A DISCOURSE CONCERNING THE BEING AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD, THE

by Samuel Clarke

Samuel Clarke's powerful sermons on demons and Christian discipleship.

45 Chapters

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Chapter 0

A Discourse Concerning the Being and Attributes of God, the

Chapter 1

Introduction

DEMONSTRATION

OF THE

BEING AND ATTRIBUTES

OF

GOD.

ALL those who either are or pretend to be atheists; The introduction.
who either disbelieve the being of God, or would be thought to do so;
or, (which is all one,) who deny the principal attributes of the divine
nature, and suppose God to be an unintelligent being, which acts merely
by necessity; that is, which, in any tolerable propriety of speech,
acts not at all, but is only acted upon: all men that are atheists, I
say, in this sense, must be so upon one or other of these three
accounts.

Either, first, Because being extremely ignorant Atheism arises from
stupid ignorance. and stupid, they have never duly considered any thing
at all; nor made any just use of their natural reason, to discover even
the plainest and most obvious truths; but have spent their time in a
manner of life very little superior to that of beasts.

Or from gross corruption of manners: Or, secondly, Because being
totally debauched and corrupted in their practice, they have, by a
vicious and degenerate life, corrupted the principles of their nature,
and defaced the reason of their own minds; and, instead of fairly and
impartially inquiring into the rules and obligations of nature, and the
reason and fitness of things, have accustomed themselves only to mock
and scoff at religion; and, being under the power of evil habits, and
the slavery of unreasonable and indulged lusts, are resolved not to

hearken to any reasoning which would oblige them to forsake their beloved vices.

Or from false philosophy. Or, thirdly, Because in the way of speculative reasoning, and upon the principles of philosophy, they pretend that the arguments used against the being or attributes of God, seem to them, after the strictest and fullest inquiry, to be more strong and conclusive than those by which we endeavour to prove these great truths.

These seem the only causes that can be imagined, of any man's disbelieving the being or attributes of God; and no man can be supposed to be an atheist but upon one or other of these three accounts. Now, to the two former of these three sorts of men; namely, to such as are wholly ignorant and stupid, or to such as through habitual debauchery have brought themselves to a custom of mocking and scoffing at all religion, and will not hearken to any fair reasoning; it is not my present business to apply myself. The one of these wants to be instructed in the first principles of reason as well as of religion.

The other disbelieves only for a present false interest, and because he is desirous that the thing should not be true. The one has not yet arrived to the use of his natural faculties: the other has renounced them; and declares he will not be argued with, as a rational creature.

It is therefore the third sort of atheists only (namely those who in the way of speculative reasoning, and upon the principles of philosophy, pretend that the arguments brought against the being or attributes of God, do, upon the strictest and fullest examination, appear to them to be more strong and conclusive, than those by which these great truths are attempted to be proved;) these, I say, are the only atheistical persons to whom my present discourse can be supposed to be directed, or indeed who are capable of being reasoned with at

all.

Now, before I enter upon the main argument, I shall premise several concessions, which these men, upon their own principles, are unavoidably obliged to make.

And first, They must of necessity own, that, supposing The being of God very desirable. it cannot be proved to be true, yet at least it is a thing very desirable, and which any wise man would wish to be true, for the great benefit and happiness of men; that there was a God, an intelligent and wise, a just and good Being, to govern the world. Whatever hypothesis these men can possibly frame; whatever argument they can invent, by which they would exclude God and providence out of the world; that very argument or hypothesis will of necessity lead them to this concession. If they argue, that our notion of God arises not from nature and reason, but from the art and contrivance of politicians; that argument itself forces them to confess, that it is manifestly for the interest of human society that it should be believed there is a God. If they suppose that the world was made by chance, and is every moment subject to be destroyed by chance again; no man can be so absurd as to contend that it is as comfortable and desirable to live in such an uncertain state of things, and so continually liable to ruin, [1] without any hope of renovation; as in a world that were under the preservation and conduct of a powerful, wise, and good God. If they argue against the being of God, from the faults and defects which they imagine they can find in the frame and constitution of the visible and material world; this supposition obliges them to acknowledge, that it would have been better the world had been made by an intelligent and wise Being, who might have prevented all faults and imperfections. If they argue against providence, from the faultiness and inequality which they think they discover in the management of the moral world, this is

a plain confession that it is a thing more fit and desirable in itself, that the world should be governed by a just and good Being, than by mere chance or unintelligent necessity. Lastly, if they suppose the world to be eternally and necessarily self-existent, and consequently that every thing in it is established by a blind and eternal fatality, no rational man can at the same time deny, but that liberty and choice, or a free power of acting, is a more eligible state, than to be determined thus in all our actions, as a stone is to move downward, by an absolute and inevitable fate. In a word, which way soever they turn themselves, and whatever hypothesis they make, concerning the origin and frame of things, nothing is so certain and undeniable, as that man, considered without the protection and conduct of a superior being, is in a far worse case, than upon supposition of the being and government of God, and of men's being under his peculiar conduct, protection, and favour. Man, of himself, is infinitely insufficient for his own happiness: [2] he is liable to many evils and miseries, which he can neither prevent nor redress: he is full of wants which he cannot supply, and compassed about with infirmities which he cannot remove, and obnoxious to dangers which he can never sufficiently provide against: he is secure of nothing that he enjoys in this world, and uncertain of every thing he hopes for: he is apt to grieve for what he cannot help, and eagerly to desire what he is never able to obtain, &c. Under which evil circumstances it is evident there can be no sufficient support, but in the belief of a wise and good God, and in the hopes which true religion affords. Whether therefore the being and attributes of God can be demonstrated or not, it must at least be confessed, by all rational and wise men, to be a thing very desirable, and which they would heartily wish to be true, that there was a God, an intelligent and wise, a just and good Being, to govern the world.

Now, the use I desire to make of this concession is only this: that since the men I am arguing with are unavoidably obliged to confess that it is a thing very desirable at least, that there should be a God, they must of necessity, upon their own principles, be very willing, nay, desirous, above all things, to be convinced that their present opinion is an error, and sincerely hope that the contrary may be demonstrated to them to be true; and consequently they are bound with all seriousness, attention, and impartiality, to consider the weight of the arguments by which the being and attributes of God may be proved to them.

Secondly, All such persons as I am speaking of, Scoffing at religion, inexcusable. who profess themselves to be atheists, not upon any present interest or lust, but purely upon the principles of reason and philosophy, are bound by these principles to acknowledge, that all mocking and scoffing at religion, all jesting and turning arguments of reason into drollery and ridicule, is the most unmanly and unreasonable thing in the world. And consequently, they are obliged to exclude out of their number, as irrational and self-condemned persons, and unworthy to be argued with, all such scoffers at religion, who deride at all adventures without hearing reason; and who will not use the means of being convinced and satisfied. Hearing the reason of the case, with patience and unprejudicedness, is an equity which men owe to every truth that can in any manner concern them; and which is necessary to the discovery of every kind of error. How much more in things of the utmost importance!

Virtue and good manners absolutely necessary. Thirdly, Since the persons I am discoursing to cannot but own, that the supposition of the being of God is in itself most desirable, and for the benefit of the world, that it should be true; they must of necessity grant further,

that, supposing the being and attributes of God to be things not indeed demonstrable to be true, but only possible, and such as cannot be demonstrated to be false, as most certainly they cannot; and much more, supposing them once made to appear probable, and but more likely to be true than the contrary opinion: nothing is more evident, even upon these suppositions only, than that men ought in all reason to live piously and virtuously in the world; and that vice and immorality are, upon all accounts, and under all hypotheses, the most absurd and inexcusable things in nature.

This much being premised, which no atheist, who pretends to be a rational and fair inquirer into things, can possibly avoid granting; (and other atheists, I have before said, are not to be disputed with at all; as being enemies to reason, no less than to religion, and therefore absolutely self-condemned;) I proceed now to the main thing I at first proposed; namely, to endeavour to show, to such considering persons as I have already described, that the being and attributes of God are not only possible, or barely probable in themselves, but also strictly demonstrable to any unprejudiced mind, from the most incontestable principles of right reason.

And here, because the persons I am at present dealing with, must be supposed not to believe any revelation, nor acknowledge any authority which they will submit to, but only the bare force of reasoning; I shall not, at this time, draw any testimony from Scripture, nor make use of any sort of authority, nor lay any stress upon any popular arguments in the matter before us; but confine myself to the rules of strict and demonstrative argumentation.

Now, many arguments there are, by which the being and attributes of God have been undertaken to be demonstrated. And perhaps most of those arguments, if thoroughly understood, rightly stated, fully pursued, and

duly separated from the false or uncertain reasonings which have sometimes been intermixed with them; would at length appear to be substantial and conclusive. But because I would endeavour, as far as possible, to avoid all manner of perplexity and confusion; therefore I shall not at this time use any variety of arguments, but endeavour, by one clear and plain series of propositions necessarily connected and following one from another, to demonstrate the certainty of the being of God, and to deduce in order the necessary attributes of his nature, so far as by our finite reason we are enabled to discover and apprehend them. And because it is not to my present purpose to explain or illustrate things to them that believe, but only to convince unbelievers, and settle them that doubt, by strict and undeniable reasoning; therefore I shall not allege any thing, which, however really true and useful, may yet be liable to contradiction or dispute; but shall endeavour to urge such propositions only as cannot be denied, without departing from that reason, which all atheists pretend to be the foundation of their unbelief. Only it is absolutely necessary, before all things, that they consent to lay aside all manner of prejudices; and especially such as have been apt to arise from the too frequent use of terms of art, which have no ideas belonging to them; and from the common receiving certain maxims of philosophy as true, which at the bottom seem to be only propositions without any meaning or signification at all.

[1]

Maria ac terras coelumque--

Una dies dabit exitio, multosque per annos

Sustentata ruet moles, et machina mundi.

--Dictis dabit ipsa fidem res

Forsitan, et graviter terrarum motibus orbis

Omnia conquassari in parvo tempore cernes.

Lucret. lib. 5.

[2] Archbishop Tillotson's Sermon on Job, xxviii. 28.

Proposition I.

I. Proposition I. First then, it is absolutely and undeniably certain, that Something must have existed from eternity. something has existed from all eternity.--This is so evident and undeniable a proposition, that no atheist in any age has ever presumed to assert the contrary; and therefore there is little need of being particular in the proof of it. For since something now is, it is evident that something always was; otherwise the things that now are must have been produced out of nothing, absolutely and without cause, which is a plain contradiction in terms. For to say a thing is produced, and yet that there is no cause at all of that production, is to say that something is effected, when it is effected by nothing; that is, at the same time when it is not effected at all.--Whatever exists, has a cause, a reason, a ground of its existence; (a foundation, on which its existence relies; a ground or reason why it doth exist rather than not exist;) either in the necessity of its own nature, and then it must have been of itself eternal; or in the will of some other being, and then that other being must, at least in the order of nature and causality, have existed before it.

Of the difficulty of conceiving eternity. That something therefore has really existed from eternity, is one of the certainest and most evident truths in the world; acknowledged by all men, and disputed by none. Yet as to the manner how it can be; there is nothing in nature more difficult for the mind of man to conceive, than this very first plain and self-evident truth. For, how any thing can have existed eternally; that is, how an eternal duration can be now actually past, is a thing utterly as impossible for our narrow understandings to comprehend, as

any thing that is not an express contradiction can be imagined to be: and yet to deny the truth of the proposition, that an eternal duration is now actually past, would be to assert something still far more unintelligible, even a real and express contradiction.

