL
 INQUIRY
 CONCERNING
 HUMAN
 LIBERTY.

To Lucius.

“  Here fend you in writing
 “ my thoughts concern-
 “ ing LIBERTY and NE-
 “ CESSITY, which you
 “ have so often desired of me : and in
 “ drawing them up, have had regard
 “ to your penetration, by being as short
 “ as is consistent with being understood,
 “ and to your love of truth, by saying
 “ nothing but what I think true,
 “ and also all the truth that I apprehend
 “ relates to the subject, with the sincer-
 “ ity belonging to the conversation of
 “ friends. If you think me either too
 “ short in any respect, or to have omit-
 “ ted the consideration of any objection,
 “ by

“ by its not occurring to me, or, that
 “ you think of importance to be
 “ consider’d: be pleas’d to acquaint me
 “ therewith, and I will give you all the
 “ satisfaction I can.

Introduction.

’Tis a common observation, even among the learned, that there are certain matters of speculation, about which it is impossible, from the nature of the subjects themselves, to speak clearly and distinctly. Upon which account, men are very indulgent to, and pardon the unintelligible discourses of Theologers and Philosophers, which treat of the sublime points in theology and philosophy. And there is no question in the whole compass of speculation, of which men have written more obscurely, and of which it is thought more impossible to discourse clearly, and concerning which men more expect, and pardon obscure discourse, than upon the subjects of *Liberty* and *Necessity*. But this common observation, is both a common and a learned error. For whoever employs his thoughts either about God or the Trinity in Unity, or any other profound

found

found subject, ought to have some Ideas, to be the objects of his thoughts in the same manner as he has in thinking on the most common subjects: for where Ideas fail us in any matter, our thoughts must also fail us. And it is plain, whenever we have Ideas, we are able to communicate them to others by words †: for words being arbitrary marks of our Ideas, we can never want them to signify our Ideas, as long as we have so many in use among us, and a power to make as many more as we have occasion for. Since then we can think of nothing any farther than we have Ideas, and can signify all the Ideas we have by words to one another; why should we not be able to put one Idea into a Proposition as well as another? Why not to compare Ideas together about one subject as well as another? And why not to range one sort of Propositions into order and method, as well as another? When we use the term GOD, the Idea signify'd thereby, ought to be as distinct
and

† I do not mean unknown simple Ideas. These can at first only be made known by application of the object to the faculty: but when they have been once perceiv'd, and a common name agreed upon to signify them, they can be communicated by Words.

and determinate in us, as the Idea of a triangle or a square is, when we discourse of either of them; otherwise, the term GOD is an empty sound. What hinders us then from putting the Idea signify'd by the term GOD into a Proposition, any more than the Idea of a triangle or a square? And why cannot we compare that Idea with another Idea, as well as any two other Ideas together: since comparison of Ideas consists in observing wherein Ideas differ, and wherein they agree: to which nothing is requisite in any Ideas, but their being distinct and determinate in our Minds? And since we ought to have a distinct and determinate Idea to the term GOD, whenever we use it, and as distinct and determinate as that of a triangle or a square: since we can put it into a Proposition: since we can compare it with other Ideas on account of its distinctness and determinateness; why should we not be able to range our thoughts about GOD in as clear a method, and with as great perspicuity as about figure and quantity.

I would not hereby be thought to suppose, that the Idea of GOD is an adequate Idea, and exhausts the subject it refers to, like the Idea of a triangle or a square; or that it is as easy to form in our Minds, as the Idea of a triangle or a square; or that it does not require a great comprehension of Mind to bring together the various Ideas that relate to GOD, and so compare them together; or that there are not several Propositions concerning him that are doubtful, and of which we can arrive at no certainty; or that there are not many Propositions concerning him subject to very great Difficulties or objections. All these I grant: but say, they are no Reasons to justify Obscurity. For, first, an inadequate Idea is no less distinct, as such, than an adequate Idea, and no less true, as far as it goes; and therefore may be discours'd of with equal clearness and truth. Secondly, Tho' the Idea of GOD be not so easy to form in our Minds as the Idea of a triangle or a square, and it requires a great comprehension of mind to bring together the various Ideas that relate to him, and compare them together; yet these are only reasons, for using a greater application, or for not writing at all. Third-

C

ly,

ly, if a writer has in relation to his subject any doubts or objections in his mind, which he cannot resolve to his satisfaction, he may express those conceptions or thoughts no less clearly, than any other conceptions or thoughts. He should only take care not to exceed the bounds of those conceptions, nor endeavour to make his reader understand what he does not understand himself: for when he exceeds those bounds, his discourse must be dark, and his pains useless. To express what a man conceives is the end of writing; and every reader ought to be satisfy'd, when he sees an author speak of a subject according to the light he has about it, so far as to think him a clear writer.

When therefore any writer speaks obscurely, either about God, or any other Idea of his mind, the defect is in him. For why did he write before he had a meaning; or before he was able to express to others what he meant? Is it not unpardonable for a man to cant, who pretends to teach?

These general reflections may be confirm'd by matter of fact from the writings of the most celebrated dogmatical authors.

When

When such great men as GASSENDUS, CARTESIUS, CUDWORTH, LOCKE, BAYLE, Sir ISAAC NEWTON, and Mr. DE FONTENELLE treat of the most profound questions in metaphysics, mathematicks, and other parts of philosophy; they by handling them as far as their clear and distinct Ideas reach'd, have written with no less perspicuity to their proper readers, than other authors have done about historical matters, and upon the plainest and most common subjects.

On the other side, when authors, who in other respects are equal to the foregoing, treat of any subjects further than they have clear and distinct Ideas; they do and cannot but write to as little purpose, and take as absurd pains, as the most ignorant authors do, who treat of any subject under a total ignorance, or a confus'd knowledge of it. There are so many examples of these latter occurring to every reader; and there are such frequent complaints of mens venturing beyond their ability in several questions; that I need not name particular Authors, and may fairly avoid the odium of censuring any one. But having met with a passage concerning the ingenious Father

MALEBRANCHE in the *Letters* of Mr. BAYLE, who was an able Judge, a friend to him and a defender of him in other respects, I hope I may without being liable to exception produce Father MALEBRANCHE as an example. He has in several books treated of and vindicated the opinion of *seeing all things in God*; and yet so acute a person as Mr. BAYLE, after having read them all, declares, that he *less comprehends his notion from his last book than ever*.* Which plainly shows a great defect in F. MALEBRANCHE to write upon a subject he understood not, and therefore could not make others understand.

You see, I bespeak no favour in the question before me, and take the whole fault to myself, if I do not write clearly to you on it, and prove what I propose.

And that I may inform you, in what I think clear to myself, I will begin with explaining the sense of the Question.

Man is a *necessary Agent*, if all his actions are so determin'd by the causes preceding

The Question asked.

* *J'ai parcouru le nouveau Livre du Pere Malebranche contre Mr. Arnauld: & j'y ai moins compris que jamais sa pretention, que les Idées, par lesquelles nous connoissons les Objets, sont en Dieu, & non dans notre Ame. Il y a là du mal-entendu: ce sont, ce me semble, des embarras perpetuels.* Letter of the 16th of October 1705, to Mr. Des Maizeaux.

preceding each action, that not one past action could possibly not have come to pass, or have been otherwise than it hath been; nor one future action can possibly not come to pass, or be otherwise than it shall be. He is a *free Agent*, if he is able, at any time under the circumstances and causes he then is, to do different things: or, in other words, if he is not unavoidably determin'd in every point of time by the circumstances he is in, and causes he is under, to do that one thing he does, and not possibly to do any other.

I. This being a question of fact concerning what we ourselves do; we will, first, consider our own Experience; which if we can know, as sure we may, will certainly determine this matter. And because experience is urg'd with great triumph, by the patrons of *Liberty*, we will begin with a few general reflections concerning the argument of experience: and then we will proceed to our experience itself.

*1st. Argument where-
in our Expe-
rience is con-
sidered.*

1. The vulgar, who are bred up to believe *Liberty* or *Freedom*, think themselves secure of success, constantly appealing to *Experience* for a proof of their freedom,

*General
Reflections
on the argu-
ment of Ex-
perience.*

freedom, and being persuaded that they feel themselves free on a thousand occasions. And the source of their mistake, seems to be as follows. They either attend not to, or see not the causes of their actions, especially in matters of little moment, and thence conclude, they are free, or not mov'd by causes, to do what they do.

They also frequently do actions whereof they repent: and because in the repenting humour, they find no present motive to do those actions, they conclude, that they might not have done them at that time they did them, and that they were *free* from necessity (as they were from outward impediments) in the doing them.

They also find, that they can do as they will, and forbear as they will, without any external impediment to hinder them from doing as they will; let them will either doing or forbearing. They likewise see, that they often change their minds; that they can, and do chuse differently every successive moment; and that they frequently deliberate, and thereby are sometimes at a near ballance, and in a state of indifference with respect

to judging about some propositions, and willing or chusing with respect to some objects. And experiencing these things, they mistake them for the exercise of *Freedom*, or *Liberty* from *Necessity*. For ask them, whether they think themselves *free*? and they will immediately answer, *Yes*: and say some one or other of these foregoing things, and particularly think they prove themselves *free*, when they affirm, *they can do as they will*.

Nay, celebrated Philosophers and Theologers, both ancient and modern, who have meditated much on this matter, talk after the same manner, giving definitions of *Liberty*, that are consistent with *Fate* or *Necessity*; tho' at the same time they would be thought to exempt some of the actions of man from the power of *Fate*, or to assert *Liberty* from *Necessity*. * CICERO defines *Liberty* to be, *a power to do as we will*. And therein several moderns follow him. One † defines *Liberty* to be, *a power to act, or not to act, as we will*. Another defines it in more words thus: * *a power to do what we will, and because we will; so that if we did not will it, we should not do it; we*

* Opera
p. 3963.
Ed. Gron.

† Placette
Eclairciss.
sur la Li-
berté. p. 2.

* Jaquelot.
sur l'exist.
de Dieu.
p. 381.

should

should even do the contrary if we willed it.

† Lock's
Essay of
Human Un-
derst. Book
II. c. xxi.
§. 8.

And another, † a power to do or forbear an action, according to the determination or thought of the mind, whereby either is prefer'd to the other. On all which definitions, if the Reader will be pleas'd to reflect, he will see 'em to be only definitions of *liberty* or *freedom from outward impediments of action*, and not a *Freedom* or *Liberty from Necessity*; as I also will shew them to be in the sequel of this Discourse, wherein I shall contend equally with them for such a power as they describe, tho' I affirm, That there is *no Liberty from Necessity*.

Fabricii
Bibl. Gr.
Vol. IV. 63.
Vossius de
Sect. Phil. c.
12.

ALEXANDER the *Aphrodisæan*, (a most acute Philosopher of the II^d Century, and the earliest commentator now extant upon *Aristotle*, and esteemed his best *Defender* and *Interpreter*) defines *Liberty* to be, * a power to chuse what to do after deliberation and consultation, and to chuse and do what is most eligible to our reason; whereas otherwise, we should follow our fancy. Now a choice after deliberation, is a no less necessary choice, than a choice by fancy. For tho' a choice by fancy, or without deliberation, may be one way, and a choice with delibe-
ration

* De fato.
p. m. 57.

ration may be another way, or different; yet each choice being founded on what is judged best, the one for one reason, and the other for another, is equally necessary; and good or bad reasons, hasty or deliberate thoughts, fancy or deliberation, make no difference.