Difficulties arising merely from the nature of eternity, not to be regarded, because equal in all suppositions. The use I would make of this observation, is this: That since in all questions concerning the nature and perfections of God, or concerning any thing to which the idea of eternity or infinity is joined; though we can indeed demonstrate certain propositions to be true, yet it is impossible for us to comprehend or frame any adequate or complete ideas of the manner how the things so demonstrated can be: therefore, when once any proposition is clearly demonstrated to be true, it ought not to disturb us that there be perhaps perplexing difficulties on the other side, which merely for want of adequate ideas of the manner of the existence of the things demonstrated, are not easy to be cleared. Indeed, were it possible there should be any proposition which could equally be demonstrated on both sides of the question, or which could on both sides be reduced to imply a contradiction; (as some have very inconsiderately asserted;) this, it must be confessed, would alter the case. Upon this absurd supposition, all difference of true and false, all thinking and reasoning, and the use of all our faculties, would be entirely at an end. But when to demonstration on the one side, there are opposed on the other, only difficulties raised from our want of having adequate ideas of the things themselves; this ought not to be esteemed an objection of any real weight. It is directly and clearly demonstrable, (and acknowledged to be so, even by all atheists that ever lived,) that something has been from eternity: All the objections therefore raised against the eternity of any thing, grounded merely on

our want of having an adequate idea of eternity, ought to be looked upon as of no real solidity. Thus in other the like instances: It is demonstrable, for example, that something must be actually infinite: All the metaphysical difficulties, therefore, which arise usually from applying the measures and relations of things finite, to what is infinite; and from supposing finites to be [aliquot] parts of infinite, when indeed they are not properly so, but only as mathematical points to quantity, which have no proportion at all: (and from imagining all infinites to be equal, when in things disparate they manifestly are not so; an infinite line, being not only not equal to, but infinitely less than an infinite surface, and an infinite surface than space infinite in all dimensions:) All metaphysical difficulties, I say, arising from false suppositions of this kind, ought to be esteemed vain and of no force. Again: it is in like manner demonstrable, that quantity is infinitely divisible: All the objections therefore raised, by supposing the sums total of all infinities to be equal, when in disparate parts they manifestly are not so; and by comparing the imaginary equality or inequality of the number of the parts of unequal quantities, whose parts have really no number at all, they all having parts without number; ought to be looked upon as weak and altogether inconclusive: To ask whether the parts of unequal quantities be equal in number or not, when they have no number at all, being the same thing as to ask whether two lines drawn from differently distant points, and each of them continued infinitely, be equal in length or not, that is, whether they end together, when neither of them have any end at all.

Chapter 3

Proposition II. There must have existed from eternity one independent being.

II. Proposition II: There must have existed from eternity one independent being. There has existed from eternity, [3] some one unchangeable and independent being. For since something must needs have been from eternity, as has been already proved, and is granted on all hands, either there has always existed some one unchangeable and independent being, from which all other beings that are or ever were in the universe have received their original; or else there has been an infinite succession of changeable and dependent beings, produced one from another, in an endless progression, without any original cause at all. Now this latter supposition is so very absurd, that though all atheism must in its account of most things (as shall be shown hereafter,) terminate in it, yet I think very few atheists ever were so weak as openly and directly to defend it; for it is plainly impossible, and contradictory to itself. I shall not argue against it from the supposed impossibility of infinite succession, barely and absolutely considered in itself; for a reason which shall be mentioned hereafter. But, if we consider such an infinite progression, as one entire endless series of dependent beings, it is plain this whole series of beings can have no cause from without, of its existence; because in it are supposed to be included all things that are or ever were in the universe: And it is plain it can have no reason within itself, of its existence; because no one being in this infinite succession is supposed to be self-existent or necessary, (which is the only ground or reason of existence of any thing that can be imagined within the thing itself, as will presently more fully appear,) but every one dependent on the

foregoing: and where no part is necessary, it is manifest the whole cannot be necessary: absolute necessity of existence, not being an extrinsic, relative, and accidental denomination, but an inward and essential property of the nature of the thing which so exists. An infinite succession, therefore, of merely dependent beings, without any original independent cause, is a series of beings that has neither necessity, nor cause, nor any reason or ground at all of its existence, either within itself or from without; that is, it is an express contradiction and impossibility; it is a supposing something to be caused, (because it is granted in every one of its stages of succession, not to be necessarily and of itself;) and yet that, in the whole, it is caused absolutely by nothing; which every man knows is a contradiction to imagine done in time; and, because duration in this case makes no difference, it is equally a contradiction to suppose it done from eternity; and, consequently, there must, on the contrary, of necessity, have existed from eternity some one immutable and independent being.

To suppose an infinite succession of changeable and dependent beings produced one from another in an endless progression, without any original cause at all, is only [4] a driving back from one step to another, and (as it were) removing out of sight, the question concerning the ground or reason of the existence of things. It is in reality, and in point of argument, the very same supposition, as it would be to suppose one continued being, of beginningless and endless duration, neither self-existent and necessary in itself, nor having its existence founded in any self-existent cause; which is directly absurd and contradictory.

Otherwise, thus: Either there has always existed some one unchangeable and independent being, from which all other beings have received their

original; or else there has been an infinite succession of changeable and dependent beings, produced one from another, in an endless progression, without any original cause at all. According to this latter supposition, there is nothing in the universe self-existent or necessarily-existing: and, if so, then it was originally equally possible, that from eternity there should never have existed any thing at all, as that there should from eternity have existed a succession of changeable and dependent beings: which being supposed, then, what is it that has from eternity determined such a succession of beings to exist, rather than that from eternity there should never have existed any thing at all? Necessity it was not; because it was equally possible, in this supposition, that they should not have existed at all. Chance is nothing but a mere word, without any signification: And other being it is supposed there was none, to determine the existence of these. Their existence, therefore, was determined by nothing; neither by any necessity in the nature of the things themselves, because it is supposed that none of them are self-existent; nor by any other being, because no other is supposed to exist. That is to say; of two equally possible things, (viz. whether any thing or nothing should from eternity have existed,) the one is determined, rather than the other, absolutely by nothing; which is an express contradiction. And, consequently, as before, there must on the contrary, of necessity, have existed, from eternity, some one immutable and independent being, which, what it is, remains in the next place to be inquired.

[3] The meaning of this proposition, (and all that the argument here requires,) is, that there must needs have always been some independent being, some one at least. To show that there can be no more than one, is not the design of this proposition, but of the seventh.

[4] This matter has been well illustrated by a late able

writer.--"Suppose a chain hung down out of the heavens, from an unknown height; and, though every link of it gravitated toward the earth, and what it hung upon was not visible, yet it did not descend, but kept its situation: And, upon this, a question should arise, What supported or kept up this chain? Would it be a sufficient answer to say, that the first or lowest link hung upon the second, or that next above it; the second, or rather the first and second together, upon the third; and so on in infinitum? For, what holds up the whole? A chain of ten links, would fall down, unless something able to bear it hindered: One of twenty, if not stayed by something of a yet greater strength, in proportion to the increase of weight. And therefore one of infinite links, certainly; if not sustained by something infinitely strong, and capable to bear up an infinite weight: And thus it is in a chain of causes and effects, tending, or (as it were) gravitating, towards some end. The last, or lowest, depends, or, (as one may say) is suspended upon the cause above it. This, again, if it be not the first cause, is suspended, as an effect, upon something above it, &c. And if they should be infinite, unless (agreeably to what has been said) there is some cause, upon which all hang or depend, they would be but an infinite effect without an efficient: and to assert there is any such thing, would be as great an absurdity as to say, that a finite or little weight wants something to sustain it, but an infinite one (or the greatest) does not."--Religion of Nature Delineated, page 67.

Chapter 4

Proposition III. The one independent Being must be necessarily existing.

Proposition III: The one independent Being must be necessarily existing. III. That unchangeable and independent Being, which has existed from eternity, without any external cause of its existence, must be self-existent, that is, necessarily existing. For whatever exists, must either have come into being out of nothing, absolutely without cause; or it must have been produced by some external cause; or it must be self-existent. Now, to arise out of nothing, absolutely without any cause, has been already shown to be a plain contradiction. To have been produced by some external cause, cannot possibly be true of every thing; but something must have existed eternally and independently, as has likewise been shown already. It remains, therefore, that that being which has existed independently from eternity must of necessity be self-existent. Now, to be self-existent is not to be produced by itself; for that is an express contradiction. But it is, (which is the only idea we can frame of self-existence; and without which, the word seems to have no signification at all;) it is, I say, to exist by an absolute necessity originally in the nature of the thing itself: And this necessity must be antecedent; not, indeed, in time, to the existence of the being itself, because that is eternal; but it must be antecedent in the natural order of our ideas, to our supposition of its being; that is, this necessity must not barely be consequent upon our supposition of the existence of such a being; (for then it would not be a necessity absolutely such in itself, nor be the ground or foundation of the existence of any thing, being on the contrary only a consequent of it;) but it must antecedently force

itself upon us, whether we will or no, even when we are endeavouring to suppose that no such being exists. For example: when we are endeavouring to suppose, that there is no being in the universe that exists necessarily, we always find in our minds, Page 10, &c. (besides the foregoing demonstration of something being self-existent, from the impossibility of every thing's being dependent;) we always find in our minds, I say, some ideas, as of infinity and eternity; which to remove, that is, to suppose that there is no being, no substance in the universe, to which these attributes or modes of existence are necessarily inherent, is a contradiction in the very terms. For modes and attributes exist only by the existence of the substance to which they belong. Now, he that can suppose eternity and immensity (and consequently the substance by whose existence these modes or attributes exist,) removed out of the universe, may, if he please, as easily remove the relation of equality between twice two and four.

That to suppose immensity removed out of the universe, or not necessarily eternal, is an express contradiction; is intuitively evident to every one who attends to his own ideas, and considers the essential nature of things. To suppose [5] any part of space removed, is to suppose it removed from and out of itself: and to suppose the whole to be taken away, is supposing it to be taken away from itself, that is, to be taken away while it still remains; which is a contradiction in terms. There is no obscurity in this argument but what arises to those who think immense space to be absolutely nothing: which notion is itself likewise an express contradiction; for nothing is that which has no properties or modes whatsoever; that is to say, it is that of which nothing can truly be affirmed, and of which every thing can truly be denied; which is not the case of immensity or space.

From this third proposition it follows,

1st, That the only true idea of a self-existent or The true notion of self existence. Pages 10 and 14. necessarily-existing being, is the idea of a being, the supposition of whose not-existing is an express contradiction. For since it is absolutely impossible but there must be somewhat self-existent; that is, which exists by the necessity of its own nature; it is plain that that necessity cannot be a necessity consequent upon any foregoing supposition, (because nothing can be antecedent to that which is self-existent, no not its own will, so as to be the cause or ground of its own existence,) but it must be a necessity absolutely such in its own nature. Now, a necessity, not relatively or consequentially, but absolutely such in its own nature, is nothing else but its being a plain impossibility or implying a contradiction to suppose the contrary. For instance; the relation of equality between twice two and four is an absolute necessity only because it is an immediate contradiction in terms to suppose them unequal. This is the only idea we can frame of an absolute necessity; and to use the word in any other sense seems to be using it without any signification at all.

If any one now asks, what sort of idea the idea of that being is, the supposition of whose not-existing is thus an express contradiction; I answer, it is the first and simplest idea we can possibly frame; an idea necessarily and essentially included or presupposed, as a sine qua non, in every other idea whatsoever; an idea, which (unless we forbear thinking at all) we cannot possibly extirpate or remove out of our minds; of a most simple being, absolutely eternal and infinite, original and independent. For, that he who supposes there is no original independent being in the universe, supposes a contradiction, has been shown already. And that he who supposes there may possibly be no eternal and infinite being in the universe supposes likewise a

contradiction, is evident from hence; (besides that these two attributes do necessarily follow from self-originate independent existence, as shall be shown hereafter;) that when he has done his utmost, in endeavouring to imagine that no such being exists, he cannot avoid imagining an eternal and infinite [6] nothing; that is, he will imagine eternity and immensity removed out of the universe, and yet that at the same time they still continue there; as has been above [7] distinctly explained.

This The error of the Cartesians. argument the Cartesians, who supposed the idea of immensity to be the idea of matter, have been greatly perplexed with. For, (however in words they have contradicted themselves, yet in reality) they have more easily been driven to that most intolerable absurdity of asserting matter [8] to be a necessary being; than being able to remove out of their minds the idea of immensity, as existing necessarily and inseparably from eternity. Which absurdity and inextricable perplexity of theirs, in respect of the idea of immensity, shows that they found that indeed to be necessary and impossible to be removed; but, in respect of matter, it was only a perverse applying an idea to an object, whereto it noways belongs; for, that it is indeed absolutely impossible and contradictory to suppose matter necessarily-existing, shall be demonstrated presently.

2dly. Nothing so certain as the existence of a supreme independent cause. From hence it follows, that there is no man whatsoever, who makes any use of his reason, but may easily become more certain of the being of a supreme independent cause, than he can be of any thing else besides his own existence; for how much thought soever it may require to demonstrate the other attributes of such a being, as it may do to demonstrate the greatest mathematical certainties, (of which more hereafter,) yet, as to its existence, that there is somewhat eternal,

infinite, and self-existing, which must be the cause and origin of all other things; this is one of the first and most natural conclusions that any man, who thinks at all, can frame in his mind: and no man can any more doubt of this, than he can doubt whether twice two be equal to four.--It is impossible, indeed, a man may in some sense be ignorant of this first and plain truth, by being utterly stupid, and not thinking at all; (for though it is absolutely impossible for him to imagine the contrary, yet he may possibly neglect to conceive this: though no man can possibly think that twice two is not four, yet he may possibly be stupid, and never have thought at all whether it be so or not.) But this I say: there is no man, who thinks or reasons at all, but may easily become more certain, that there is something eternal, infinite, and self-existing, than he can be certain of any thing else.

3dly. Of the idea of God, including self-existence. Hence we may observe, that our first certainty of the existence of God does not arise from this, that in the idea our minds frame of him, (or rather in the definition that we make of the word God, as signifying a being of all possible perfections,) we include self-existence; but from hence, that it is demonstrable both negatively, that neither can all things possibly have arisen out of nothing, nor can they have depended one on another in an endless succession; and also positively, that there is something in the universe, actually existing without us, the supposition of whose not-existing plainly implies a contradiction. The argument which has by some been drawn from our including self-existence in the idea of God, or our comprehending it in the definition or notion we frame of him, has this obscurity and defect in it: that it seems to extend only to the nominal idea or mere definition of a self-existent being, and does not with a sufficiently evident connexion refer and apply that general nominal idea, definition, or notion which we frame

in our own mind, to any real particular being actually existing without us. For it is not satisfactory, that I have in my mind an idea of the proposition; there exists a being indued with all possible perfections; or, there is a self-existent being. But I must also have some idea of the thing. I must have an idea of something actually existing without me. And I must see wherein consists the absolute impossibility of removing that idea, and consequently of supposing the non-existence of the thing, before I can be satisfied, from that idea, that the thing actually exists. The bare having an idea of the proposition there is a self-existent being, proves indeed the thing not to be impossible; (for of an impossible proposition there can be no idea;) but that it actually is, cannot be proved from the idea; unless the certainty of the actual existence of a necessarily-existing being follows from the possibility of the existence of such a being; which that it does in this particular case, many learned men have indeed thought; and their subtile arguings upon this head are sufficient to raise a cloud not very easy to be seen through. But it is a much clearer and more convincing way of arguing, to demonstrate that there does actually exist without us a being, whose existence is necessary and of itself; by shewing the evident contradiction contained in the contrary supposition, (as I have before done,) and at the same time the absolute impossibility of destroying or removing some ideas, as of eternity and immensity, which therefore must needs be modes or attributes of a necessary being actually existing. For if I have in my mind an idea of a thing, and cannot possibly in my imagination take away the idea of that thing as actually existing, any more than I can change or take away the idea of the equality of twice two to four; the certainty of the existence of that thing is the same, and stands on the same foundation as the certainty of the other relation. For the relation of

equality between twice two and four has no other certainty but this; that I cannot, without a contradiction, change or take away the idea of that relation. We are certain, therefore, of the being of a supreme independent cause; because it is strictly demonstrable, that there is something in the universe actually existing without us, the supposition of whose not-existing plainly implies a contradiction.

Some writers have contended, [9] that it is preposterous to inquire in this manner at all into the ground or reason of the existence of the first cause: because evidently the first cause can have nothing prior to it, and consequently must needs (they think) exist absolutely without any cause at all. That the first cause can have no other being prior to it, to be the cause of its existence, is indeed self-evident. But if originally, absolutely, and antecedently to all supposition of existence, there be no necessary ground or reason why the first cause does exist, rather than not exist; if the first cause can rightly and truly be affirmed to exist, absolutely without any ground or reason of existence at all, it will unavoidably follow, by the same argument, that it may as well cease likewise to exist, without any ground or reason of ceasing to exist: which is absurd. The truth therefore plainly is: Whatever is the true reason, why the first cause can never possibly cease to exist, the same is, and originally and always was, the true reason why it always did and cannot but exist: that is, it is the true ground and reason of its existence.

4thly. From hence it follows, that the material That the material world cannot possibly be the self-existent being. world cannot possibly be the first and original being, uncreated, independent, and of itself eternal. For since it hath been already demonstrated, that whatever being hath existed from eternity, independent, and without any external cause of its existence, must be self-existent; and that whatever is

self-existent, must exist necessarily by an absolute necessity in the nature of the thing itself. It follows evidently, that unless the material world exists necessarily by an absolute necessity in its own nature, so as that it must be an express contradiction to suppose it not to exist, it cannot be independent, and of itself eternal. Now that the material world does not exist thus necessarily, is very evident. For absolute necessity of existing, and a possibility of not existing, being contradictory ideas, it is manifest the material world cannot exist necessarily, if without a contradiction we can conceive it either not to be, or to be in any respect otherwise than it now is; than which, nothing is more easy. For whether we consider the form of the world, with the disposition and motion of its parts, or whether we consider the matter of it, as such, without respect to its present form, every thing in it,--both the whole and every one of its parts, their situation and motion, the form and also the matter, are the most arbitrary and dependent things, and the farthest removed from necessity, that can possibly be imagined. A necessity indeed of fitness, that is, a necessity that things should be as they are, in order to the well-being of the whole, there may be in all these things: but an absolute necessity of nature in any of them, (which is what the atheist must maintain,) there is not the least appearance of. If any man will say in this sense, (as every atheist must do,) either that the form of the world, or at least the matter and motion of it, is necessary, nothing can possibly be invented more absurd.

If he says, that the particular form is necessary; that is, The form of the world not necessary. that the world, and all things that are therein, exist by necessity of nature, he must affirm it to be a contradiction to suppose that any part of the world can be in any respect otherwise than it now is. It must be a contradiction in terms,

to suppose more or fewer stars, more or fewer planets, or to suppose their size, figure, or motion different from what it now is; or to suppose more or fewer plants and animals upon earth, or the present ones of different shape and bigness from what they now are. In all which things there is the greatest arbitrariness, in respect of power and possibility, that can be imagined; however necessary any of them may be, in respect of wisdom, and preservation of the beauty and order of the whole.

If Nor its motion. the atheist will say, that the motion in general of all matter is necessary, it follows that it must be a contradiction in terms to suppose any matter to be at rest; which is so absurd and ridiculous, that I think hardly any atheists, either ancient or modern, have presumed directly to suppose it.

One late author [10] indeed has ventured to assert, and pretended to prove, that motion (that is, the conatusto motion, the tendency to move, the power or force that produces actual motion,) is essential to all matter. But how philosophically, may appear from this one consideration: The essential tendency to motion, of every one, or of any one particle of matter in this author's imaginary infinite plenum, must be either a tendency to move some one determinate way at once, or to move every way at once. A tendency to move some one determinate way cannot be essential to any particle of matter, but must arise from some external cause; because there is nothing in the pretended necessary nature of any particle to determine its motion necessarily and essentially one way rather than another. And a tendency or conatus equally to move every way at once, is either an absolute contradiction, or at least could produce nothing in matter but an eternal rest of all and every one of its parts.

If the atheist will suppose motion necessary and essential to some

matter, but not to all, the same absurdity, as to the determination of motion, still follows; and now he moreover supposes an absolute necessity not universal; that is, that it shall be a contradiction to suppose some certain matter at rest though at the same time some other matter actually be at rest.

If Nor the bare matter. he only affirms bare matter to be necessary then, besides the extreme folly of attributing motion and the form of the world to chance, (which senseless opinion I think all atheists have now given up; and therefore I shall not think myself obliged to take any notice of it in the sequel of this discourse;) it may be demonstrated, by many arguments drawn from the nature and affections of the thing itself, that matter is not a necessary being. For instance, thus: Tangibility, or resistance, (which is what mathematicians very properly call vis inertiæ, is essential to matter; otherwise the word matter will have no determinate signification. Tangibility, therefore, or resistance, belonging to all matter, it follows evidently, that, if all space were filled with matter, the resistance of all fluids (for the resistance of the parts of hard bodies arises from another cause,) would necessarily be equal. For greater or less degrees of fineness or subtilty can in this case make no difference; because the smaller or finer the parts of the fluid are, wherewith any particular space is filled, the greater in proportion is the number of the parts; and consequently the resistance still always equal. But experience shows, on the contrary, that the resistance of all fluids is not equal; there being large spaces in which no sensible resistance at all is made to the swiftest and most lasting motion of the solidest bodies. Therefore all space is not filled with matter; but, of necessary consequence, there must be a vacuum.

Or thus. It appears from experiments of falling bodies, and from

experiments of pendulums, which (being of equal lengths and unequal gravities,) vibrate in equal times; that all bodies whatsoever, in spaces void of sensible resistance, fall from the same height with equal velocities. Now, it is evident, that whatever force causes unequal bodies to move with equal velocities, must be proportional to the quantities of the bodies moved. The power of gravity therefore in all bodies, is, (at equal distances, suppose from the centre of the earth,) proportional to the quantity of matter contained in each body. For if, in a pendulum, there were any matter that did not gravitate proportionally to its quantity, the vis inertiæ of that matter would retard the motion of the rest, so as soon to be discovered in pendulums of equal lengths and unequal gravities in spaces void of sensible resistance. Gravity, therefore, is in all bodies [11] proportional to the quantity of their matter. And consequently, all bodies not being equally heavy, it follows again necessarily, that there must be a vacuum. [12]

Now, if there be a vacuum, it follows plainly, that matter is not a necessary being. For if a vacuum actually be, then it is evidently more than possible for matter not to be. If an atheist will yet assert, that matter may be necessary, though not necessary to be everywhere, I answer, this is an express contradiction: for absolute necessity is absolute necessity everywhere alike. And if it be no impossibility for matter to be absent from one place, it is no impossibility (absolutely in the nature of the thing; for no relative or consequential necessity can have any room in this argument,) it is no absolute impossibility, I say, in the nature of the thing, that matter should be absent from any other place, or from every place.

Spinoza, Spinoza's opinion confuted. the most celebrated patron of atheism in our time, who taught that there is no difference of

substances, [13] but that the whole and every part of the material world is a necessarily-existing being, and that there is no other God but the universe; [14] that he might seemingly avoid the manifold absurdities of that opinion, endeavours by an ambiguity of expression, in the progress of his discourse, to elude the arguments by which he foresaw his assertion would be confuted. For, having first plainly asserted, that all substance is necessarily-existing, [15] he would afterward seem to explain it away, by asserting, that the reason why every thing exists necessarily, [16] and could not possibly have been in any respect different from what it now is, is because every thing flows from the necessity of the divine nature. By which, if the unwary reader understands, that he means things are therefore necessarily such as they are, because infinite wisdom and goodness could not possibly make things but in that order which is fittest and wisest in the whole, he is very much mistaken: for such a necessity is not a natural, but only a moral and consequential necessity, and directly contrary to the author's true intention. Further, if the reader hereby understands, that God was determined, not by a necessity of wisdom and goodness, but by a mere natural necessity, exclusive of will and choice, to make all things just as they now are; neither is this the whole of Spinoza's meaning: for this, as absurd as it is, is still supposing God as a substance distinct from the material world; which he expressly denies. [17] Nay, further, if any one thinks his meaning to be, that all substances in the world are only modifications of the divine essence, neither is this all; for thus God may still be supposed as an agent, acting upon himself at least, and manifesting himself in different manners, according to his own will; which Spinoza expressly denies. [18] But his true meaning, therefore, however darkly and ambiguously he sometimes speaks, must be this; and if he means any thing at all

consistent with himself, can be no other than this: that, since it is absolutely [19] impossible for any thing to be created or produced by another; and [20] also absolutely impossible for God to have caused any thing to be in any respect different from what it now is; every thing that exists, must needs be so a part [21] of the divine substance, not as a modification caused in it by any [22] will or good-pleasure, or wisdom in the whole, but as of absolute necessity in itself, with respect to the manner [23] of the existence of each part, no less than with respect to the self-existence of the whole. Thus the opinion of Spinoza, when expressed plainly and consistently, comes evidently to this; that the material world, and every part of it, with the order and manner of being of each part, is the only self-existent, or necessarily-existing being. And now, consequently, he must of necessity affirm all the conclusions which I have before shown to follow demonstrably from that opinion. He cannot possibly avoid affirming, that it is a contradiction, (not to the perfections of God, for that is mere senseless cant and amusement in him who maintains that there is but one substance in the universe; but he must affirm that it is in itself and in terms a contradiction,) for any thing to be, or to be imagined, in any respect otherwise than it now is. He must say it is a contradiction, to suppose the number, or figure, or order of the several parts of the world, could possibly have been different from what they now are. He must say, motion is necessarily of itself, and consequently that it is a contradiction in terms to suppose any matter to be at rest; or else he must affirm, (which is rather the more absurd of the two, as may appear from what has been already said in proof of the second general head of this discourse; [24] and yet he has chosen to affirm it;) that motion, as a dependent being, has been eternally communicated from one piece of matter to another, without having at all

any original cause of its being, either within itself or from without, which, with other the like consequences touching the necessity of the existence of things, (the very mention of which is a sufficient confutation of any opinion they follow from,) do, as I have said, unavoidably follow from the fore-mentioned opinion of Spinoza. And consequently, that opinion, viz. that the universe, or whole world, is the self-existent or necessarily-existing being, is demonstrated to be false.