In the same manner, † Bishop BRAM-
HALL, who has written several books
for *Liberty*, and pretends to assert the
Liberty taught by ARISTOTLE, defines
Liberty thus: He says, *That act which
makes a Man's actions to be truly free, is
election; which is the deliberate chusing
or refusing of this or that means, or the accep-
tation of one means before another, where di-
vers are represented by the understanding.*
And that this definition places *Liberty*
wholly in *chusing* the seeming best means,
and not in *chusing* the seeming worst
means, equally with the best; will appear
from the following passages. He says, *acti-
ons done in sudden and violent passions, are not
free; because there is no deliberation nor elec-
tion.---To say the will is determined by mo-
tives, that is, by reasons or discourses,
is as much as to say that the Agent is de-
termin'd by himself, or is free. Because mo-
tives determine not naturally, but moral-*

† Bp. Bram-
hall's.
Works, p.
735.

p. 697.

p. 702.

ly ; which kind of determination is consistent with true Liberty--Admitting that the will follows necessarily the last dictate of the understanding, this is not destructive of the liberty of the will ; this is only an hypothetical necessity. So that Liberty, with him, consists in chusing, or refusing necessarily after deliberation ; which chusing or refusing is morally and hypothetically determined, or necessary by virtue of the said deliberation.

* Le Clerc
Bibl. Chois.
Tom. Xii.
P, 10. 3, 104.

*Lastly, A great Arminian Theologer, who has writ a course of Philosophy, and enter'd into several controversies on the subject of Liberty, makes Liberty to consist in * an indifferency of mind while a thing is under deliberation. For, says he, while the mind deliberates, it is free till the moment of action ; because nothing determines it necessarily to act, or not to act. Whereas, when the mind ballances or compares Ideas or motives together, it is then no less necessarily determin'd to a state of Indifferency by the appearances of those Ideas and motives, than it is necessarily determin'd in the very moment of action. Were a man to be at liberty in this state of indifferency, he ought to have it in his power to be not indifferent,*
at

at the same time that he is *indifferent*.

If *experience* therefore proves the *liberty* contended for by the foregoing asserters of *liberty*, it proves men to have *no liberty from necessity*.

2. As the foregoing asserters of liberty, give us definitions of *Liberty*, as grounded on experience, which are consistent with *Necessity*; so some of the greatest Patrons of liberty, do by their concessions in this matter, sufficiently destroy all argument from *Experience*.

ERASMUS in his treatise for *Free-will*, against LUTHER, says, * *That among the difficulties which have exercis'd the Theologers and Philosophers of all ages, there is none greater than the question of free-will*. And Mr. LE CLERC, speaking of this Book of ERASMUS, says, † *that the question of free-will, was too subtle for ERASMUS, who was no Philosopher; which makes him often contradict himself*.

* Opera
Tom. 9. p.
1215.

† Bibl.
chois.
Tom. xii.
p. 51.

‡ Expos.
p. 117.

The late Bishop of SARUM †, tho' he contends, *Every Man experiences liberty*; yet owns, that *great difficulties attend the subject on all hands*, and that therefore *he pretends not to explain or answer them*.

Page. 27.

The famous BERNARD OCHIN, a

Printed at
Bzfl.

Italian Wit, has written a most subtile and ingenious boock, intituled, *Labyrinths concerning Free-will and Predestination, &c.* wherein he shews, that they who assert, that Man acts freely, are involv'd in four great difficulties; and that those who assert that Man acts necessarily, fall into four other difficulties. So that he forms eight *Labyrinths*, four against *Liberty*, and four against *Necessity*. He turns himself all manner of ways to get clear of them; but not being able to find any solution, he constantly concludes with a Prayer to *G O D* to deliver him from these Abyffes. Indeed in the progress of his work, he endeavours to furnish means to get out of this prison: but he concludes that the only way, is to say, with *SOCRATES*, *Hoc unum scio quod nihil scio.* We ought, says he, to rest contented, and conclude, that *G O D* requires neither the affirmative nor negative of us. This is the title of his last chapter, *Qua via ex omnibus supradictis Labyrinthis cito exiri possit, quæ doctæ ignorantiae via vocatur.*

Printed at
Oxford
1751

A famous Author*, who appeals to common experience, for a proof of liberty, confesses, that the question of liberty

is the most obscure and difficult question in all Philosophy: that the learned are fuller of contradictions to themselves, and to one another, on this, than on any other subject: And that he writes against the common notion of liberty, and endeavours to establish another notion, which he allows to be intricate.

Pag. 99.

Pag. 105,

Pag. 117.

But how can all this happen in a plain matter of fact, suppos'd to be experienc'd by every body? What difficulty can there be in stating a plain matter of fact, and describing what every body feels? What need of so much *Philosophy*? And why so many contradictions on the subject? And how can all men experience *Liberty*, when it is allow'd, that the common notion of liberty is false, or not experienc'd; and a new notion of *Liberty*, not thought on before (or thought on but by few) is set up as matter of experience? This could not happen, if matter of fact was clear for liberty.

3. Other Asserters of *Liberty* seem driven into it on account of suppos'd inconveniences attending the doctrine of *Necessity*. The great EPISCOPUS, in his *Treatise of Free-will*, acknowledges in effect, that the asserters of *Necessity* have
seeming

† Opera
Vol. I. p.
198, 199,
200.

seeming experience on their side, and are thereby very numerous; † *They*, as he observes, *alledge one thing of moment, in which they triumph, viz.* “ that the
“ will is determin’d by the understand-
“ ing: *and assert*, that unless it were so;
“ the will would be a blind faculty, and
“ might make evil, as evil, its object;
“ and reject what is pleasant and agreea-
“ ble: And by consequence, that all
“ persuasions, promises, reasonings and
“ threats, would be as useless to a Man
“ as to a stock or a stone.” *This*, he al-
lows to be very *plausible*, and to *have*
the appearance of probability; to be *the*
common sentiment of the schools; to be *the*
rock on which the ablest defenders of liber-
ty have split, without being able to answer
it; and to be *the reason*, or argument (or
rather the matter of experience) *which*
has made men in all ages, and not a few
in this age, fall into the opinion of the fa-
tal necessity of all things. But because it
makes all our actions necessary, and there-
by, in his opinion, *subverts all religion,*
laws, rewards and punishments; he con-
cludes it to be most certainly false: and
religion makes him quit this common and
plausible opinion. Thus also many other
strenuous

strenuous Asserters of *Liberty*, as well as himself, are driven by these supposed difficulties, to deny *manifest experience*. I say, *manifest experience*, for are we not manifestly determin'd by pleasure or pain, and by what seems reasonable or unreasonable to us, to judge or will, or act? Whereas could they see that there are not grounds for laws and morality, rewards and punishments, but by supposing the doctrine of *Necessity*; and that there is no foundation for laws and morality, rewards and punishments, upon the supposition of man's being a free agent, (as shall evidently, and demonstratively appear) they would readily allow experience to be against *Free-will*, and deny *Liberty*, when they should see there was no need to assert it, in order to maintain those necessary things. And as a farther evidence thereof, let any man peruse the discourses written by the ablest authors for liberty, and he will see (as they confess of one another) that they frequently contradict themselves, write obscurely, and know not where to place *Liberty*; at least, he will see that he is able to make nothing of their discourses; no more than * Mr. LOCKE

was of this treatise of EPISCOPUS, who in all his other writings, shews himself to be a clear, strong, and argumentative writer.

4. There are others, and those contenders for *Liberty*, as well as denyers of it, who report the persuasions of Men, as to the Matter of fact, very differently, and also judge very differently themselves about the fact, from what is vulgarly believed among those who maintain *Free-will*.

† Alexander de Fato
p. 10

An ancient author speaks thus †: *Fate*, says he, *is sufficiently proved from the general receiv'd opinion and persuasion of Men thereof. For, in certain things, when Men all agree, except a few, who dissent from them on account of maintaining some doctrines before taken up, they cannot be mistaken. Wherefore ANAXAGORAS the Clazomenian, tho' no contemptible Naturalist, ought not to be judged to deserve any regard, when opposing the common persuasion of all Men he asserts, "That nothing*
" is done by Fate; but that it is an emp-
" ty name." And according to all authors, recording the opinions of men in this matter, the belief of *Fate*, as to all Events, has continued to be the *most com-*

non persuasion, both of Philosophers and People ; as it is at this day *the persuasion* of much the greatest part of mankind, according to the relations of Voyagers. And tho' it has not equally prevail'd among Christians, as it has and does among all other religious parties ; yet it is certain, the Fatalists have been, and are very numerous among Christians : and the free-will-Theologers themselves allow, * *That some Christians are as great Fatalists, as any of the antient Philosophers were.*

* Reeves's
Apol. vol.
1. p. 150.
Sherlock
of Prov.
p. 66.

The acute and penetrating Mr. BAYLE, reports the fact, as very differently understood by those who have thoroughly examin'd and consider'd the various actions of Man, from what is vulgarly suppos'd in this matter. Says he, † *They who examine not to the bottom what passes within them, easily persuade themselves, that they are free : but, they who have considered with care the foundation and circumstances of their actions, doubt of their freedom, and are even persuaded, that their reason and understandings are Slaves that cannot resist the force which carries them along.* He says also, in a familiar Letter, *That the best proofs al-*
E ledg'd

† Diction-
naire, p.
1497. 2d.
edit.

* Letter
of the 13 of
December,
1696, to the
Abbot Du
Bos.

*ledg'd for Liberty are, that without it
Man could not sin; and that God would be
the author of evil, as well as good thoughts*.*

De Orig.
mali. c. 5.

And the celebrated Mr. LEIBNIZ, that universal genius on occasion of Archbishop KING's *appeal to experience*, (in behalf of his notion of *liberty*, viz. *A faculty, which, being indifferent to objects, and over-ruling our passions, appetites, sensations, and reason, chuses arbitrarily among objects; and renders the object chosen agreeable, only because it has chosen it*) denies, that we experience such, or any other *Liberty*; but contends that we rather experience a determination in all our actions. Says he, *We experience something in us which inclines us to a choice; and if it happens that we cannot give a reason of all our inclinations, a little attention will show us, that the constitution of our bodies, the bodies encompassing us, the present, or preceding state of our minds, and several little matters comprehended under these great causes, may contribute to make us chuse certain objects, without having recourse to a pure indifference, or to I know not what power of the Soul, which does upon objects, what they say colours do upon the Camelion.* In fine, he is so far from

Remarques sur le
liv. de l'Orig.
du mal,
p. 76.

from thinking that there is the least foundation from *Experience*, for the said Page. 84. notion of *Liberty*, that he treats it as a *chimera*, and compares it to the magical power of the *Fairies* to transform things.

Lastly, The Journalists of *Paris* are very far from thinking Archbishop KING's notion of liberty to be matter of experience, when they say, *That Dr. KING, not satisfy'd with any of the former notions of Liberty, proposes a new notion; and carries indifference so far, as to maintain that pleasure is not the motive but the effect of the choice of the will; placet res quia eligitur, non eligitur quia placet. This opinion, add they, makes him frequently contradict himself**.

* Journal des Savans of the 16 of March 1505.

So that upon the whole, the affair of experience, with relation to *liberty*, stands thus. Some give the name *Liberty* to actions, which when described, are plainly Actions that are necessary; Others, tho' appealing to vulgar experience, yet inconsistently therewith, contradict the vulgar experience, by owning it to be an *intricate matter*, and treating it after an intricate manner; Others are driven into the defence of *Liberty*, by difficulties imagin'd

to flow from the doctrine of *Necessity*, combating what they allow to be matter seeming experience ; Others, and those the most discerning, either think liberty cannot be prov'd by experience, or think Men may see by experience, that they are *necessary Agents* ; and the bulk of Mankind have always been persuaded that they are necessary Agents.

Our experience itself considered.

Having thus pav'd the way by shewing that liberty is not a plain matter of experience, by arguments drawn from the asserters of liberty themselves, and by consequence subverted the argument from experience for liberty ; we will now run over the various actions of Men which can be conceiv'd to concern this subject, and examine, whether we can know from experience, that Man is a free or a necessary Agent. I think those actions may be reduc'd to these four : 1. Perception of Ideas. 2. Judging of Propositions. 3. Willing. 4. Doing as we will.

Perception of Ideas.

1. *Perception of Ideas.* Of this there can be no dispute but it is a necessary action of man, since it is not even a voluntary action. The Ideas both of sensation and reflection, offer themselves to

us whether we will or no, and we cannot reject 'em. We must be conscious that we think, when we do think; and thereby we necessarily have the Ideas of Reflection. We must also use our senses when awake; and thereby necessarily receive the Ideas of Sensation. And as we necessarily receive Ideas, so each Idea is necessarily what it is in our mind: for it is not possible to make any thing different from itself. This first necessary action, the reader will see is the foundation and cause of all the other intelligent actions of man, and makes them also necessary. For, as a judicious author and nice observer of the inward actions of Man, says truly, * *Temples have their sacred images, and we see what influence they have always had over a great part of mankind. But in truth, the Ideas and images in mens minds, are the INVISIBLE POWERS that constantly govern them, and to these, they universally pay a ready submission.*

* Locke's
Works.
p. 1, 2.

2. The second action of man is *judging of propositions.* All propositions must appear to me either self-evident, or evident from proof, or probable, or improbable, or doubtful, or false. Now these

Judging of
Propositions

these various appearances of propositions to me, being founded on my capacity, and the degree of light propositions stand into me; I can no more change those appearances in me, than I can change the Idea of red rais'd in me. Nor can I judge contrary to those appearances: for what is judging of propositions, but judging that propositions do appear as they do appear? which I cannot avoid doing, without lying to myself: which is impossible. If any man thinks he can judge a proposition, appearing to him evident, to be not evident; or a probable proposition, to be more or less probable than it appears by the proofs to be; he knows not what he says, as he may see, if he will define his words. The necessity of being determin'd by appearances, was maintain'd by all the old Philosophers, even by the *Academicks* or *Scepticks*. CICERO says, *You must take from a Man his senses, if you take from him the power of assenting; for it is as necessary the mind should yield to what is clear, as that a scale hanging on a balance, should sink with weight laid on it. For as all living creatures cannot but desire what is agreeable to their natures, so*

they

they cannot but assent to what is clear. Wherefore, if those things whereof we dispute are true; it is to no purpose to speak of assent. For he who apprehends or perceives any thing, assents immediately. Again, assent not only precedes the practice of vice; but of virtue, the steady performance whereof, and adherence to which, depend on what a man has assented to and approv'd. And it is necessary, that something should appear to us before we act, and that we should assent to that appearance. Wherefore he who takes away appearances and assent from man, destroys all action in him. The force of this reasoning manifestly extends to all the various judgments men make upon the appearances of things. And CICERO, as an Academic or Sceptick, must be suppos'd to extend necessity to every kind of judgment or assent of man upon the appearances (or as the Greeks call them *φαινομένη* and himself the *Visa*) of things. SEXTUS EMPIRICUS says, they who say, the Scepticks take away appearances, have not convers'd with them, and do not understand them. For we destroy not the passions, to which our senses find themselves expos'd whether we will or no, and which force us

Pyrrhon.
Hypot. 1.
2. c. 10.

to submit to appearances. For when it is ask'd us, whether objects are such as they appear? we deny not their appearances nor doubt of them, but only question, whether the external objects are like the appearances.

Willing.

3. *Willing*, is the third action of man, which I propose to consider. It is matter of daily experience, that we begin, or forbear, continue or end several actions barely by a thought or preference of the mind, ordering the doing or not doing, the continuing or ending, such or such actions. Thus before we think or deliberate on any subject, or before we get on horse-back, we do prefer those things to any thing else in competition with them. In like manner, if we forbear these actions, when any of them are offer'd to our thoughts: or if we continue to proceed in any one of these actions once begun: or if at any time we make an end of prosecuting them; we do forbear, or continue, or end them on our preference of the forbearance to the doing of them, of the continuing of them to the ending them, and of the ending to the continuing them. This power of the man thus to order the
beginning

beginning or forbearance, the continuance or ending of any action, is call'd *the will*, and the actual exercise thereof, *willing*.

There are two questions usually put about this matter: *first*, Whether we are at liberty to will, or not to will? *secondly*, Whether we are at liberty to will one or the other of two or more objects?

1. As to the first, *whether we are at liberty to will, or not to will?* it is manifest, we have not that liberty. For let an action in a man's power be propos'd to him as presently to be done, as for example, *to walk*; the will to walk, or not to walk, exists immediately. And when an action in a man's power is propos'd to him to be done to morrow, as *to walk to morrow*; he is no less oblig'd to have some immediate will. He must either have a will to defer willing about the matter propos'd, or must will immediately in relation to the thing propos'd: and one or the other of those wills must exist immediately, no less than the will to walk, or not to walk in the former case. Wherefore in every proposal of something to be done which is in a man's

power to do, he cannot but have some immediate will.

Locke of
Hum.
Und. l. 2.
c. 21.

Hence appears the mistake of those who *think* men at *liberty to will, or not to will, because, say they, they can suspend willing*, in relation to actions to be done to morrow; wherein they plainly confound themselves, with words. For when it is said, man is necessarily determin'd to will; it is not thereby understood, that he is determin'd to will or chuse one out of two objects immediately in every case propos'd to him (or to chuse at all in some cases; as whether he *will* travel into *France* or *Holland*), but that on every propofal he must necessarily have some will. And he is not less determin'd to will, because he does often suspend willing or chusing in certain cases: for *suspending to will*, is itself an *act of willing*; it is willing to defer willing about the matter propos'd. In fine, tho' great stress is laid on the case of *suspending the will*, to prove *liberty*, yet there is no difference between that and the most common cases of willing and chusing upon the manifest excellency of one object before another. For as when a man wills or chuses living in *England*

gland before going out of it (in which will he is manifestly determin'd by the satisfaction he has in living in *England*) he rejects the will to go out of *England*; so a man, who suspends a will about any matter, wills doing nothing in it at present, or rejects for a time willing about it; which circumstances of wholly rejecting, and rejecting for a time, make no variation that affects the question. So that willing or chusing suspension, is like all other choices or wills we have.

2. Secondly, let us now see, *whether we are at liberty to will or chuse one or the other of two or more objects.* Now as to this, we will, *first*, consider, whether we are at liberty to will one of two or more objects wherein we discern any difference: that is, where one upon the whole seems less hurtful than another. And this will not admit of much dispute, if we consider what willing is. Willing or preferring, is the same with respect to good and evil, that judging is with respect to truth or falshood. It is judging, that one thing is upon the whole better than another, or not so bad as another. Wherefore as we judge of truth or falshood according to appearances; so we

must will or prefer as things seem to us, unless we can lye to ourselves, and think that to be worst, which we think best.

Locke's
Essay of Hu-
man Und. l.
2. c. 21.
sect. 25.

An ingenious author expresses this matter well, when he says, "*the question, whether a man be at liberty to will which of the two he pleases, motion or rest; carries the absurdity of it so manifestly in itself, that one might hereby be sufficiently convinced, that liberty concerns not the will. For to ask, whether a man be at liberty to will either motion or rest, speaking or silence, which he pleases? is to ask, whether a man can will what he wills, or be pleas'd with what he is pleas'd with? A question that needs no answer.*"

To suppose a sensible being capable of willing or preferring, (call it as you please) misery, and refusing good, is to deny it to be really sensible; for every man, while he has his senses, aims at pleasure and happiness, and avoids pain and misery; and this, in willing actions, which are suppos'd to be attended with the most terrible consequences. And therefore the ingenious Mr. NORRIS

Theory of
Love, p. 139.

† very justly observes, that *all who com-*

mit

mit sin, think it at the instant of commission all things consider'd, a lesser evil; Otherwise it is impossible they should commit it: and he instances in St. PETER'S denial of his Master, who, he says, judg'd that part most eligible which he chose; that is, he judg'd the sin of denying his Master, at that present juncture, to be less evil, than the danger of not denying him, and so chose it. Otherwise, if he had then actually thought it a greater evil, all that whereby it exceeded the other, he would have chosen gratis, and consequently have willed evil as evil, which is impossible. And another acute Philosopher observes, * that there are in France many new converts, who go to mass with great reluctance. They know they mortally offend God, but as each offence would cost them (suppose) two pistoles, and having reckon'd the charge, and finding that this fine paid as often as there are festivals and sundays, would reduce them and their families to beg their bread, they conclude it is better to offend God, than beg.

In fine, tho' there is hardly any thing so absurd, but some ancient philosopher or other may be cited for it; yet according to PLATO †, none of them were so
absurd

* Bayle
Reponse aux
Quef. Sc.
vol. 3. p.
756.

† Opera
Edit.
Serran. vol.
1. p. 345,
346.

Bramball's
Works, p.
656, and
658.

absurd to say that men did evil voluntarily; and he asserts, that it is contrary to the nature of man, to follow evil, as evil, and not pursue good; and that when a man is compell'd to chuse between two evils, you will never find a man who chuses the greatest, if it is in his power to chuse the less; and that this is a truth manifest to all. And even the greatest modern advocates for liberty allow, that whatever the will chuseth, it chuseth under the notion of good; and that the object of the will is good in general, which is the end of all human actions.

This I take to be sufficient to shew, that man is not at liberty to will one or the other of two or more objects, between which (all things consider'd) he perceives a difference; and to account truly for all the choices of that kind, which can be assign'd.