I have, in this attempt to show that the material world cannot possibly be the first and original being, uncreated, independent, and self-existent, designedly omitted the argument usually drawn from the supposed absolute impossibility, in the nature of the thing itself, of the world's being eternal, or having existed through an infinite succession of time; and this I have done for the two following reasons.

1st. Of the opinion concerning the eternity of the world. Because the question between us and the atheists is not whether the world can possibly have been eternal, but whether it can possibly be the original, independent self-existing being?--which is a very different question. For many, who have affirmed the one, have still utterly denied the other. And almost all the ancient philosophers, that held the eternity of the world, in whose authority and reasons our modern atheists do so greatly boast and triumph, defended that their opinion by such arguments as show plainly that they did by no means thereby intend to assert that the material world was the original, independent, self-existing being, in opposition to the belief of the existence of a supreme all-governing mind, which is the notion of God. So that the deniers of the being of God have no manner of advantage from that opinion of the eternity of the world, even supposing it could not be disproved. Almost all the old philosophers, I say, who held the

eternity of the world, did not thereby mean (at least their arguments do not tend to prove) that it was independent and self-existent; but their arguments are wholly levelled, either to prove barely that something must needs be eternal, and that the universe could not possibly arise out of nothing absolutely and without cause; which is all that Ocellus Lucanus's arguments amount to: or else that the world is an eternal and necessary effect, flowing from the essential and immutable energy of the divine nature; which seems to have been Aristotle's opinion: or else that the world is an eternal voluntary emanation from the all-wise and supreme cause; which was the opinion of many of Plato's followers. None of which opinions or arguments will in the least help out our modern atheists; who would exclude supreme mind and intelligence out of the universe. For, however the opinion of the eternity of the world is really inconsistent with the belief of its being created in time, yet so long as the defenders of that opinion either did not think it inconsistent with the belief of the world's being the effect and work of an eternal, all-wise, and all-powerful mind; or at least could defend that opinion by such arguments only as did not in the least prove the self-existence or independency of the world, but most of them rather quite the contrary; it is with the greatest injustice and unreasonableness in the world, that modern atheists (to whose purpose the eternity or non-eternity of the world would signify nothing, unless at the same time the existence and sovereignty of eternal intelligence or mind were likewise disproved,) pretend either the authority or the reasons of these men to be on their side.

Ocellus Lucanus, one of the ancientest asserters of the eternity of the world, (whose antiquity and authority [25] Mr Blunt opposes to that of Moses,) in delivering his opinion, speaks, indeed, like one that

believed the material world to be self-existent; asserting, [26] that it is utterly incapable either of generation or corruption, of beginning or end; that it is of itself eternal and perfect, and permanent for ever, and that the frame and parts of the world must needs be eternal as well as the substance and matter of the whole. But when he comes to produce his arguments or reasons for his opinion, they are either so very absurd and ridiculous, that even any atheist in this age ought to be ashamed to repeat them; as when he attempts to prove [27] that the world must needs be eternal, without beginning or end, because both its figure and motion are a circle, which has neither beginning nor end: or else they are such arguments as prove only, what no man ever really denied, viz. that something must needs be eternal, because it is impossible for every thing to arise out of nothing, or to fall into nothing; as when he says [28] that the world must have been eternal, because it is a contradiction for the universe to have had a beginning, since, if it had a beginning, it must have been caused by some other thing, and then it is not the universe. To which one argument all that he says in his whole book is plainly reducible. So that it is evident all that he really proves, is only this: that there must needs be an eternal being in the universe; and not, that matter is self-existent, in opposition to intelligence and mind. For, all that he asserts about the absolute necessity of the order and parts of the world, is confessedly most ridiculous; not at all proved by the arguments he alleges; and in some passages of this very book, as well as in other fragments, he himself supposes, and is forced expressly to confess, that, however eternal and necessary every thing in the world be imagined to be, yet even that necessity must flow from an eternal and intelligent mind, [29] the necessary perfections of whose nature are the cause [30]) of the harmony and beauty of the world, and

particularly of men's having [31] faculties, organs of sense, appetites, &c. fitted even to final causes.

Aristotle, likewise, was a great asserter indeed of the eternity of the world; but not in opposition to the belief of the being, or of the power, wisdom, or goodness of God. On the contrary, he for no other reason asserted the world to be eternal, but because he fancied that such an effect must needs eternally proceed from such an eternal cause. And so far was he from teaching that matter is the first and original cause of all things, that, on the contrary, he everywhere expressly describes God to be an intelligent being; [32] incorporeal; [33] the first mover of all things, [34] himself immoveable; and affirms, that [35] if there were nothing but matter in the world, there would be no original cause, but an infinite progression of causes, which is absurd. As to those philosophers who taught plainly and expressly that matter was not only eternal, but also self-existent and entirely independent, co-existing from eternity with God, independently, as a second principle, I have already shown the impossibility of this opinion, at the entrance upon the present head of discourse, where I proved that matter could not possibly be self-existent: and I shall further demonstrate it to be false, when I come to prove the unity of the self-existent being.

Plato, whatever his opinion was about the original matter, very largely and fully declares his sentiments about the formation of the world, viz. that it was composed and framed by an intelligent and wise God. And there is no one of all the ancient philosophers, who does in all his writings speak so excellently and worthily [36] as he, concerning the nature and attributes of God. Yet as to the time of the world's beginning to be formed, he seems to make it indefinite, when he says [37] the world must needs be an eternal resemblance of the eternal

idea. At least his followers afterward so understood and explained it, as if, by the creation of the world, was not to be understood a creation in time; [38] but only an order of nature, causality and dependence, that is, that the will of God, and his power of acting, being necessarily as eternal as his essence, [39] the effects of that will and power might be supposed coeval to the will and power themselves; in the same manner as light would eternally proceed from the sun, or a shadow from the interposed body, or an impression from an imposed seal, if the respective causes of these effects were supposed eternal.

From all which, it plainly appears how little reason modern atheists have to boast either of the authority or reasons of those ancient philosophers who held the eternity of the world. For since these men neither proved, nor attempted to prove, that the material world was original to itself, independent or self-existing, but only that it was an eternal effect of an eternal cause, which is God, it is evident that this their opinion, even supposing it could by no means be refuted, could afford no manner of advantage to the cause of atheists in our days, who, excluding supreme mind and intelligence out of the universe, would make mere matter and necessity the original and eternal cause of all things.

2dly. The other reason why (in this attempt to prove that the material world cannot possibly be the first and original being, uncreated, independent and self-existent,) I have omitted the argument usually drawn from the supposed absolute impossibility of the world's being eternal, or having existed through an infinite succession of time,--is, because that argument can never be so stated as to be of any use in convincing or affecting the mind of an atheist, who must not be supposed to come prepared beforehand with any transcendent idea of the

eternity of God. For since an atheist cannot be supposed to believe the nice and subtile (and indeed unintelligible) distinctions of the schools, it is impossible by this argument so to disprove the possibility of the eternity of the world, but that an atheist will understand it to prove equally against the possibility of any thing's being eternal; and, consequently, that it proves nothing at all, but is only a difficulty arising from our not being able to comprehend adequately the notion of eternity. That the material world is not self-existent or necessarily-existing, but the product of some distinct superior agent, may (as I have already shown) be strictly demonstrated by bare reason against the most obstinate atheist in the world. But the time when the world was created, or whether its creation was, properly speaking, in time, is not so easy to demonstrate strictly by bare reason, (as appears from the opinions of many of the ancient philosophers concerning that matter;) but the proof of it can be taken only from revelation. To endeavour to prove, that there cannot possibly be any such thing as infinite time or space, from the impossibility of an addition [40] of finite parts ever composing or exhausting an infinite; or from the imaginary inequality of the number of years, days, and hours, that would be contained in the one; or of the miles, yards, and feet, that would be contained in the other; is supposing infinites to be made up of numbers of finites; that is, it is supposing finite quantities to be aliquot or constituent parts of infinite; when indeed they are not so, but do all equally, whether great or small, whether many or few, bear the very same proportion to an infinite, as mathematical points do to a line, or lines to a superficies, or as moments do to time; that is, none at all. So that, to argue absolutely against the possibility of infinite space or time, merely from the imaginary inequality of the numbers of their finite parts, which are

not properly constituent parts, but mere nothings in proportion,--is the very same thing as it would be to argue against the possibility of the existence of any determinate finite quantity, from the imaginary equality or inequality of the number of the mathematical lines and points contained therein; when indeed neither the one nor the other have (in propriety of speech) any number at all, but they are absolutely without number: neither can any given number or quantity be any aliquot or constituent part of infinite, or be compared at all with it, or bear any kind of proportion to it; or be the foundation of any argument in any question concerning it.

[5] Moveantur partes spatii de locis suis, et movebuntur (ut ita dicam) de seipsis.--Newton. Princip. lib. I. Schol. ad Definit. 8.

[6] See the Answer to a Seventh Letter, at the end of this Book.

[7] Page 15.

[8] Puto implicare contradictionem, ut mundus sit finitus: i. e. I think it implies a contradiction for the world to be finite.--Cartes. Epist. 69. primæ partis. And his follower Mr. Regis, Mais peutê tre (saith he) que je raisonne mal, &c. i. e. But perhaps I argue ill, when I conclude that the property my idea hath to represent extension, [that is, in the sense of the Cartesians, matter,] comes from extension itself as its cause. For, what hinders me from believing that if this property comes not from myself, yet at least it may come from some spirit [or being] superior to me, which produces in me the idea of extension, though extension does not actually exist? Yet when I consider the thing attentively, I find that my conclusion is good; and that no spirit [or being] how excellent soever, can cause the idea which I have of extension to represent to me extension rather than any thing else, if extension does not actually exist; because if he should do so, the idea which I should then have of extension would not be a

representation of extension, but a representation of nothing; which is impossible. But it may be I still deceive myself, when I say that the idea I have of extension supposes an object actually existing. For it seems that I have ideas, which do not suppose any object: I have, for example, the idea of an enchanted castle; though no such thing really exists. Yet when I consider the difficulty still more attentively, I find there is this difference between the idea of extension, and that of an enchanted castle, that the first, being natural, that is, independent on my will, supposes an object which is necessarily such as it represents, whereas the other, being artificial, supposes indeed an object, but it is not necessary that that object be absolutely such as the idea represents, because my will can add to that object, or diminish from it, as it pleases, as I have before said, and as shall be proved hereafter, when I come to treat of the origin of ideas.--Regis Metaphys. lib. I. par. 1. cap. 3.

[9] See the Answer to a Seventh Letter at the end of this book.

[10] Mr Toland, Letter III.

[11] Neutoni Princip. Philosoph. edit. 1ma. p. 304. edit. 2da. p. 272. edit. 3tia. p. 294.

[12] Neutoni Princip. Philosoph. edit. 1ma. p. 411. edit. 2da, p. 368.

[13] Una substantia non potest produci ab alia substantia. Et hi par. 1. prop. 6. Omnis substantia est necessaria infinita. Ibid. prop. 8. Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet existere. Ibid. prop. 7.

[14] Præter Deum nulla dari neque concipi potest substantia. Ibid. prop. 14.

[15] Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet existere. Prop. 7.

[16] Res, nullo alio modo, neque alio ordine, a Deo produci potuerunt quam productæ sunt. Prop. 33. Ex necessitate Divinæ Naturæ, infinita infinitis modis (hoc est, omnia quæ sub intellectum infinitum cadere

possunt,) sequi debent. Prop 16.

[17] Locis supra citatis.

[18] Deum non operari ex libertate voluntatis. Prop. 32. corol. 1. et scholium ad prop. 17.

[19] Una substantia non potest produci ab alia substantia. Prop. 6.

[20] Res, nullo alio modo, neque alio ordine, a Deo produci potuerunt quam productæ sunt. Prop. 33.

[21] Præter Deum nulla dari, neque concipi potest substantia. Prop. 14.

[22] Deum non operari ex libertate voluntatis. Prop. 32. corol. 1.

[23] Nullo alio modo, neque ordine, &c.

[24] Corpus motum, vel quiescens, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad motum vel quietum determinatum fuit ab alio, et illud iterum ab alio, et sic in infinitum. Par. II. prop. 13. lemma 3.

[25] Oracles of Reason; Letter to Mr Gildon, p. 216.

[26] Agenneton to pan kai anolethron. Anarchon kai ateleuteion. Kosmos autos ex heautou aidios esti kai autoteles, kai diamenon ton panta aiona. Aei ontos tou kesmou, anankaion kai ta mere autou sunuparchein. Lego de mere ouranon, gen, &c. Ocell. Lucan. Peri tes ou pantos phuseos.