But, secondly, some of the patrons of liberty contend, that we are free in our choice among things indifferent, or alike, as in chusing one out of two or more eggs; and that in such cases the man having no motives from the objects, is not necessitated to chuse one rather than the other, because there is no perceivable

ceivable difference between them, but chuses one by a mere act of willing without any cause but his own free act. To which I answer, 1. First, by asking whether this and other instances like this are the only instances wherein man is free to will or chuse among objects? If they are the only instances wherein man is free to will or chuse among objects, then we are advanc'd a great way in the question; because there are few (if any) objects of the will that are perfectly alike; and because necessity is hereby allow'd to take place in all cases where there is a perceivable difference in things, and consequently in all moral and religious cases, for the sake whereof such endeavours have been us'd to maintain so absurd and inconsistent a thing as *liberty* or *freedom* from *necessity*. So that liberty is almost, if not quite, reduc'd to nothing, and destroy'd as to the grand end in asserting it. If those are not the only instances wherein man is free to will or chuse among objects, but man is free to will in other cases, these other cases should be assign'd, and not such cases as are of no consequence, and which by the great likeness of the objects to one another

nother, and for other reasons make the cause of the determination of man's will less easy to be known, and consequently serve to no other purpose but to darken the question, which may be better determin'd by considering, *whether man be free to will or no* in more important instances. 2. Secondly, I answer, that whenever a choice is made, there can be no equality of circumstances preceding the choice. For in the case of chusing one out of two more eggs, between which there is no perceivable difference; there is not nor can there be a true equality of circumstances and causes preceding the act of chusing one of the said eggs. It is not enough to render *things* equal to the will, that they are equal or alike in themselves. All the various modifications of the man, his opinions, prejudices, temper, habit, and circumstances are to be taken in and consider'd as causes of *election* no less than the objects without us among which we chuse; and these will ever incline or determine our wills, and make the choice we do make, preferable to us, tho' the external objects of our choice are ever so much alike to each other. - And, for example,

in

in the case of chusing one out of two eggs that are alike, there is, first, in the person chusing a will to eat or use an egg. There is, secondly, a will to take but one, or one first. Thirdly, consequent to these two wills, follow in the same instant chusing and taking *one*; which *one* is chosen and taken most commonly, according as the parts of our bodies have been form'd long since by our wills or by other causes to an habitual practice, or as those parts are determin'd by some particular circumstances at that time. And we may know by reflection on our actions that several of our choices have been determin'd to one among several objects by these last means, when no cause has arisen from the mere consideration of the objects themselves. For we know by experience, that we either use all the parts of our bodies by habit, or according to some particular cause determining their use at that time. Fourthly, there are in all trains of causes, that precede their effects, and especially effects which nearly resemble each other, certain differences undiscernable on account of their minuteness, and also on account of our not accustoming our-

G selves

selves to attend to them, which yet in concurrence with other causes as necessarily produce their effect, as the last feather laid on breaks the horse's back, and as a grain necessarily turns the balance between any weights, tho' the eye cannot discover which is the greatest weight or bulk by so small a difference. And I add, that as we know without such discovery by the eye, that if one scale rises and the other falls there is a greater weight in one scale than the other, and also know that the least additional weight is sufficient to determine the scales; so likewise we may know that the least circumstance in the extensive chain of causes, that precede every effect, is sufficient to produce an effect; and also know, that there must be causes of our choice (tho' we do not or cannot discern those causes) by knowing, *that every thing that has a beginning must have a cause.* By which last principle we are as necessarily led to conceive a cause of action in man, where we see not the particular cause itself; as we are to conceive that a greater weight determines a scale, tho' our eyes discover no difference between the two weights.

But

But let us put a case of true equality or Indifference, and what I have asserted will more manifestly appear true. Let two eggs appear perfectly alike to a man; and let him have no will to eat or use eggs. (For so the case ought to be put, to render things perfectly indifferent to him; because, if once *a will* to eat eggs be suppos'd, that *will* must necessarily introduce a train of causes which will ever destroy an equality of circumstances in relation to the things which are the objects of our choice. There will soon follow a second will to eat one first. And these *two wills* must put the man upon action and the usage of the parts of his body to obtain his end; which parts are determin'd in their motions either by some habitual practice or by some particular circumstance at that time, and cause the man to chuse and take one of them first rather than the other.) The case of equality being thus rightly stated, I say, it is manifest no choice would or could be made; and the Man is visibly prevented in the beginning from making a choice. For every man experiences, that before he can make a choice among eggs, he must

have a will to eat or use an egg; otherwise he must let them alone. And he also experiences in relation to all things which are the objects of his choice, that he must have a precedent will to chuse; otherwise he will make no choice. No man marries one woman preferable to another, or travels into *France* rather than into another countrey, or writes a book on one subject rather than another, but he must first have a precedent will to marry, travel, and write.

It is therefore contrary to experience, to suppose any choice can be made under an equality of circumstances. And by consequence it is matter of experience, that man is ever determin'd in his willing or acts of volition and choice.

Doing as we
will.

4. Fourthly, I shall now consider the actions of men consequent to *willing*, and see whether he be *free* in any of those actions. And here also we experience perfect necessity. If we will thinking or deliberating on a subject, or will reading, or walking, or riding, we find we must do those actions, unless some external impediment, as an apoplexy or some intervening cause, hinders us; and then we are as much necessitated to let an
action

action alone, as we are to act according to our will, had no such external impediment to action happen'd. If also we change our wills after we have begun any of these actions, we find we necessarily leave off these actions and follow the *new will* or choice. And this was ARISTOTLE'S sense of such actions of man.

As, says he, in arguing we necessarily assent to the inference or conclusion drawn from premises, so if that arguing relate to practice, we necessarily act upon such inference or conclusion. As for example, when we argue thus, whatever is sweet is to be tasted, this is sweet, he who infers, therefore this ought to be tasted, necessarily tastes that sweet thing if there be no obstacle to hinder him.

Ethica I. 7.
c. 5. ap. Opera
Edit.
Par. Vol. II.
p. 88. &c.

For a conclusion of this argument from experience, let us compare the actions of inferior intelligent and sensible agents, and those of men together. It is allow'd that beasts are necessary agents, and yet there is no perceivable difference between their actions and the actions of men, from whence they should be deem'd *necessary* and men *free* agents. *Sheep*, for example, are suppos'd to be *necessary agents*, when they stand still,
lie

lie down, go slow or fast, turn to the right or left, skip, as they are differently affected in their minds; when they are doubtful or deliberate which way to take; when they eat and drink out of hunger and thirst; when they eat or drink more or less according to their humour, or as they like the water or the pasture; when they chuse the sweetest and best pasture; when they chuse among pastures that are indifferent or alike; when they copulate; when they are fickle or stedfast in their amours; when they take more or less care of their young; when they act in virtue of vain fears; when they apprehend danger and fly from it, and sometimes defend themselves; when they quarrel among themselves about love or other matters, and terminate those quarrels by fighting; when they follow those leaders among themselves that presume to go first; and when they are either obedient to the shepherd and his dog, or refractory. And why should man be deem'd *free* in the performance of the same or the like actions? He has indeed more knowledge than sheep. He takes in more things, as matter of pleasure, than

than they do ; being sometimes mov'd with notions of honour and virtue, as well as with those pleasures he has in common with them. He is also more mov'd by absent things, and things future, than they are. He is also subject to more vain fears, more mistakes and wrong actions, and infinitely more absurdities in notions. He has also more power and strength, as well as more art and cunning, and is capable of doing more good and more mischief to his fellow-men than they are to one another. But these larger powers and larger weaknesses which are of the same kind with the powers and weaknesses of sheep, cannot contain liberty in them, and plainly make no perceivable difference between them and men, as to the general causes of action, in finite intelligent and sensible beings; no more than the different degrees of these powers and weaknesses, among the various kinds of beasts, birds, fishes, and reptiles do among them. Wherefore I need not run thro' the actions of *foxes* or any of the more subtile animals, nor the actions of *children*, which are allow'd by the Advocates of *liberty* to be all necessary. I shall only ask these questions concerning

concerning the last. To what age do children continue necessary agents, and when do they become *free*? what different experience have they when they are suppos'd to be free agents, from what they had while necessary agents? And what different actions do they do, from whence it appears, that they are *necessary* agents to a certain age, and *free* agents afterwards.

2d Argument taken from the impossibility of Liberty.

II. A second reason to prove man a necessary agent is, because all his actions have a beginning. For whatever has a beginning must have a cause; and every cause is a necessary cause.

If any thing can have a beginning which has no cause, then nothing can produce something. And if nothing can produce something, then the world might have had a beginning without a cause: which is not only an absurdity commonly charg'd on Atheists, but is a real absurdity in itself.

Besides, if a cause be not a necessary cause, it is no cause at all. For if causes are not necessary causes; then causes are not suited to, or are indifferent to effects; and the *Epicurean System*
of

of chance is rendred possible ; and this orderly world might have been produc'd by a disorderly or fortuitous concourse of atoms ; or which is all one, by no cause at all. For in arguing against the Epicurean system of chance, do we not say, (and that justly) that it is impossible for chance ever to have produc'd an orderly system of things, as not being a cause suited to the effect ; and that an orderly system of things, which had a beginning, must have had an intelligent Agent for its cause, as being the only proper cause to that effect ? All which implies, that causes are suited or have relation to some particular effects, and not to others. And if they be suited to some particular effect and not to others, they can be no causes at all to those others. And therefore a cause not suited to the effect, and no cause ; are the same thing. And if a cause not suited to the effect, is no cause ; then a cause suited to the effect is a necessary cause : for if it does not produce the effect, it is not suited to it, or is no cause at all of it.

Liberty therefore, or a power to act or not to act, to do this or another thing under the same causes, is an *impossibility* and *atheistical*.

And as *liberty* stands, and can only be grounded on the absurd principles of *Epicurean Atheism*; so the *Epicurean Atheists*, who were the most popular and most numerous sect of the *Atheists* of antiquity, were the great * asserters of *Liberty*; as on the other side, the † *Stoicks*, who were the most popular and most numerous sect among the religionaries of antiquity, were the great asserters of fate and necessity. The case was also the same among the *Jews*, as among the Heathen: the *Jews*, I say, who besides the light of nature had many books of Revelation (some whereof are now lost); and who had intimate and personal conversation with God himself. They were principally divided into three sects, the *Sadducees*, the *Pharisees*, and the *Essenes*. The *Sadducees*, who were esteem'd an irreligious and atheistical sect, maintain'd *the liberty of man*. But the *Pharisees*, who were a religious sect, ascrib'd all things to fate or to God's appointment, and it was *the first article of their creed*, that fate and God do all; and consequently they could not assert a *true liberty*, when they asserted a *liberty* together with this

* Lucretius
l. 2. v. 250,
Etc. Euf.
Prep. Ev. l.
6. c. 7.

† Cicero de
Nat. Deor.
3. 2.

Josephus
Antiq. l. 18.
6. 2.

Jud. l. 2.
6. 7.

this *fatality* and *necessity* of all things. And the *Essenes*, who were the *most religious sect* among the *Jews*, and fell not under the censure of our Saviour for their hypocrisy as the *Pharisees* did, were asserters of *absolute fate* and *necessity*. St. PAUL, who was a *Pharisee* and the son of a *Pharisee*, is suppos'd by the learned DODWELL, to have received his doctrine of fate from the masters of that sect, as they received it from the *Stoicks*. And he observes further, that the *Stoick Philosophy* is necessary for the explication of *Christian Theology*; that there are examples in the holy scriptures of the holy Ghost's speaking according to the opinions of the *Stoicks*; and that in particular, the *Apostle St. PAUL* in what he has disputed concerning *Predestination* and *Reprobation*, is to be expounded according to the *Stoicks* opinion concerning fate. So that liberty is both the real foundation of popular *Atheism*, and has been the profess'd principle of the *Atheists* themselves; as on the other side, *fate* or the *necessity* of events, has been esteem'd a religious opinion and been the profess'd principle of the religious, both among *Heathens* and *Jews*, and also of that great Convert to

Acts 23. 6.