[27] To anarchon kai ateleuteton ou schematos kai tes kieseos pistoutai, dioti agennetos ho kesmos kai aphthartos hete gar tou schematos idea, kuklos houtos de pantothen hisos kai homoios, dioper anarchos kai ateleuteeos, he te tes kineseos, &c. Ibid. Thus translated: Nay, that the figure, motion, &c. thereof, are without beginning and end; thereby it plainly appears, that the world admitteth neither production nor dissolution. For the figure is spherical, and consequently on every side equal, and therefore without beginning or ending. Also the motion is circular, &c. Oracles of Reason, p. 215.

[28] Agenneton to pan.--ex ou gar gegonen, ekeino proton tou pantos esti.--To ge de pan genomenon sun pasi ginetai, kai touto ge de adunaton--Ektos gar tou Pantos, ouden. Ocell. Ibid.

[29] To aeikineton theion men, kai logon echon kai emphron. Ocell. Luc. de Leg. Fragm.

[30] Sunechei ton kosmon harmonia. Tautes d' aitios ho TheosIbid.

[31] Tas dunameis kai ta Organa kai tas horexeis upo Theou dedomenas, anthropos, ouch hedones heneka dedosthai sumbebeken, alla, &c. Idem, Peri tes tou pantos phuseos.

[32] Nous.

[33] Theon asomaton apephens. Diog. in Vita Aristol.

[34] To proton kinoun, akineton. Aristot. Metaph.

[35] Ei me estai para ta aistheta alla, ouk estai arche kai taxis, all' aei t8es arches arche. Ibid

[36] Ho poetes kai patertoude tou pantos Ho gen, ouranon, kai Theous, kai p8anta ta en ourano kai ta en adou kai upo ges hehapanta ergasamenos. De Republ. lib. 10.

[37] Pasa ananke tonde kosmon, eikona tinos einai. Plato in Timæo. Which words being very imperfect in our copies of the original, are thus rendered by Cicero: Si ergo generatus [est mundus;] ad id effectus est, quod ratione sapientiaque comprehenditur, atque immutabili æternitate continetur. Ex quo efficitur, ut sit necesse hunc quem cernimus mundum, simulacrum æternum esse alicujus æterni. Cic. de Univers.

[38] Noun pro kosoou einai, ouch hos chrono proteron autou onta, all' hoti ho kosmos para nou esti, phusei proteros ekeinos kai aition toutou. Plotinus.Qui autem a Deo quidem factum fatentur, non tamen eum volunt temporis habere, sed suæ creationis initium; ut, modo quodam vix intelligibili, semper sit factus. Augustin. de Civit. Dei, lib. 11.

cap. 4. De mundo, et de his quos in mundo deos a Deo factos scribit Plato, apertissime dicit eos esse cæpisse, et habere initium.--Verum id quomodo intelligant, invenerunt [Platonici;] non esse hoc videlicet temporis, sed substitutionis initium. Ibid. lib. 10. cap. 31. Sed mundum quidem fuisse semper, philosophia auctor est; conditore quidem Deo, sed non ex tempore. Macrob. in Somn. Scip. lib. 2. cap. 10.

[39] Kai ei boulei, paradeigmati si ti9ne ton gnorimon xenagess pros to zeteuenon; phasi gar hoti kath8aper aition to soma tes hekastou skias ginetai; homochronos deto somati he skia, kai ouch homotimos; houto de kai hode ho kosmos parakolouthema esti to Theou aitio9u ontos auto tou einai, k9ai sunaidios esti to Theo, ouketi de kai homotimos. Zachariæ Scholast. Disputat. Sicut enim, inquiunt [Platonici,] si pes ex æternitate semper fuisset in pulvere, semper ei subesset vestigium; quod tamen vestigium a calcante factum nemo dubitaret; nec alterum altero prius esset quamvis alterum ab altero factum esset: Sic, inquiunt, et mundus atque; in illo dii creati, et semper fuerunt, semper existente qui fecit; et tamen facti sunt.--Augustin de Civitate Dei. lib. 10. cap. 31.

[40] Cudworth's System, p. 643.

Chapter 5

Proposition IV: The essence of the self-existent Being [is] incomprehensible.

IV. Proposition IV. The essence of the self-existent Being incomprehensible. What the substance or essence of that being, which is self-existent, or necessarily-existing, is, we have no idea; neither is it at all possible for us to comprehend it. That there is such a being actually existing without us, we are sure (as I have already shown) by strict and undeniable demonstration. Also what it is not, that is, that the material world is not it, as modern atheists would have it, has been already demonstrated. But what it is, I mean as to its substance and essence, this we are infinitely unable to comprehend. Yet this does not in the least diminish the certainty of the demonstration of its existence. For it is one thing to know certainly that a being exists; and another, to know what the essence of that being is. And the one may be capable of the strictest demonstration, when the other is absolutely beyond the reach of all our faculties to understand. A blind or deaf man has infinitely more reason to deny the being, or the possibility of the being, of light or sounds, than any atheist can have to deny, or doubt of the existence of God: For the one can, at the utmost, have no other proof but credible testimony, of the existence of certain things, whereof it is absolutely impossible that he himself should frame any manner of idea, not only of their essence, but even of their effects or properties; but the other may, with the least use of his reason, be assured of the existence of a Supreme Being, by undeniable demonstration; and may also certainly know abundance of its attributes, (as shall be made appear in the following propositions,) though its substance or essence be entirely incomprehensible. Wherefore nothing

can be more unreasonable and weak, than for an atheist upon this account to deny the being of God, merely because his weak and finite understanding cannot frame to itself any adequate notion of the substance or essence of that first and supreme cause. We are utterly ignorant of the substance or essence of all other things; even of those things which we converse most familiarly with, and think we understand best. There is not so mean and contemptible a plant or animal, that does not confound the most enlarged understanding upon earth; nay, even the simplest and plainest of all inanimate beings have their essence or substance hidden from us in the deepest and most impenetrable obscurity. How weak then and foolish is it, to raise objections against the being of God from the incomprehensibleness of his essence! And to represent it as a strange and incredible thing, that there should exist any incorporeal substance, the essence of which we are not able to comprehend! As if it were not far more strange, that there should exist numberless objects of our senses, things subject to our daily inquiry, search, and examination, and yet we not be able, no not in any measure, to find out the real essence of any one even of the least of these things.

Nevertheless, it is very necessary to observe here, by the way, that it does not at all from hence follow, that there can possibly be, in the unknown substance or essence of God, any thing contradictory to our clear ideas. For, as a blind man, though he has no idea of light and colours, yet knows certainly and infallibly that there cannot possibly be any kind of light which is not light, or any sort of colour which is not a colour; so, though we have no idea of the substance of God, nor indeed of the substance of any other being; yet we are as infallibly certain that there cannot possibly be, either in the one or the other, any contradictory modes or properties as if we had the clearest and

most distinct idea of them.

From what has been said upon this head, we may observe,

1st. Of infinite space. The weakness of such as have presumed to imagine infinite space to be a just representation or adequate idea of the essence of the supreme cause. This is a weak imagination, arising from hence, that men, using themselves to judge of all things by their senses only, fancy spiritual or immaterial substances, because they are not objects of their corporeal senses, to be, as it were, mere nothings; just as children imagine air, because they cannot see it, to be mere emptiness and nothing. But the fallacy is too gross to deserve being insisted upon. There are perhaps numberless substances in the world, whose essences are as entirely unknown and impossible to be represented to our imaginations, as colours are to a man that was born blind, or sounds to one that has been always deaf. Nay, there is no substance in the world, of which we know any thing further than only a certain number of its properties or attributes; of which we know fewer in some things, and in others more. Infinite space is nothing else but abstract immensity or infinity, even as infinite duration is abstract eternity. And it would be just as proper, to say that eternity is the essence of the supreme cause, as to say, that immensity is so. Indeed, they seem both to be but modes of an essence or substance incomprehensible to us; and when we endeavour to represent the real substance of any being whatsoever in our weak imaginations, we shall find ourselves in like manner deceived.

2dly. From hence appears the vanity of the schoolmen, The vanity of the schoolmen. who, as in other matters, so in their disputes about the self-existent being, when they come at what they are by no means able to comprehend or explain, lest they should seem ignorant of any thing, they give us terms of art, and words of amusement, mere empty sounds,

which, under pretence of explaining the matter before them, have really no manner of idea or signification at all. Thus, when they tell us concerning the essence of God, that he is purus actus, mera forma, and the like, either the words have no meaning, and signify nothing; or else they express only the perfection of his power and other attributes; which is not what these men intend to express by them.

Proposition V. That the self-existent being must be eternal.

V. Proposition V. That the self-existent being must be eternal. Though the substance or essence of the self-existent being is in itself absolutely incomprehensible to us; yet many of the essential attributes of his nature are strictly demonstrable, as well as his existence.

Thus, in the first place, the self-existent being must of necessity be eternal. The ideas of eternity and self-existence are so closely connected, that, because something must of necessity be eternal independently and without any outward cause of its being, therefore it must necessarily be self-existent; and, because it is impossible but something must be self-existent, therefore it is necessary that it must likewise be eternal. To be self-existent, is (as has been already shown,) to exist by an absolute necessity in the nature of the thing itself. Now this necessity being absolute, and not depending upon any thing external, must be always unalterably the same; nothing being alterable but what is capable of being affected by somewhat without itself. That being, therefore, which has no other cause of its existence but the absolute necessity of its own nature, must of necessity have existed from everlasting, without beginning; and must of necessity exist to everlasting without end.

As Of the manner of our conceiving the eternity of God. to the manner of this eternal existence: it is manifest, it herein infinitely transcends the manner of the existence of all created beings, even of such as shall exist for ever; that whereas it is not possible for their finite minds to comprehend all that is past, or to understand perfectly all things that are at present, much less to know all that is future, or to have entirely in their power any thing that is to come; but their

thoughts, and knowledge, and power must of necessity have degrees and periods, and be successive and transient as the things themselves. The eternal supreme cause, on the contrary, (supposing him to be an intelligent being, which will hereafter be proved in the sequel of this discourse,) must of necessity have such a perfect, independent, and unchangeable comprehension of all things, that there can be no one point or instant of his eternal duration, wherein all things that are past, present, or to come, will not be as entirely known and represented to him in one single thought or view; and all things present and future be equally entirely in his power and direction as if there was really no succession at all, but all things were actually present at once. Thus far we can speak intelligibly concerning the eternal duration of the self-existent being; and no atheist can say this is an impossible, absurd, or insufficient account. It is, in the most proper and intelligible sense of the words, to all the purposes of excellency and perfection, interminabilis vitæ tota simul et perfecta possessio; the entire and perfect possession of an endless life.
Others With respect to succession. have supposed that the difference between the manner of the eternal existence of the supreme cause, and that of the existence of created beings, is this: that, whereas the latter is a continual transient succession of duration, the former is one point or instant comprehending eternity, and wherein all things are really co-existent. But this distinction I shall not now insist upon, as being of no use in the present dispute, because it is impossible to prove and explain it in such a manner as ever to convince an atheist that there is any thing in it; and besides, as, on the one hand, the schoolmen have indeed generally chosen to defend it, so, on the other hand, [41] there are many learned men, of far better understanding and judgment, who have rejected and opposed it.

[41] Crucem ingenio figere, ut rem capiat fugientem captum.--Tam fieri non potest, ut instans [temporis] coexistant rei successivæ, quam impossibile est punctum coexistere [coexistendi] lineæ.--Lusus merus non intellectorum verberum.--Gassend. Physic. lib. 1. I shall not trouble you with the inconsistent and unintelligible notions of the schoolmen; that it [the eternity of God] is duratio tota simul, in which we are not to conceive any succession, but to imagine it an instant. We may as well conceive the immensity of God to be a point, as his eternity to be an instant.--And how that can be together, which must necessarily be imagined to be co-existent to successions, let them that can, conceive.--Archbishop Tillotson, vol. 7. serm. 13. Others say, God sees and knows future things, by the presentiality and co-existence of all things in eternity; for they say, that future things are actually present and existing to God, though not in mensura propria, yet in mensura aliena. The schoolmen have much more of this jargon and canting language. I envy no man the understanding these phrases; but to me they seem to signify nothing, but to have been words invented by idle and conceited men, which a great many ever since, lest they should seem to be ignorant, would seem to understand. But I wonder most, that men, when they have amused and puzzled themselves and others with hard words, should call this explaining things.--Archbishop Tillotson, vol. 6. serm. 6.

Chapter 7

Proposition VI. That the self-existent being must be infinite and omnipresent.