Proleg. ad
Stearn. de
Obstin. sect.
40, & 41.

Christianity and great converter of others, St. PAUL.

3d Argument taken from the Imperfection of Liberty.

III. Thirdly, *Liberty* is contended for by the patrons thereof as a great *perfection*. In order therefore to disprove all pretences for it, I will now show, that according to all the various descriptions given of it by Theologers and Philosophers, it would often be an *imperfection*, but never a *perfection*, as I have in the last article show'd it to be *impossible* and *atheistical*.

Ye Clerc.
Bibl. Choif.
Tom. xii.
p. 88, 89.

I. If *liberty* be defin'd, *a power to pass different judgments at the same instant of time upon the same individual propositions that are not evident* (we being, as it is own'd, *necessariy determin'd to pass but one judgment on evident propositions*) it will follow, that men will be so far irrational, and by consequence *imperfect* agents, as they have that *freedom of judgment*. For, since they would be irrational agents, if they were capable of judging evident propositions not to be evident; they must be also deem'd irrational agents, if they are capable of judging the self-same probable or improbable propositions not to be probable or improbable.

bable. The appearances of all propositions to us, whether evident, probable, or improbable, are the sole rational grounds of our judgments in relation to them : and the appearances of probable or improbable propositions, are no less necessary in us from the respective reasons by which they appear probable or improbable, than are the appearances of evident propositions from the reasons by which they appear evident. Wherefore if it be rational and a perfection to be determin'd by an evident appearance, it is no less so to be determin'd by a probable or improbable appearance ; and consequently an imperfection not to be so determin'd.

It is not only an absurdity, and by consequence an *imperfection*, not to be equally and necessarily determin'd in our respective judgments, by probable and improbable, as well as by evident appearances, which I have just now proved ; but even not to be necessarily determin'd by probable appearances, would be a *greater imperfection*, than not to be necessarily determin'd by evident appearances : because almost all our actions are founded on the probable appearances

ances of things, and few on the evident appearance of things. And therefore, if we could judge, that what appears probable, is not probable but improbable or false; we should be without the best rule of action and assent, we can have.

2. Were *liberty* defin'd, a power to overcome our reason by the force of choice, as a celebrated Author may be suppos'd to mean, when he says, * *the will seems to have so great a power over the understanding being over-rul'd by the election of the will, not only takes what is good to be evil, but is also compelled to admit what is false to be true*; man would, with the exercise of such a power, be the most irrational and inconsistent being, and by consequence, the most *imperfect* understanding being, which can be conceiv'd. For what can be more irrational and inconsistent, than to be able to refuse our assents to what is evidently true to us, and to assent to what we see to be evidently false, and thereby inwardly give the lye to the understanding?

3. Were *liberty* defin'd, a power to will evil (knowing it to be evil) as well as good; that would be an Imperfection in man

* King de
orig. mali. p.
231.

man consider'd as a sensible being, if it be an imperfection in such a being to be miserable. For *willing evil*, is chusing to be miserable, and bringing knowingly destruction on ourselves. Men are already sufficiently unhappy, by their several volitions; founded on the wrong use of their faculties, and on the mistaken appearances of things. But what miserable beings would they be, if instead of chusing evil under the appearance of good (which is the only case wherein men now chuse evil) they were indifferent to good and evil, and had the power to chuse *evil as evil*, and did actually chuse *evil as evil* in virtue of that power? They would in such a state or with such a liberty be like Infants that cannot walk, left to go alone, with liberty to fall: Or like Children, with knives in their hands: Or lastly like young rope-dancers, left to themselves, on their first essays upon the rope, without any one to catch them if they fall. And this miserable state following from the supposition of *liberty*, is so visible to some of the greatest advocates thereof, that they acknowledge, that *created beings, when in a state of happiness cease to*

Bibl.
Choise.
Tom. xii.
p. 95.
Bramhall's
Works,
p. 655.

have

have liberty (that is, cease to have liberty to chuse evil) *being inviolably attach'd to their duty by the actual enjoyment of their felicity.*

4. Were *liberty* defin'd, as it is by some, a power to will or chuse at the same time any one out of two or more indifferent things; that would be no perfection. For those things call'd here *indifferent* or *alike*, may be considered, either as really different from each other, and that only seem indifferent or alike to us thro' our want of discernment; or as exactly like each other. Now the more *liberty* we have in the first kind, that is, the more instances there are of things which seem alike to us and are not alike; the more mistakes and wrong choices we must run into. For if we had just notions, we should know those things were not indifferent or alike. This *liberty* therefore would be founded on a direct imperfection of our faculties. And as to a power of chusing differently at the same time among things, really indifferent; what benefit, what perfection would such a power of chusing be, when the things that are the sole objects of our *free choice* are all alike?

5. Lastly, a celebrated Author seems to understand by liberty, *a faculty, which, being indifferent to objects, and over-ruling our passions, appetites, sensations, and reason, chuses arbitrarily among objects; and renders the object chosen agreeable, only because it has chosen it.*

My design here is to consider this definition, with the same view, that I have consider'd the several foregoing definitions, *viz.* to show, that *liberty, inconsistent with necessity*, however describ'd or defin'd, is an *imperfection*. Referring therefore my reader for a confutation of this *new* notion of *liberty* to the other parts of my book, wherein I have already prov'd, that the existence of such an *arbitrary faculty* is contrary to experience, and impossible; that our *passions, appetites, sensations, and reason*, determine us in our several choices; and that we chuse objects because they please us, and not, as the author pretends, that *objects please us, only because we chuse them*: I proceed to shew the *imperfection* of this last kind of *liberty*.

1. First, the pleasure or happiness accruing from the *liberty* here asserted is less than accrues from the *hypothesis* of *necessity*.

* Page
107, 108.
† P. 107.

All the pleasure and happiness said to attend this pretended *liberty* consists * *wholly* in † *creating* pleasure and happiness by *chusing objects*.

Now man, consider'd as an intelligent necessary agent, would no less *create* this pleasure and happiness to himself by *chusing objects*; than a being indu'd with the said *faculty*: if it be true in fact, that *things please us, because we chuse them*.

But man, as an intelligent necessary agent, has these further pleasures and advantages. He, by not being indifferent to objects, is mov'd by the goodness and agreeableness of them, as they appear to him, and as he knows them by reflection and experience. It is not in his power to be indifferent to what causes pleasure or pain. He cannot resist the pleasure arising from the use of his passions, appetites, senses, and reason: and if he suspends his choice of an object, that is presented to him, by any of these powers as agreeable; it is, because he doubts or examines, whether upon the whole the object would make him happy; and because he would gratify all these powers in the best manner he is able, or at least such of these powers as
he

he conceive tend most to his happiness. If he makes a choice which proves disagreeable, he gets thereby an experience, which may qualify him to chuse the next time with more satisfaction to himself. And thus wrong choices may turn to his advantage for the future. So that, at all times and under all circumstances, he is pursuing and enjoying the greatest happiness, which his condition will allow.

It may not be improper to observe, that some of the pleasures he receives from objects, are so far from being the effect of *choice*, that they are not the effect of the least premeditation or any act of his own, as in finding a treasure on the road, or in receiving a legacy from a person unknown to him.

2. Secondly, this *arbitrary* * *faculty* * P. 147.
to 150. would subject a man to more *wrong choices*, than if he was determin'd in his choice.

A man, determin'd in his choice by the appearing nature of things, and the usage of his intellectual powers, never makes a wrong choice, but by mistaking the true relation of things to him. But a being, indifferent to † *all objects*, and † P. 106.
111.

|| P. 10.V.
107, 113.
139, 141.
147.

sway'd by no motives in his choice of objects, chuses at a venture; and only makes a right choice, when || *it happens* (as the author justly expresses his notion) that he chuses *an object*, which he can by his *creating* power render so agreeable, as that it may be call'd a *rightly chosen object*. Nor can this faculty be improv'd by any experience: but must ever continue to chuse at a venture, or as it *it happens*. For if this *faculty*, improves by experience, and will have regard to the agreeableness or disagreeableness of objects in themselves; it is no longer the *faculty* contended for, but a *faculty* mov'd and affected by the nature of things.

So that man, with a *faculty* of choice indifferent to all objects, must make more *wrong choices*, than man consider'd as a necessary being; in the same proportion, as *acting as it happens*, is a worse direction to chuse right, than the use of our senses, experience, and reason.

3. Thirdly, the existence of such an *arbitrary faculty*, to chuse without regard to the qualities of objects, would destroy the use of our senses, appetites, passions, and reason; which have been
given

given us to direct us in our inquiries after truth, in our pursuit after happiness, and to preserve our beings. For, if we had a *faculty*, which chose without regard to the notices and advertisements of these powers, and by its choice overruled them; we should then be indu'd with a *faculty* to defeat the end and uses of these powers.

But the *imperfection* of liberty inconsistent with necessity, will yet more appear by considering the great *perfection* of being necessarily determin'd.

The Perfection of necessity.

Can any thing be perfect, that is not necessarily perfect? For whatever is not necessarily perfect may be imperfect, and is by consequence imperfect.

Is it not a perfection in God necessarily to know all truth?

Is it not a perfection in him to be necessarily happy?

Is it not also a perfection in him to will and do always what is best? For if all things are *indifferent* to him, as some of the advocates of liberty assert, and become *good* only by his *willing* them; he cannot have any motive from his own Ideas, or from the nature of things, to *will* one thing rather than another; and consequently

King de
orig. mali.
p. 177.

consequently he must *will* without any reason or cause: which cannot be conceiv'd possible of any being; and is contrary to this self-evident truth, that *whatever has a beginning must have a cause*. But if things are not *indifferent* to him, he must be necessarily determin'd by what is best. Besides, as he is a wise being, he must have some end and design: and as he is a good being, things cannot be *indifferent* to him, when the happiness of intelligent and sensible beings, depend on the will he has, in the formation of things. With what consistency therefore can those advocates of liberty assert GOD to be *a holy and good being*, who maintain that *all things are indifferent* to him before he wills any thing; and that he may will, and do *all things*, which they themselves esteem wicked and unjust?

Page 117.

I cannot give a better confirmation of this argument from the consideration of the Attributes of GOD, than by the judgment of the late Bishop of SARUM; which has the more weight, as proceeding from a great asserter of liberty, who by the force of truth is driven to say what he does. He grants, that *infinite perfection*

fection excludes successive thoughts in God; and therefore that the Essence of God is one perfect thought, in which he views and wills all things. And though his transient acts such as creation, providence and miracles, are done in a succession of time; yet his immanent acts, his knowledge and decrees, are one with his essence. And as he grants this to be a true notion of God so he allows that a vast difficulty arises from it against the liberty of God. For, says he, the imminent acts of God being suppos'd free, it is not easy to imagine how they should be one with the divine essence; to which, necessary existence does most certainly belong. And if the immanent acts of God are necessary, then the transient must be so likewise, as being the certain effects of his immanent acts: and a chain of necessary fate must run through the whole order of things: and God himself then is no free being, but acts by a necessity of nature. And this necessity, to which God is thus subject, is, adds he, no absurdity to some. God is, according to them, necessarily just, true, and good, by an intrinsic necessity that arises from his own infinite perfection. And from hence they have thought, that since God acts by in-

Expof.
p. 26, 27.

finite

finite wisdom and goodness, things could not have been otherwise than they are: for what is infinitely wise or good cannot be alter'd, or made either better or worse. And he concludes, that he must leave this difficulty without pretending to explain it, or answer the objections that arise against all the several ways by which Divines have endeavour'd to resolve it.