VI. Proposition VI. That the self-existent being must be infinite and omnipresent. The self-existent Being must of necessity be infinite and omnipresent. The idea of infinity or immensity, as well as of eternity, is so closely connected with that of self-existence, that, because it is impossible but something must be infinite independently and of itself, (for else it would be impossible there should be any infinite at all, unless an effect could be perfecter than its cause,) therefore it must of necessity be self-existent: and because something must of necessity be self-existent, therefore it is necessary that it must likewise be infinite. To be self-existent (as has been already shown,) is to exist by an absolute necessity in the nature of the thing itself. Now, this necessity being absolute in itself, and not depending on any outward cause, it is evident it must be everywhere as well as always, unalterbly the same. For a necessity, which is not everywhere the same, is plainly a consequential necessity only, depending upon some external cause, and not an absolute one in its own nature; for a necessity absolutely such in itself, has no relation to time or place, or any thing else. Whatever therefore exists by an absolute necessity in its own nature, must needs be infinite as well as eternal. To suppose a finite being to be self-existent, is to say that it is a contradiction for that being not to exist, the absence of which may yet be conceived without a contradiction; which is the greatest absurdity in the world. For if a being can, without a contradiction, be absent from one place, it may, without a contradiction, be absent likewise from another place, and from all places: and whatever necessity it may have of existing,

must arise from some external cause, and not absolutely from itself; and, consequently, the being cannot be self-existent.

From hence it follows,

1st. That the infinity of the self-existent being must be an infinity of fulness as well as of immensity; that is, it must not only be without limits, but also without diversity, defect, or interruption: For instance; could matter be supposed boundless, it would not therefore follow that it was in this complete sense infinite; because, though it had no limits, yet it might have within itself many assignable vacuities. But whatever is self-existent, must of necessity exist absolutely in every place alike, and be equally present everywhere; and consequently must have a true and absolute infinity, both of immensity and fulness.

2dly. From hence it follows, that the self-existent being must be a most simple, unchangeable, incorruptible being; without parts, figure, motion, divisibility, or any other such properties as we find in matter. For all these things do plainly and necessarily imply finiteness in their very notion, and are utterly inconsistent with complete infinity. Divisibility is a separation of parts, real or mental: meaning, by mental separation, not barely a partial apprehending, (for space, for instance, which is absolutely indivisible and inseparable, either really or mentally, may yet be partially apprehended; [42] but a removing, disjoining or separating of parts one from another, even so much as in the imagination. And any such separation or removing of parts, one from another, is really or mentally a setting of bounds; either of which destroys infinity.

Motion, for the same reason, implies finiteness; and to have parts, properly speaking, signifies either difference and diversity of existence, which is inconsistent with necessity; or else it signifies

divisibility, real or mental as before, which is inconsistent with complete infinity. Corruption, change, or any alteration whatsoever, implies motion, separation of parts, and finiteness. And any manner of composition, in opposition to the most perfect simplicity, signifies difference and diversity in the manner of existence, which is inconsistent with necessity.

Of the manner of our conceiving the immensity of God.

It is evident, therefore, that the self-existent being must be infinite in the strictest and most complete sense. But as to the particular manner of his being infinite or everywhere present, in opposition to the manner of created things being present in such or such finite places; this is as impossible for our finite understandings to comprehend or explain, as it is for us to form an adequate idea of infinity. Yet that the thing is true, that he is actually omnipresent, we are as certain as we are that there must something be infinite, which no man who has thought upon these things at all ever denied. The schoolmen, indeed, have presumed to assert that the immensity of God is a point, as his eternity (they think) is an instant. But this being altogether unintelligible, that which we can more safely affirm, and which no atheist can say is absurd, and which nevertheless is sufficient to all wise and good purposes, is this: that whereas all finite and created beings can be present but in one definite place at once, and corporeal beings even in that one place very imperfectly and unequally, to any purpose of power or activity, only by the successive motion of different members and organs; the Supreme Cause, on the contrary, being an infinite and most simple essence, and comprehending all things perfectly in himself, is at all times equally present, both in his simple essence, and by the immediate and perfect exercise of all his attributes, to every point of the boundless immensity, as if it were

really all but one single point.

[42] Ordo partium spatii est immutabilis; moveantur hæ de locis suis, et movebuntur (ut ita dicam) de seipsis. Newton. Princip. Schol. ad definit. 8.

Chapter 8

Proposition VII. That the self-existent being can be but one.

VII. Proposition VII. That the self-existent being can be but one. The self-existent being must of necessity be but one. This evidently follows from his being necessarily-existent: for necessity absolute, in itself, is simple and uniform and universal, without any possible difference, difformity, or variety whatsoever: and all variety or difference of existence must needs arise from some external cause, and be dependent upon it, and proportionable to the efficiency of that cause, whatsoever it be. Absolute necessity, in which there can be no variation in any kind or degree, cannot be the ground of existence of a number of beings, however similar and agreeing: because, without any other difference, even number is itself a manifest difformity or inequality (if I may so speak) of efficiency or causality.

Again: To suppose two (or more) distinct beings existing of themselves, necessarily, and independent from each other, implies this plain contradiction; that each of them being independent from the other, they may either of them be supposed to exist alone, so that it will be no contradiction to imagine the other not to exist; and consequently neither of them [43] will be necessarily-existing. Whatsoever therefore exists necessarily, is the one simple essence of the self-existent being; and whatsoever differs from that, is not necessarily-existing; because in absolute necessity there can be no difference or diversity of existence. Other beings there may be innumerable, besides the one infinite self-existent: but no other being can be self-existent, because so it would be individually the same, at the same time that it is supposed to be different.

From hence it follows,

1st. Of the Trinity. That the unity of God is a true and real, not figurative unity. With which prime foundation of natural religion, how the scripture-doctrine of the Trinity perfectly agrees I have elsewhere endeavoured to show particularly, in its proper place.

2dly. The impossibility of two independent principles. From hence it follows, that it is impossible there should be two different self-existent independent principles, as some philosophers have imagined; such as God and matter. For, since self-existence is necessary-existence, and since it is an express contradiction, (as has already been shown,) that two different beings should each be necessarily-existing; it evidently follows, that it is absolutely impossible there should be two independent self-existent principles, such as God and matter.

3dly. The error of Spinoza. From hence we may observe the vanity, folly, and weakness of Spinoza; who, because the self-existent being must necessarily be but one, concludes from thence, [44] that the whole world, and every thing contained therein, is one uniform substance, eternal, uncreated, and necessary: whereas, just on the contrary, he ought to have concluded, that, because all things in the world are very different one from another, and have all manner of variety, and all the marks of will and arbitrariness and changeableness, (and none of necessity) in them, being plainly fitted with very different powers to very different ends, and distinguished one from another by a diversity, not only of modes, but also of essential attributes, and consequently (so far as it is possible for us, by the use of our present faculties, to attain any knowledge at all of them) of their substances themselves also; therefore none of these things are necessary or self-existent, but must needs depend all upon some external cause, that is, on the one supreme, unchangeable, self-existent being. That which led Spinoza into

his foolish and destructive opinion, and on which alone all his argumentation is entirely built, is that absurd definition of substance, [45] that it is something, the idea of which does not depend on, or presuppose the idea of any other thing, from which it might proceed; but includes in itself necessary-existence. Which definition is either false, and signifies nothing; and then his whole doctrine built upon it falls at once to the ground: Or, if it be true, then neither matter nor spirit, nor any finite being whatsoever, (as has been before shown,) is in that sense properly a substance, but (the ho on) the self-existent being alone: and so it will prove nothing (notwithstanding all his show and form of demonstration,) to his main purpose, which was to make us believe that there is no such thing as power or liberty in the universe, but that every particular thing [46] in the world is by an absolute necessity just what it is, and could not possibly have been in any respect otherwise. Supposing, I say, his definition of substance to be true, yet even that would really conclude nothing to his main purpose concerning the necessity of all things. For since, according to that definition, neither matter nor spirit, nor any finite beings whatsoever, are substances, but only modes; how will it follow, that, because substance is self-existent, therefore all these modes are so too? Why, because, [47] from an infinite cause infinite effects must needs follow. Very true, supposing that infinite self-existent cause not to be a voluntary, but a mere necessary agent, that is, no agent at all: and supposing also, that in mere necessity there could and must be all or any variety. Both which suppositions (in the present argument) are the question begged: and what he afterwards attempts to allege in proof of them, shall afterwards be considered in its proper place.

[43] See this farther explained, in the Answer to the First Letter at

the end of this book.

[44] Una substantia non potest produci ab alia. Ethic. par. 1. prop. 6. Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet existere. Prop. 7. Præter Deum nulla dari, neque concipi potest substantia. Prop. 14.

[45] Per substantiam intelligo id quod in se est et per se concipitur; hoc est, id cujus conceptus non indiget conceptu alterius rei a quo formari debeat.--Definitio 3. which, presently after, he thus explains:--Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet existere; hoc est, ipsius essentia involvit necessario existentiam. Ethic. Par. 1. prop. 7.

[46] Res nullo alio modo, neque alio ordine, a Deo produci potuerunt quam productæ sunt.--Prop. 33.

[47] Ex necessitate divinæ naturæ, infinita infinitis modis (hoc est, omnia quæ sub intellectum infinitum cadere possunt,) seque debent.--Prop. 16.

Chapter 9

Proposition VIII. That the self-existent being must be intelligent.

VIII. Proposition VIII. That the self-existent being must be intelligent. The self-existent and original cause of all things must be an intelligent being. In this proposition lies the main question between us and the atheists. For, that something must be self-existent, and that that which is self-existent must necessarily be eternal and infinite, and the original cause of all things, will not bear much dispute.--But all atheists, whether they hold the world to be of itself eternal both as to the matter and form, or whether they hold the matter only to be necessary and the form contingent, or whatever hypothesis they frame, have always asserted, and must maintain, either directly or indirectly, that the self-existent being is not an intelligent being, but either pure unactive matter, or (which in other words is the very same thing) a mere necessary agent. For a mere necessary agent must of necessity either be plainly and directly in the grossest sense unintelligent; which was the ancient atheist's notion of the self-existent being: or else its intelligence (which is the assertion of Spinoza and some moderns,) must be wholly separate from any power of will and choice; which, in respect of any excellency and perfection, or indeed to any common sense, is the very same thing as no intelligence at all.

Now, that the self-existent being is not such a blind and unintelligent necessity, but in the most proper sense an understanding and really active being, does not indeed so obviously and directly appear to us by considerations a priori; because (through the imperfection of our faculties) we know not wherein intelligence consists, nor can see the immediate and necessary connexion of it with self-existence, as we can

that of eternity, infinity, unity, &c. But, a posteriori, almost every thing in the world demonstrates to us this great truth, and affords undeniable arguments to prove that the world, and all things therein, are the effects of an intelligent and knowing cause.

And 1st. Proved from the degrees of perfection in things, and the order of causes and effects. Since in general there are manifestly in things various kinds of powers, and very different excellencies and degrees of perfection, it must needs be, that, in the order of causes and effects, the cause must always be more excellent than the effect: and consequently the self-existent being, whatever that be supposed to be, must of necessity (being the original of all things) contain in itself the sum and highest degree of all the perfections of all things: not because that which is self-existent must therefore have all possible perfections; (for this, though most certainly true in itself, yet cannot be so easily demonstrated a priori;) but because it is impossible that any effect should have any perfection, which was not in the cause. For, if it had, then that perfection would be caused by nothing; which is a plain contradiction. Now an unintelligent being, it is evident, cannot be indued with all the perfections of all things in the world; because intelligence is one of those perfections. All things, therefore, cannot arise from an unintelligent original; and consequently the self-existent being, must, of necessity, be intelligent.

There is no possibility for an atheist to avoid the force of this argument any other way than by asserting one of these two things: either that there is no intelligent being at all in the universe; or that intelligence is no distinct perfection, but merely a composition of figure and motion, as colour and sounds are vulgarly supposed to be. Of the former of these assertions, every man's own consciousness is an

abundant confutation. For they who contend that beasts are mere machines, have yet never presumed to conjecture that men are so too. And that the latter assertion (in which the main strength of atheism lies,) is most absurd and impossible, shall be shown presently; though if that assertion could be supposed to be true, yet even still it would unavoidably follow, that the self-existent being must needs be intelligent; as shall be proved in my fourth argument upon this present head. In the meantime, that the assertion itself, viz. that intelligence is not any distinct perfection, properly speaking, but merely a composition of unintelligent figure and motion; that this assertion, I say, is most absurd and impossible, will appear from what shall be said in the ensuing argument.