*Bramball's
Works. p.
656, 695.*

Again, are not Angels and other heavenly beings esteem'd more perfect than men; because, having a clear insight into the nature of things, they are necessarily determin'd to judge right in relation to truth and falsehood, and to chuse right in relation to good and evil, pleasure and pain; and also to act right in pursuance of their judgment and choice? And therefore would not man be more perfect than he is, if, by having a clear insight into the nature of things, he was necessarily determin'd to assent to truth only, to chuse only such objects as would make him happy, and to act accordingly?

Further, is not man more perfect, the more capable he is of conviction? And will he not be more capable of conviction, if he be necessarily determin'd in his assent

assent by what seems a reason to him, and necessarily determin'd in his several volitions by what seems good to him; than if he was indifferent to propositions notwithstanding any reason for them, or was indifferent to any objects notwithstanding they seem'd good to him? For otherwise, he could be convinced upon no principles, and would be the most undisciplinable and untractable of all Animals. All advice and all reasonings would be of no use to him. You might offer arguments to him, and lay before him pleasure and pain; and he might stand unmov'd like a rock. He might reject what appears true to him, assent to what seems absurd to him, avoid what he sees to be good, and chuse what he sees to be evil. Indifference therefore to receive truth, that is, *liberty* to deny it when we see it; and Indifference to pleasure and pain, that is, *liberty* to refuse the first and chuse the last, are direct obstacles to knowledge and happiness. On the contrary, to be necessarily determin'd by what seems reasonable, and by what seems good, has a direct tendency to promote truth and happiness, and

is the proper perfection of an understanding and sensible being. And indeed it seems strange that men should allow that GOD and Angels act more perfectly because they are determin'd by reason; and also allow, that clocks, watches, mills, and other artificial unintelligent beings are the better, the more they are determin'd to go right by weight and measure: and yet that they should deem it a perfection in man not to be determin'd by his reason, but to have liberty to go against it. Would it not be as reasonable to say, it would be a perfection in a clock not to be necessarily determin'd to go right, but to have its motions depend upon chance?

Again, tho' man does thro' weakness and imperfection fall into several mistakes both in judging and willing in relation to what is true and good; yet he is still less ignorant and less unhappy by being necessarily determin'd in judging by what seems reasonable, and in willing by what seems best, than if he was capable of judging contrary to his reason and willing against his senses. For, were it not so, what *seems false*, would be as
just

just a rule of truth; and what seems evil, as just a rule of good, as what seems good. Which are absurdities too great for any to affirm; especially if we consider, that there is a perfectly wise and good Being, who has given men senses and reason to conduct them.

Lastly, it is a perfection to be necessarily determin'd in our choices, even in the most indifferent things: because, if in such cases there was not a cause of choice, but a choice could be made without a cause; then all choices might be made without a cause, and we should not be necessarily determin'd by the greatest evidence to assent to truth, nor by the strongest inclination for happiness to chuse pleasure and avoid pain; to all which it is a perfection to be necessarily determin'd. For if an action whatsoever can be done without a cause; then effects and causes have no necessary relation, and by consequence we should not be necessarily determin'd in any case at all.

IV. A fourth argument to prove man a necessary agent, shall be taken from the consideration of the divine prescience.

Fourth argument taken from the consideration of the divine prescience.

The divine Prescience supposes, that all things future will certainly exist in such time, such order, and with such circumstances; and not otherwise. For if any things future were contingent, or uncertain, or depended on the liberty of man, that is, might or might not happen; their certain existence could not be the object of the divine prescience: it being a contradiction to know that to be certain, which is not certain: and God himself could only guess at the existence of such things. And if the divine prescience supposes the *certain* existence of all things future, it supposes also the *necessary* existence of all things future; because God can fore-know their certain existence only, either as that existence is the effect of his decree, or as it depends on its own causes. If he fore-knows that existence, as it is the effect of his decree; his decree makes that existence necessary: for it implies a contradiction for an all-powerful being to decree any thing which shall not necessarily come to pass. If he foreknows that existence, as it depends on its own causes; that existence is no less necessary:

ry: for it no less implies a contradiction, that causes should not produce their effects (causes and effects having a necessary relation to and dependance on each other) than that an event should not come to pass, which is decreed by God.

CICERO has some passages to the purpose of this argument. Says he, *Qui potest provideri quidquam futurum esse quod neque causam habet ullam, neque notam, cur futuram sit?---Quid est igitur, quod casu fieri aut forte fortuna, putemus?-----Nihil est enim tam contrarium rationi & constantiæ quam fortuna; ut mihi ne in Deum cadere videatur, ut sciat, quid casu & fortuito futurum sit. Si enim scit, certe illud eveniet. Sin certe eveniet, nulla est fortuna. Est autem fortuna. Rerum igitur fortuitarum nulla est presentio.* Also that illustrious Reformer LUTHER says, in his treatise against free-will: *Concessaa Dei præscientia & omnipotentia, sequitur naturaliter irrefragabili consequentia, nos per nos ipsos non esse factos, nec vivere, nec agere quicquam, sed per illius omnipotentiam. Cum autem tales nos ille ante præscierit futuros, talesque nunc faciat, moveat, & gubernet; quid potest*

De Div
vin. c. 2.

Cap. 147.

potest fingi quæso, quod in nobis liberum sit, aliter & aliter fieri, quam ille præscierit, aut nunc agat? Pugnat itaque ex diametro præscientia & omnipotentia Dei cum nostro libero arbitrio. Aut enim Deus fallatur præsciendo, errabit & agendo (quod est impossibile) aut nos agemus & agemur secundum ipsius præscientiam & actionem. And our learned Dr. SOUTH says, *the fore-knowledge of an event does certainly and necessarily infer, that there must be such an event; for as much as the certainty of knowledge depends upon the certainty of the thing known. And in this sense it is, that God's decree and promise give a necessary existence to the thing decreed or promised, that is to say, they infer it by infallible consequence; so that it was as impossible for Christ not to rise from the dead, as it was for God absolutely to decree and promise a thing, and yet the thing not come to pass.*

Sermons,
Vol. III.
p. 488.

* See among others
Cartesii Prin.
Pars I. Art.
41. Locke's
Letters, p. 27.
Tillotson's
Sermons, V.
VI. p. 157.
Stilling-
fleet of
Christ's sa-
tisfaction,
p. 355.

I could also bring in the greatest Divines and * Philosophers who are asserters of liberty, as confirming this argument; for * they acknowledge, that they are unable to reconcile the *divine prescience* and the *liberty* of man together:

ther : which is all I intended to prove by this argument, taken from the consideration of the *divine Prescience*.

V. A fifth argument to prove man a necessary agent, is as follows : If man was not a necessary agent, determin'd by pleasure and pain, there would be no foundation for rewards and punishments, which are the † *essential Supports* of society.

For if men were not necessarily determin'd by pleasure and pain, or if pleasure and pain were no causes to determine mens wills ; of what use would be the prospect of rewards to frame a man's will to the observation of the law, or punishments to hinder his transgression thereof? Were pain, as such, eligible, and pleasure, as such, avoidable ; rewards and punishments could be no motives to a man, to make him do or forbear any action. But if pleasure and pain have a necessary effect on men, and if it be impossible for men not to chuse what seems good to them, and not to a-

Fifth argument taken from the nature of rewards and punishments.

† Solon rempublicam contineri dicebat duabus rebus, præmio & pœnâ, Cicero Epist. 15. ad Brutum.

void what seems evil; the necessity of rewards and punishments is then evident, and rewards will be of use to all those who conceive those rewards to be pleasure, and punishments will be of use to all those who conceive them to be pain: and rewards and punishments will frame those mens wills to observe, and not transgress the laws.

Besides, since there are so many robbers, murderers, whoremasters, and other criminals, who notwithstanding the punishments threatn'd, and rewards promis'd, by laws; prefer breaking the laws as the greater good or lesser evil, and reject conformity to them as the greater evil or lesser good: how many more would there be, and with what disorders would not all societies be fill'd, if rewards and punishments, consider'd as pleasure and pain, did not determine some mens wills, but that, instead thereof, all men could prefer or will punishment consider'd as pain, and reject rewards consider'd as pleasure? men would then be under no restraints.

VI. My sixth and last argument to prove man a necessary agent is: if man was not a necessary agent determin'd by pleasure and pain, he would have no notion of *morality*, or motive to practise it: the distinction between morality and immorality, virtue and vice would be lost; and man would not be a moral agent.

Sixth argument taken from the nature of morality.

Morality or Virtue, consists in such actions as are in their own nature, and upon the whole, *pleasant*; and immorality or vice, consists in such actions as are in their own nature, and upon the whole *painful*. Wherefore a man must be affected with pleasure and pain, in order to know what morality is, and to distinguish it from immorality. He must also be affected with pleasure and pain, to have a reason to practise morality; for there can be no motives, but pleasure and pain, to make a Man do or forbear any action. And a man must be the more moral, the more he understands or is duly sensible, what actions give pleasure and what pain; and must be perfectly moral, if necessarily determin'd by

Locke's Essay of H. Und. l. II. c. 20. Serjeant's Solid. Philos. assert. ed, p. 219.

L

pleasure

pleasure and pain, rightly understood and apprehended. But if man be *indifferent* to pleasure and pain, or is not duly affected with them; he cannot know what morality is, nor distinguish it from immorality, nor have any motive to practise morality, and abstain from immorality; and will be equally indifferent to morality and immorality, or virtue and vice. Man in his present condition is sufficiently immoral by mistaking pain for pleasure, and thereby judging, willing, and practising amiss: but if he was indifferent to pleasure and pain, he would have no rule to go by, and might never judge, will, and practise right.

Objections
answer'd.

Tho' I conceive I have so propos'd my arguments, as to have obviated most of the plausible objections usually urg'd against the doctrine of necessity; yet it may not be improper to give a particular solution to the principal of them.

First objection.

* Auli
Gellii no-
tes Att. 1.
6. c. 2.