2dly. From the intelligence that is in created beings. Since in men in particular there is undeniably that power, which we call thought, intelligence, consciousness, perception or knowledge; there must of necessity either have been from eternity, without any original cause at all, an infinite succession of men, whereof no one has had a necessary, but every one a dependent and communicated being; or else these beings, indued with perception and consciousness, must at some time or other have arisen purely out of that which had no such quality as sense, perception, or consciousness; or else they must have been produced by some intelligent superior being. There never was nor can be any atheist whatsoever, that can deny but one of these three suppositions must be the truth. If, therefore, the two former can be proved to be false and impossible, the latter must be owned to be demonstrably true. Now, that the first is impossible, is evident from what has been already said in proof of the second general head of this discourse; and that the second is likewise impossible, may be thus demonstrated: If perception, or intelligence, be a distinct quality or perfection, and not a mere

effect or composition of unintelligent figure and motion, then beings indued with perception or consciousness can never have arisen purely out of that which had no such quality as perception or consciousness; because nothing can ever give to another any perfection, which it hath not either actually in itself, or at least in a higher degree. But perception or intelligence is a distinct quality or perfection, and not a mere effect or composition of unintelligent figure and motion.

First: If perception or intelligence be any real distinct quality, or perfection, and not a mere effect or composition of unintelligent figure and motion, then beings indued with perception or consciousness can never possibly have arisen purely out of that which itself had no such quality as perception or consciousness; because nothing can ever give to another any perfection which it hath not either actually in itself, or at least in a higher degree. This is very evident; because, if any thing could give to another any perfection which it has not itself, that perfection would be caused absolutely by nothing; which is a plain contradiction. If any one here replies, (as Mr Gildon has done [48] in a letter to Mr Blount,) that colours, sounds, tastes, and the like, arise from figure and motion, which have no such qualities in themselves; or that figure, divisibility, mobility, and other qualities of matter, are confessed to be given from God, who yet cannot, without extreme blasphemy, be said to have any such qualities himself; and that therefore, in like manner, perception [49] or intelligence may arise out of that which has no intelligence itself; the answer is very easy,--first, that colours, sounds, tastes, and the like, are by no means effects arising from mere figure and motion; there being nothing in the bodies themselves, the objects of the senses, that has any manner of similitude to any of these qualities; but they are plainly thoughts or modifications of the mind itself, which is an intelligent

being; and are not properly caused, but only occasioned, by the impressions of figure and motion. Nor will it at all help an atheist, (as to the present question) though we should here make for him, (that we may allow him the greatest possible advantage,) even that most absurd supposition, that the mind itself is nothing but mere matter and not at all an immaterial substance. For, even supposing it to be mere matter, yet he must needs confess it to be such matter as is indued not only with figure and motion, but also with the quality of intelligence and perception; and consequently, as to the present question, it will still come to the same thing, that colours, sounds, and the like, which are not qualities of unintelligent bodies, but perceptions of mind, can no more be caused by, or arise from mere unintelligent figure and motion, than colour can be a triangle, or sound a square, or something be caused by nothing. Secondly, as to the other part of the objection; that figure, divisibility, mobility, and other qualities of matter, are (as we ourselves acknowledge) given it from God, who yet cannot, without extreme blasphemy, be said to have any such qualities himself; and that therefore, in like manner, perception or intelligence may arise out of that which has no intelligence itself; the answer is still easier: That figure, divisibility, mobility, and other such like qualities of matter, are not real, proper, distinct, and positive powers, but only negative qualities, deficiencies, or imperfections. And though no cause can communicate to its effect any real perfection which it has not itself, yet the effect may easily have many imperfections, deficiencies, or negative qualities, which are not in the cause. Though, therefore, figure, divisibility, mobility, and the like, (which are mere negations, as all limitations and all defects of powers are,) may be in the effect, and not in the cause; yet intelligence, (which I now suppose, and shall prove immediately, to be

a distinct quality, and which no man can say is a mere negation,) cannot possibly be so.

Having therefore thus demonstrated, that if perception or intelligence be supposed to be a distinct quality or perfection, (though even but of matter only, if the atheist pleases,) and not a mere effect or composition of unintelligent figure and motion; then beings indued with perception or consciousness can never have arisen purely out of that which had no such quality as perception or consciousness; because nothing can ever give to another any perfection which it has not itself. It will easily appear, secondly, that perception or intelligence is really such a distinct quality or perfection, and not possibly a mere effect or composition of unintelligent figure and motion; and that for this plain reason, because intelligence is not figure, and consciousness is not motion: For whatever can arise from, or be compounded of any things, is still only those very things of which it was compounded. And if infinite compositions or divisions be made eternally, the things will still be but eternally the same; and all their possible effects can never be any thing but repetitions of the same. For instance, all possible changes, compositions, or divisions of figure, are still nothing but figure; and all possible compositions or effects of motion can eternally be nothing but mere motion. If, therefore, there ever was a time when there was nothing in the universe but matter and motion, there never could have been any thing else therein but matter and motion. And it would have been as impossible there should ever have existed any such thing as intelligence or consciousness, or even any such thing as light, or heat, or sound, or colour, or any of those we call secondary qualities of matter, as it is now impossible for motion to be blue or red, or for a triangle to be transformed into a sound. That which has been apt to

deceive men in this matter is this; that they imagine compounds to be somewhat really different from that of which they are compounded: which is a very great mistake. For all the things of which men so judge, either, if they be really different, are not compounds nor effects of what men judge them to be, but are something totally distinct; as, when the vulgar think colours and sounds to be properties inherent in bodies, when indeed they are purely thoughts of the mind: or else, if they be really compounds and effects, then they are not different, but exactly the same that ever they were; as, when two triangles put together make a square, that square is still nothing but two triangles; or when a square cut in halves makes two triangles, those two triangles are still only the two halves of a square; or when the mixture of a blue and yellow powder makes a green, that green is still nothing but blue and yellow intermixed, as is plainly visible by the help of microscopes. See my letter to Mr. Dodwell, with the four defences of it. And in short, every thing, by composition, division, or motion, is nothing else but the very same it was before, taken either in whole or in parts, or in different place or order. He therefore that will affirm intelligence to be the effect of a system of unintelligent matter in motion, must either affirm intelligence to be a mere name or external denomination of certain figures and motions, and that it differs from unintelligent figures and motions, no otherwise than as a circle or triangle differs from a square; which is evidently absurd: or else he must suppose it to be a real distinct quality, arising from certain motions of a system of matter not in itself intelligent; and then this no less evidently absurd consequence would follow, that one quality inherred in another; for, in that case, not the substance itself, the particles of which the system consists, but the mere mode, the particular mode of motion and figure, would be intelligent. Mr. Hobbes

seems to have been aware of this: and therefore, though he is very sparing, and as it were ashamed to speak out, yet finding himself pressed, in his own mind, with the difficulty arising from the impossibility of sense or consciousness being merely the effect of figure and motion, and it not serving his purpose at all, (were the thing never so possible,) to suppose that God, by an immediate and voluntary act of his almighty power indues certain systems of matter with consciousness and thought, (of which opinion I shall have occasion to speak something more hereafter,) he is forced [50] to have recourse to that prodigiously absurd supposition that all matter, as matter, is indued not only with figure and a capacity of motion, but also with an actual sense of perception; and wants only the organs and memory of animals to express its sensation.

3dly. From the beauty, order, and final causes of things. See Mr. Boyle, of Final Causes; & Mr Ray, of the Wisdom of God in the Creation; and Mr. Derham's Physico-Theology. That the self-existent and original cause of all things is an intelligent being, appears abundantly from the excellent variety, order, beauty, and wonderful contrivance and fitness of all things in the world to their proper and respective ends. This argument has been so learnedly and fully handled both by ancient and modern writers, that I do but just mention it, without enlarging at all upon it. I shall only at this time make this one observation; That, whereas Des Cartes and others have endeavoured to give a possible account, (possible, did I say? nay, indeed, a most impossible and ridiculous account,) how the world might be formed by the necessary laws of motion alone; [51] they have, by so seemingly vast an undertaking, really meant no more than to explain philosophically how the inanimate part, that is, infinitely the least considerable part of the world, might possibly have been framed. For as to plants and

animals, in which the wisdom of the Creator principally appears, they have never, in any tolerable manner, or with any the least appearance of success, pretended to give an account how they were originally formed. In these things, matter and the laws of motion are able to do nothing at all. And how ridiculous the Epicurean hypothesis is, of the earth producing them all at first by chance, (besides that, I think, it is now given up even by all atheists;) appears from the late discovery made in philosophy, that there is no such thing as equivocal generation of any the meanest animal or plant; the sun, and earth and water, and all the powers of nature in conjunction, being able to do nothing at all towards the producing any thing indued with so much as even a vegetable life. (From which most excellent discovery we may, by the way, observe the usefulness of natural and experimental philosophy, sometimes even in matters of religion.) Since therefore things are thus, it must unavoidably be granted (even by the most obstinate atheist,) either that all plants and animals are originally the work of an intelligent being, and created by him in time; or that, having been from eternity in the same order and method they are now in, they are an eternal effect of an eternal intelligent cause, continually exerting his infinite power and wisdom; or else, that, without any self-existent original at all, they have been derived one from another in an eternal succession, by an infinite progress of dependent causes. The first of these three ways is the conclusion we assert: the second, (so far as the cause of atheism is concerned,) comes to the very same thing: and the third I have already shown, (in my proof of the second general head of this discourse,) to be absolutely impossible, and a contradiction.

4thly. From the original of motion. Supposing it was possible that the form of the world, and all the visible things contained therein, with the order, beauty, and exquisite fitness of their parts; nay, supposing

that even intelligence itself, with consciousness and thought, in all the beings we know, could possibly be the result or effect of mere unintelligent matter, figure, and motion; (which is the most unreasonable and impossible supposition in the world;) yet even still there would remain an undeniable demonstration, that the self-existent being, (whatever it be supposed to be,) must be intelligent. For even these principles themselves [unintelligent figure and motion] could never have possibly existed without there had been before them an intelligent cause. I instance in motion:--It is evident there is now such a thing as motion in the world; which either began at some time or other, or was eternal. If it began at any time, then the question is granted, that the first cause is an intelligent being; for mere unintelligent matter, and that at rest, it is manifest could never of itself begin to move. On the contrary, if motion was eternal, it was either eternally caused by some eternal intelligent being, or it must of itself be necessary and self-existent; or else, without any necessity in its own nature, and without any external necessary cause, it must have existed from eternity by an endless successive communication. If motion was eternally caused by some eternal intelligent being, this also is granting the question, as to the present dispute. If it was of itself necessary and self-existent, then it follows, that it must be a contradiction in terms to suppose any matter to be at rest: and yet at the same time, because the determination of this self-existent motion must be every way at once, the effect of it could be nothing else but a perpetual rest. Besides, (as there is no end of absurdities, when they once begin,) it must also imply a contradiction, to suppose that there might possibly have been originally more or less motion in the universe than there actually was: which is so very absurd a consequence, that Spinoza himself, though he

expressly asserts all things to be necessary, yet seems ashamed here [52] to speak out his opinion, or rather plainly contradicts himself in the question about the original of motion. But if it be said, lastly, that motion, without any necessity in its own nature, and without any external necessary cause, has existed from eternity, merely by an endless successive communication, as [53] Spinoza, inconsistently enough, seems to assert: This I have before shown, (in my proof of the second general proposition of this discourse,) to be a plain contradiction. It remains, therefore, that motion must of necessity be originally caused by something that is intelligent, or else there never could have been any such thing as motion in the world; and consequently the self-existent being, the original cause of all things, (whatever it be supposed to be,) must of necessity be an intelligent being.

From hence it follows again, that the material world cannot possibly be the original self-existent being: For, since the self-existent being is demonstrated to be intelligent, and the material world plainly is not so, it follows that the material world cannot possibly be self-existent. What some have fondly imagined concerning a soul of the world, if thereby they mean a created, dependent being, signifies nothing in the present argument: But if they understand thereby something necessary and self-existent, then it is nothing else but a false, corrupt, and imperfect notion of God.

[48] Oracles of Reason, p. 186. See also my Letter to Mr Dodwell, with several answers and replies concerning the natural immortality of the soul.

[49] If, with one of Cicero's dialogists, they would infer that the whole [of the world] must have understanding, because some portions of it are intelligent--we may retort with the other speaker in Cicero, that, by the same argument, the whole must be a courtier, a musician, a

dancing-master, or a philosopher, because many of the parts are such.
Mr Toland's Letter; motion essential to matter.

[50] Scio fuisse philosophos quosdam, eosdemque viros doctos, qui corpora omnia sensu prædita esse sustinuerunt; nec video, si natura sensionis in reactione sola collocaretur, quomodo refutari possint. Sed etsi ex reactione etiam corporum aliorum, phantasma aliquod nasceretur, illud tamen, remoto objecto, statim cessaret. Nam, nisi ad retinendum motum impressum, etiam remoto objecto, apta habeant organa, ut habent animalia; ita tantum sentient, ut nunquam sensisse se recordentur.--Sensioni ergo, quæ vulgo ita appellatur necessario adhæret memoria aliqua, &c.--Hobbes Physic. cap. 25. sect. 5. See also Nos. 2 and 11 of the Appendix to a Collection of papers which passed between Mr. Leibnitz and Dr. Clarke.