1. First then it is objected, that * *if men are necessary agents and do commit necessarily all breaches of the law, it would be unjust to punish them for doing what they cannot avoid doing.*

To which I answer, that the sole end of punishment in society is to prevent, as far as may be, the commission of *certain* crimes: and that punishments have their designed effect two ways; first, by restraining or cutting off from society the *vicious* members; and secondly, by correcting men or terrifying them from the commission of those crimes. Now let punishments be inflicted with either of these views, it will be manifest, that no regard is had to any *free-agency* in man, in order to render those punishments just; but that on the contrary punishments may be *justly* inflicted on man tho' a necessary agent. For, first, if *murderers* for example, or any such *vicious* members are cut off from society, merely as they are publick nuisances, and unfit to live among men; it is plain, they are in that case so far from being consider'd as *free-agents*, that they are cut off from society as a canker'd branch is from a tree, or as a mad dog is kill'd in the streets. And the punishment of such men is *just*, as it takes mischievous members out of society. Also for the same reason, *furious madmen*, whom all allow

to be necessary agents, are in many places of the world, either the objects of judicial punishments, or are allow'd to be dispatch'd by private men. Nay, even *men infected with the plague*, who are not voluntary agents and are guilty of no crime, are sometimes thought to be justly cut off from society, to prevent contagion from them. Secondly, let punishments be inflicted on some criminals with a view to terrify, it will appear that in inflicting punishments with that view, no regard is had to any *free-agency* in man, in order to make those punishments *just*. To render the punishment of such men *just*, it is sufficient that they were *voluntary* agents, or had the will to do the crime for which they suffer for the law very justly and rightly regardeth only the will, and no other preceding causes of action. For example, suppose the law on pain of death forbids theft, and there be a man who by the strength of temptation is necessitated to steal, and is thereupon put to death for it; doth not his punishment *deter* others from theft? Is it not a cause, that others steal not? Doth it not frame their wills

to justice? Whereas, a criminal who is an involuntary agent, (as for instance, a man who has kill'd another in a chance medly or while in a fever, or the like) cannot serve for an example to *deter* any others from doing the same; he being no more an intelligent agent in doing the crime, than an house is, which kills a man by its fall: and by consequence the punishment of such an involuntary agent would be unjust. When therefore a man does a crime *voluntarily*, and his punishment will serve to deter others from doing the same, he *is justly punished for doing what* (thro' strength of temptation, ill habits, or other causes) *he could not avoid doing.*

It may not be improper to add this farther consideration from the law of our country. There is one case, wherein our law is so far from requiring, that the persons punish'd should be *free-agents*, that it does not consider them as voluntary agents, or even as guilty of the crime for which they suffer: so little is *free-agency* requisite to make punishments just. The children of rebel-parents suffer in their fortunes for the guilt of their parents;

rents; and their punishment is deem'd just, because it is suppos'd to be a means to prevent rebellion in parents.

Second objection.

II. Secondly, it is objected, *that it is useless to threaten punishment or inflict it on men to prevent crimes, when they are necessarily determin'd in all their actions.*

First answer.

I. To which I answer, first, that *threatning of punishments* is a cause which necessarily determines some mens wills to a conformity to law and against committing the crimes to which punishments are annex'd; and therefore is useful to all those whose wills must be determin'd by it. It is as useful to such men, as the sun is to the ripening the fruits of the earth, or as any other causes are to produce their proper effects; and a man may as well say the sun is useless, if the ripening the fruits of the earth be necessary, as say, there is no need of threatning punishment for the use of those to whom threatning punishment is a necessary cause of forbearing to do a crime. It is also of use to society to *inflict* punishments on men *for doing what they cannot avoid doing*, to the end that necessary causes

causes may exist, to form the wills of those who in virtue of them necessarily observe the laws; and also of use to cut them off as *noxious members* of society.

2. But secondly, so far is threatening and inflicting punishments from being usefess, if men are necessary agents, that it would be usefess to *correct* and *deter* (which are the principal effects design'd to be obtained by threatening and inflicting punishments) unless men were necessary agents, and were determin'd by pleasure and pain; because, if men were free or indifferent to pleasure and pain, pain could be no motive to cause men to observe the law.

Second
answer.

3. Thirdly, men have every day examples before them of the usefulness of punishments upon some intelligent or sensible beings, which they all contend are necessary agents. They punish dogs, horses, and other animals every day with great success, and make them leave off their vicious habits, and form them thereby according to their wills. These are plain facts, and matters of constant experience, and even confirm'd by the evasions of the advocates of liberty, who
call

Third an-
swer.

*Bramball's
Works, p.
685.*

call *the rewards and punishments* us'd to brute beasts *analogical*; and say, that *beating them and giving them victuals, have only the shadow of rewards and punishments.* Nor are capital punishments without their use among beasts and birds. RORARIUS tells us, that *they crucify Lyons in Africa to drive away other Lyons from their cities and towns*; and that *travelling thro' the country of Juliers, he observ'd, they hanged up wolves to secure their flocks.* And in like manner with us, men hang up *crows and rooks* to keep birds from their corn, as they hang up murderers in chains to deter other murderers. But I need not go to brutes for examples of the usefulness of punishments on necessary agents. Punishments are not without effect on *some idiots and madmen*, by restraining them to a certain degree; and they are the very means by which the minds of *children*, are form'd by their parents. Nay, punishments have plainly a better effect on *children*, than on grown persons; and more easily form them to virtue and discipline, than they change the vicious habits of grown persons, or plant new habits in them.

*Quod bruti anim. &c.
l. 2. p. 109.*

them. Wherefore the Objectors ought to think punishments may be threatened and inflicted on men usefully, tho' they are necessary agents.

3. Thirdly; it is objected, *if men are necessary agents, it is of no use to represent reasons to them, or to entreat them, or to admonish them, or to blame them, or to praise them.* Third
Objection.

To which I answer, that all these, according to me, are necessary causes to determine certain mens wills to do what we desire of them; and are therefore useful, as acting on such necessary agents to whom they are necessary causes of action; but would be of no use, if men had *free-will*, or their wills were not mov'd by them. So that they who make this objection must run into the absurdities of saying, that *that cause is useful, which is no cause of action, and serves not to change the will*; and that *that cause is usefess, which necessitates the effect.* Answer.

Let me add something further in respect of praise. Men have at all times been prais'd for actions judged by all the world to be necessary. It has been

a standing method of commendation among the Epick Poets, who are the greatest Panegyrist of glorious actions, to attribute their Hero's valour and his great actions, to some Deity present with him and assisting him. HOMER gives many of his Hero's a God or a Goddess to attend them in battle, or to be ready to help them in distress. VIRGIL describes ÆNEAS as always under the divine direction and assistance. And TASSO gives the Christians in their holy war divine assistance.

Orators also and Historians, think necessary actions the proper subjects of praise. CICERO, when he maintain'd, that the Gods inspir'd MILO with the design and courage to kill CLODIUS, did not intend to lessen the satisfaction or glory of MILO, but on the contrary to augment it. But can there be a finer commendation than that given by VELLEIUS PATERCULUS to CATO, that he *was good by nature, because he could not be otherwise?* For, that alone is true goodness which flows from disposition, whether that disposition be natural or acquir'd. Such goodness may be de-
 pended

Oratio pro
Milone.

pended on; and will seldom or ever fail. Whereas goodness founded on any reasonings whatsoever, is a very precarious thing; as may be seen by the lives of the greatest Declaimers against vice, who tho' they are constantly acquainting themselves with all the topicks that can be drawn from the excellency of goodness or virtue, and the mischiefs of vice; the rewards that attend the one, and the punishments that attend the other: yet are not better, than those, who are never conversant in such topicks. Lastly, the common proverb, *gaudeant bene nati*, is a general commendation of men for what plainly in no sense depends on them.

4. Fourthly, it is objected, that *if all events are necessary, then there is a period fix'd to every man's life: and if there is a period fix'd to every man's life, then it cannot be shortned by want of care or violence offer'd, or diseases; nor can it be prolong'd by care or physick: and if it cannot be shortned or prolong'd by them, then it is usefess to avoid or use any of these things.*

Fourth
Objection.

Answer.

In answer to which, I grant, that if the period of human life be fix'd (as I contend it is) it cannot but happen at the time fix'd, and nothing can fall out to prolong or shorten that period. Neither such want of care, nor such violence offer'd, nor such diseases can happen as can cause the period of human life to fall short of that time; nor such care, nor physick be us'd, as to prolong it beyond that time. But tho' these cannot so fall out, as to shorten or prolong the period of human life; yet being necessary causes in the chain of causes to bring human life to the period fix'd, or to cause it not to exceed that time, they must as necessarily precede that effect, as other causes do their proper effects; and consequently when us'd or neglected, serve all the ends and purposes, that can be hop'd for or fear'd from the use of any means, or the neglect of any means whatsoever: For example, let it be fix'd and necessary for the river *Nile* annually to overflow; the means to cause it to overflow, must no less necessarily precede. And as it would be absurd to argue, that *if the overflowing of the Nile was annually fix'd*
and

and necessary, it would overflow, tho' the necessary means to make it overflow did not precede; so it is no less absurd to argue from the fix'd period of human life, against the necessary means to bring it to its fix'd period, or to cause it not to exceed that period.

5. Fifthly, it is ask'd, *how a man can act against his conscience, and how a man's conscience can accuse him, if he knows he acts necessarily, and also does what he thinks best when he commits any sin?* I reply, that conscience being a man's own opinion of his actions with relation to some rule, he may at the time of doing an action contrary to that rule, know that he breaks that rule; and consequently act with reluctance, tho' not sufficient to hinder the action. But after the action is over, he may not only judge his action to be contrary to that rule; but by the absence of the pleasure of the sin, and by finding himself obnoxious to shame, or by believing himself liable to punishment, he may *really accuse himself*; that is, he may condemn himself for having done it, be sorry he has done it, and

Fifth
Objection.

Answer.

and wish it undone, because of the consequences that attend it.

Sixth
Objection.

6. Sixthly, it is objected, *that if all events are necessary, it was as impossible (for example) for JULIUS CÆSAR not to have died in the Senate, as it is impossible for two and two to make six. But who will say the former was as impossible as the latter is, when we can conceive it possible for JULIUS CÆSAR to have died any where else as well as in the Senate, and impossible to conceive two and two ever to make six?*

Answer.

To which I answer, that I do allow, *that if all events are necessary, it was as impossible for JULIUS CÆSAR not to have died in the Senate, as it is impossible for two and two to make six:* and will add, that it is no more possible to conceive the death of JULIUS CÆSAR to have happen'd any where else but in the Senate, than that two and two should make six. For whoever does conceive his death possible any where else, supposes other circumstances preceding his death than did precede his death. Whereas let them suppose all the same circumstances

to

to come to pass that did precede his death; and then it will be impossible to conceive (if they think justly) his death could have come to pass any where else, as they conceive it impossible for two and two to make six. I observe also, that to suppose other circumstances of any action possible, than those that do precede it, is to suppose a contradiction or impossibility: for, as all actions have their particular circumstances, so every circumstance preceding an action, is as impossible not to have come to pass, by virtue of the causes preceding that circumstance, as that two and two should make six.

Having, as I hope, prov'd the truth of what I have advanc'd, and answer'd the most material objections that can be urg'd against me; it will, perhaps, not be improper to give some account of the sentiments of the learned in relation to my subject, and confirm by *authority* what I have said, for the sake of those with whom *authority* has weight in matters of speculation.

The Opini-
ons of the
learned con-
cerning li-
berty, &c.

The questions of *liberty*, *necessity*, and *chance*, have been subjects of dispute among Philosophers at all times; and most of those Philosophers have clearly asserted *necessity*, and deny'd *liberty* and *chance*.

The questions of *liberty* and *necessity*, have also been debated among Divines in the several ages of the Christian Church, under the terms of *free-will* and *predestination*: and the Divines who have deny'd *free-will* and asserted *predestination*, have inforc'd the arguments of the Philosopher, by the consideration of some doctrines peculiar to the Christian Religion. And as to *chance*, *hazard*, or *fortune*, I think, Divines unanimously agree, that those words have no meaning.

Some Christian communions have even proceeded so far in relation to these matters, as to condemn in Councils and Synods the doctrine of *free-will* as heretical; and the denial thereof is become a part of the *Confessions of Faith*, and *Articles of Religion* of several Churches.

From this state of the fact, it is manifest, that whoever embraces the opinion

I have maintain'd, cannot want the *authority* of as many learned and pious men, as in embracing the contrary.

But considering how little men are mov'd by the *authority* of those who profess'dly maintain opinions contrary to theirs, tho' at the same time they themselves embrace no opinion but on the *authority* of some-body ; I shall wave all the advantages that I might draw from the *authority* of such Philosophers and Divines as are undoubtedly on my side : and for that reason shall not enter into a more particular detail of them ; but shall offer the *authority* of such men, who profess to maintain *liberty*. There are indeed very few real adversaries to the opinion I defend among those who pretend to be so ; and upon due inquiry it will be found, that most of those who assert *liberty* in words, deny the thing, when the question is rightly stated. For proof whereof, let any man examin the clearest and acutest authors who have written for *liberty*, or discourse with those who think *liberty* a matter of experience, and he will see, that they allow, that the *will*, follows the judgment

of the understanding ; and that, when two objects are presented to a man's choice, one whereof appears better than the other, he cannot choose the worst ; that is, cannot choose evil as evil. And since they acknowledge these things to be true, they yield up the question of *liberty* to their adversaries, who only contend, that the will or choice is always determin'd by what seems best. I will give my reader one example thereof in the most acute and ingenious Dr. CLARK, whose authority is equal to that of many others put together, and makes it needless to cite others after him. He asserts, that *the will* is determin'd by *moral motives*, and calls the *necessity*, by which a man chooses in virtue of those motives, *moral necessity*. And he explains himself with his usual candor and perspicuity by the following instance. *A man*, says he, *intirely free from all pain of body and disorder of mind*, judges it unreasonable for him to hurt or destroy himself ; and being under no temptation or external violence, he CANNOT POSSIBLY act contrary to this judgment ; not because he wants a natural or physical power so to do, but because it

is

Demonst. of
the Being
and Attri-
but. of God,
p. 105. of
the 4th E-
dition 1716.

is absurd and mischievous, and morally impossible for him to choose to do it. Which also is the very same reason, why the most perfect rational creatures, superior to men, cannot do evil; not because they want a natural power to perform the material action, but because it is morally impossible, that with a perfect knowledge of what is best, and without any temptation to evil, their will should determine itself to choose to act foolishly and unreasonably.

In this he plainly allows the necessity, for which I have contended. For he assigns the same causes of human actions that I have done; and extends the necessity of human actions as far, when he asserts, that a man *cannot* under those causes, *possibly do the contrary to what he does*; and particularly, that a man under the circumstances, of *judging it unreasonable to hurt or destroy himself, and being under no temptation or external violence, cannot possibly act contrary to that judgment.* And as to a natural or physical power in man to *act contrary to that judgment, and to hurt or destroy himself,* which is asserted in the foregoing passage; that is so far from being inconsi-

stent with the doctrine of *necessity*, that the said *natural power to do the contrary*, or to hurt or destroy himself, is a consequence of the doctrine of *necessity*. For, if man is *necessarily* determin'd by particular *moral causes*, and cannot then possibly act contrary to what he does; he must under opposite *moral causes*, have a power to do the contrary. Man, as determin'd by *moral causes*, cannot possibly choose evil as evil, and by consequence chooses life before death, while he apprehends life to be a good, and death to be an evil; as, on the contrary, he chooses death before life, while he apprehends death to be a good, and life to be an evil. And thus *moral causes*, by being different from one another or differently understood, do determine men differently; and by consequence suppose a *natural power* to choose and act as differently, as those causes differently determine them.

If therefore men will be govern'd by authority in the questions before us, let them sum up the real asserters of the liberty of man, and they will find them

not to be very numerous; but on the contrary, they will find far the greater part of the pretended assertors of *liberty*, to be real assertors of *necessity*.

I shall conclude this Discourse with observing; that tho' I have contended, that *Liberty from Necessity* is contrary to experience; that it is impossible; and if possible, that it is imperfection; that it is inconsistent with the divine perfections; and that it is subversive of laws and morality: yet, to prevent all objections to me, founded on the equivocal use of the word *Liberty*, which like all words employ'd in debates of consequence has various meanings affix'd to it, I think myself oblig'd to declare my opinion, that I take *man* to have a truly valuable *liberty* of another kind. He has a *power to do as he wills, or pleases*. Thus, if he wills, or pleases to speak or be silent; to sit or stand, to ride or walk; to go this way or that way; to move fast or slow; or, in fine, if his will changes like a weather-cock, he is able to do as he wills or pleases: unless
prevented

The Author's notion of *Liberty*.

prevented by some restraint or compulsion, as by being gagg'd; being under an acute pain; being forc'd out of his place; being confin'd; having convulsive motions; having lost the use of his limbs; or such-like causes.

He has also the same power in relation to the actions of his mind, as to those of his body. If he wills or pleases, he can think of this or that subject; stop short or pursue his thoughts; deliberate or defer deliberation or resume deliberation as he pleases; resolve or suspend his resolution as he pleases; and, in fine, can every moment change his object when he pleases: unless prevented by pain, or a fit of an apoplexy; or some such intervening restraint and compulsion.

And is it not a great perfection in man to be able, in relation both to his thoughts and actions, to do as he wills or pleases, in all those cases of pleasure and interest? Nay, can a greater and more beneficial power in man be conceiv'd

ceiv'd, than to be able to do as he wills, or pleases? And can any other *liberty* be conceived beneficial to him? Had he this power or *liberty* in all things, he would be omnipotent!

F I N I S.



BOOKS printed for and Sold by R. ROBIN-
SON, at the *Golden Lion* in *S^t. Paul's Church-*
Yard.

BURKITT on the New Testament, 10th Edition,
Folio.

Boyer's French and English Dictionary, Quarto.
— in Octavo.

Hederici Lexicon, Quarto.

Cole's Latin Dictionary, 8vo.

Drelincourt on Death, 8vo.

Sherlock of Death, 8vo.

Dictionarium Rusticum, 2 Vol.

Eachard's Gazetteer, Compleat.

Hudibras, 12mo.

Life of Mr. John Hales of Eaton.

Littleton's Dictionary, 4to.

Patrick's Devout Christian, 12mo.

— Christians Sacrifice, 12mo.

Scarron's Works, 2 Vol. 12mo.

Taylor's Living and Dying.

Ware's History of Ireland, Folio.

Moll's Geography, Folio.

Wifeman's Surgery, 2 Vol. 8vo.

Burnet's Abridgment, 3 Vol. 12mo. 6th Edition.

— Travels, 12mo.

Motteux's Don Quixot, 4 Vol. 12mo.

Vertot's Revolutions of Portugal, 8vo.

Howell's History of England, 8vo.

Tatlers, 4 Vol. 12mo.

Kennet's Roman Antiquities, 8vo.

Potter's Antiquities, 2 Vol. 8vo.

Beveridge's Thoughts, 2 Vol. 8vo.

— 12mo.

Bates's Works, Folio.

King on the Primitive Church, 8vo.

Woolsey's Life, Folio.

Virgil, Delph. 8vo.

Machiavel's Works, Folio.

Echard's Terence, 12mo.

Vertot's Revolutions of Rome, 2 Vol.

Wood's Civil Law, Folio.

English Expositor.

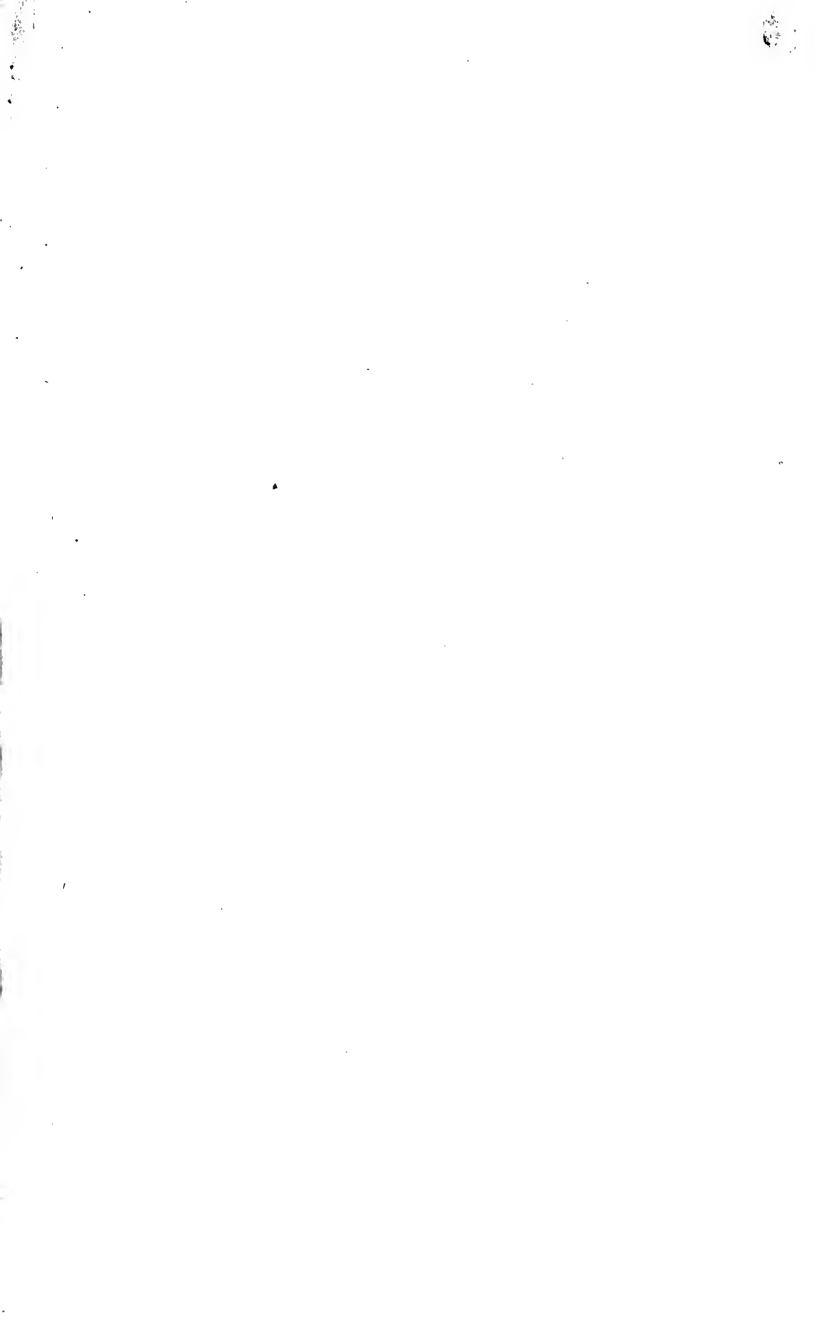
Lowthorp's Abridgment, 3 Vol. 4to.

Shelton's Don Quixot, 4 Vol. 12mo.

Parson's Christians Directory, 8vo.

DATE DUE

JUN 1 5 1984			
JUN 1 5 1984			
GAYLORD			PRINTED IN U.S.A.



2