[51] See Mr Boyle, of Final causes; and Mr Ray, of the Wisdom of God in the creation; and Mr Derham's Physico-Theology.

[52] Spinozæ Ethic. Par. I, prop. 33, compared with part II, prop. 13, lemma 3.

[53] Corpus motum, vel quiescens, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad motum vel quietem determinatum fuit ab alio, et illud iterum ab alio, et sic in infinitum.--Ethic. par. II, prop. 13, lemma 3.

Chapter 10

Proposition IX. That the self-existent being must be a free agent.

IX. Proposition IX. That the self-existent being must be a free agent. The self-existent and original cause of all things, is not a necessary agent but a being indued with liberty and choice. The contrary to this proposition is the foundation and the sum of what Spinoza and his followers have asserted concerning the nature of God. What reasons or arguments they have offered for their opinion I shall have occasion to consider briefly in my proof of the proposition itself. The truth of which appears--

1st. This a necessary consequent of the foregoing proposition. In that it is a necessary consequence of the foregoing proposition. For intelligence without liberty (as I there hinted) is really (in respect of any power, excellence, or perfection,) no intelligence at all: It is indeed a consciousness, but it is merely a passive one; a consciousness, not of acting, but purely of being acted upon. Without liberty, nothing can, in any tolerable propriety of speech, be said to be an agent, or cause of any thing. For to act necessarily, is really and properly not to act at all, but only to be acted upon. What therefore Spinoza and his followers assert, concerning the production of all things [54] from the necessity of the divine nature, is mere jargon and words, without any meaning at all. For if, by the necessity of the divine nature, they understand not the perfection and rectitude of his will, whereby God is unalterably determined to do always what is best in the whole, (as confessedly they do not, because this is consistent with the most perfect liberty and choice,) but, on the contrary, mean an absolute and strictly natural necessity; it follows evidently, that when they say God, by the necessity of his nature, is

the cause and author of all things, they understand him to be a cause or agent in no other sense than as if a man should say, that a stone, by the necessity of its nature, is the cause of its own falling and striking the ground, which is really not to be an agent or cause at all; but their opinion amounts to this, that all things are equally self-existent, and consequently that the material world is God; which I have before proved to be a contradiction. In like manner, when they speak of the intelligence and knowledge of God, they mean to attribute these powers to him in no other sense than the ancient Hylozoicks attributed them to all matter; See a very remarkable passage of Mr Hobbes, cited above page 53. that is, that a stone, when it falls, has a sensation and consciousness, but that that consciousness is no cause at all, or power of acting; which kind of intelligence, in any tolerable propriety of speech, is no intelligence at all: And, consequently, the arguments that proved the supreme cause to be properly an intelligent and active being do also undeniably prove that he is likewise indued with liberty and choice, which alone is the power of acting.

2dly. Proved farther from the arbitrary disposition of things in the world; with an answer to Spinoza's arguments for the necessity of all things. If the supreme cause is not a being indued with liberty and choice, but a mere necessary agent, whose actions are all as absolutely and naturally necessary as his existence, then, it will follow, that nothing which is not, could possibly have been; and that nothing which is, could possibly not have been; and that no mode or circumstance of the existence of any thing could possibly have been in any respect otherwise than it now actually is: All which being evidently most false and absurd, it follows, on the contrary, that the supreme cause is not a mere necessary agent, but a being indued with liberty and choice.

The consequence, [55] viz. that if the supreme cause be a necessary agent, then nothing which is not, could possibly have been; and nothing which is, could possibly either not have been, or have been different from what it is: This, I say, is expressly owned by Spinoza to be the unavoidable consequence of his own opinion. And, accordingly, he endeavours to maintain, that no thing, or mode of existence of any thing, could possibly have been in any respect different from what it now actually is. His reasons are; (1) because [56] from an infinitely perfect nature, infinite things in infinite manners, must needs proceed; and (2.) [57] because, if any thing could possibly be otherwise than it is, the will and nature of God must be supposed capable of change; and (3.) [58] because if all possible things in all possible manners do not always and necessarily exist, they never can all exist; but some things, that do not exist, will still always be possible only, and never can actually exist; and so the actual omnipotence of God is taken away. The first of these arguments is a plain begging of the question; For, that an infinitely perfect nature is able indeed to produce infinite things in infinite manners, is certainly true; but that it must always actually do so, by an absolute necessity of nature, without any power of choice, either as to time or manner or circumstances, does by no means follow from the perfection of its nature, unless it be first supposed to be a necessary agent; and also, that in mere necessity there must be all (or can be any) variety. Both which suppositions are the very question begged that was to be proved. The second argument, is (if possible) still weaker: for how does it follow, if God, according to his eternal unerring purpose and infinite wisdom, produces different things at different times, and in different manners, that, therefore, the will and nature of God is changeable? It might exactly as well be argued, that if God (according

to Spinoza's supposition, does always necessarily produce all possible differences and varieties of things, therefore his will and nature is always necessarily infinitely various, unequal, and dissimilar to itself. And as to the third argument, (which is mere metaphysical trifling,) it is just such reasoning as if a man should argue, that if all possible [eternal] duration be not always actually exhausted, it never can be all exhausted; and that therefore so the eternity of God is taken away; which sort of arguing every one at first sight discerns the weakness of.

But whatever the arguments were, and if they were never so much more plausible than they really are, yet the assertion itself, viz. that no thing, or mode of existence of any thing, could possibly have been made in any respect different from what it actually is; is so palpably absurd and false, so contradictory to experience and the nature of things, and to the most obvious and common reason of mankind; that of itself it immediately, and upon the first hearing, sufficiently confutes any principle of which it is a consequence. For all things in the world appear plainly to be the most arbitrary that can be imagined; and to be wholly the effects not of necessity, but of wisdom and choice. A necessity indeed of fitness; that is, that things could not have been otherwise than they are, without diminishing the beauty, order, and well-being of the whole; there may be, and (as far as we can apprehend) there certainly is. But this is so far from serving our adversaries' purpose, that, on the contrary, it is a direct demonstration that all things were made and ordered by a free and wise agent. That, therefore, which I affirm, contradictory to Spinoza's assertion, is, that there is not the least appearance of an absolute necessity of nature, (so as that any variation would imply a contradiction,) in any of these things. Motion itself, and all its

quantities and directions, with the laws of gravitation, are entirely arbitrary; and might possibly have been altogether different from what they now are. The number and motion of the heavenly bodies have no manner of necessity in the nature of the things themselves. The number of the planets might have been greater or less. Their motion upon their own axes might have been in any proportion swifter or slower then it now is. And the direction of all their progressive motions, both of the primary and secondary planets, uniformly from west to east, (when by the motion of comets [59] it appears there was no necessity but that they might as easily have moved in all imaginable transverse directions,) is an evident proof that these things are solely the effect of wisdom and choice. There is not the least appearance of necessity, but that all these things might possibly have been infinitely varied from their present constitution: and (as the late improvements in astronomy discover) they are actually liable to very great changes. Every thing upon earth is still more evidently arbitrary; and plainly the product, not of necessity, but will. What absolute necessity for just such a number of species of animals or plants? or who, without blushing, dare affirm, [60] that neither the form, nor order, nor any the minutest circumstance or mode of existence of any of these things could possibly have been in the least diversified by the supreme cause?

To give but one instance. In all the greater species of animals, where was the necessity for that conformity [61] we observe in the number and likeness of all their principal members? and how would it have been a contradiction to suppose any or all of them varied from what they now are? To suppose indeed the continuance of such monsters, as Lucretius imagines to have perished for want of their principal organs of life, is really a contradiction. But how would it have been a contradiction

for a whole species of horses or oxen to have subsisted with six legs or four eyes? But it is a shame to insist longer upon so plain an argument.

It might have been objected with much more plausibleness, that the supreme cause cannot be free, because he must needs do always what is best in the whole. But this would not at all serve Spinoza's purpose. For this is a necessity, not of nature and fate, but of fitness and wisdom; a necessity, consistent with the greatest freedom and most perfect choice. For the only foundation of this necessity is such an unalterable rectitude of will, and perfection of wisdom, as makes it impossible for a wise being to resolve to act foolishly; or for a nature infinitely good, to choose to do what is evil: Of which I shall have occasion to speak more hereafter, when I come to deduce the moral attributes of God.

3dly. The same proved also from final causes. If there be any final cause, of any thing in the universe, then the supreme cause is not a necessary but a free agent. This consequence also, Spinoza acknowledges to be unvoidable: And therefore he has no other way left, but, with a strange confidence, to expose all final causes, [62] as the fictions of ignorant and superstitious men: and to laugh [63] at those who are so foolish and childish as to fancy that eyes were designed and fitted to see with, teeth to chew with, food to be eaten for nourishment, the sun to give light, &c. I suppose it will not be thought, that when once a man comes to this, he is to be disputed with any longer. Whoever pleases, may, for satisfaction on this head, consult Galen de Usu Partium, Tully de Natura Deorum, Mr Boyle of Final Causes, and Mr Ray of the Wisdom of God in the Creation. I shall only observe this one thing; that the larger the improvements and discoveries are, which are daily made in astronomy and natural philosophy, the more clearly is

this question continually determined, to the shame and confusion of atheists.

4thly. From the finiteness of created beings. If the supreme cause be a mere necessary agent, it is impossible any effect or product of that cause should be finite. For since that which acts necessarily, cannot govern or direct its own actions, but must necessarily produce whatever can be the effect or product of its nature, it is plain, every effect of such an infinite uniform nature acting everywhere necessarily alike, must of necessity be immense, or infinite in extension: and so no creature in the universe could possibly be finite; which is infinitely absurd and contrary to experience. Spinoza, to shuffle off this absurdity, expresses the consequence of his doctrine thus: [64] that, from the necessity of the divine nature, infinite things (meaning infinite in number,) in infinite manners must needs follow. But whoever reads his demonstration of this proposition, can hardly fail to observe, (if he be at all used to such speculations,) that if it proved any thing at all, it would equally prove, that from the necessity of the divine nature, only infinite things (meaning infinite in extension) can possibly arise; which demonstration alone is a sufficient confutation of the opinion it was designed to establish.

5thly. And from the impossibility of an infinite succession of causes. If the supreme cause be not a free and voluntary agent, then in every effect, (for instance, in motion,) there must have been a progression of causes in infinitum, without any original cause at all. For if there be no liberty anywhere, then there is no agent; no cause, mover, principle, or beginning of motion anywhere. Every thing in the universe must be passive, and nothing active; every thing moved, and no mover: every thing effect, and nothing cause. Spinoza indeed, (as has been already observed,) refers all things to the necessity of the divine

nature, as their real cause and original; but this is mere jargon, and words without any signification; and will not at all help him over the present difficulty. For, if by things existing through the necessity of the divine nature, he means absolutely a necessity of existence, so as to make the world and every thing in it self-existent, then it follows (as I have before shown) that it must be a contradiction in terms, to suppose motion, &c. not to exist, which Spinoza himself is ashamed to assert. But if, therefore, by the necessity of the divine nature, he means only the necessary following of an effect from its cause, or the cause necessarily producing its effect; this necessity must still always be determined by something antecedent, and so on infinitely. And this, Spinoza (though sometimes he seems to mean the other and equally absurd sense) expressly owns in some places to be his meaning. [65] There can be no volition, saith he, but from some cause, which cause must likewise be caused by some other cause, and so on infinitely. Again; will, [66] saith he, belongs to the nature of God no otherwise than motion and rest do; so that God can no more properly be said to act by the liberty of his will than by the liberty of motion and rest. And what the original of motion and rest is, he tells us in these words: [67] every body in motion, or at rest, must have been determined to that motion or rest by some other body, which must itself likewise have been determined by a third; and so on in infinitum. And thus, since motion is not, in any one of its stages of communication, a necessary self-existent being, (because the body moved may always, without a contradiction, have been imagined to be at rest, and is supposed not to have motion from itself, but from another;) the opinion of Spinoza plainly recurs to an infinite succession of dependent beings produced one from another, in an endless progression, without any original cause at all; which notion I have already (in the proof of the

second general head of this discourse) demonstrated to imply a contradiction. And since, therefore, there is no other possible way to avoid this absurdity, but by granting that there must be somewhere a principle of motion and action, which is liberty, I suppose it by this time sufficiently proved that the supreme cause must be a being indued with liberty and choice.

From That liberty is not in itself an impossible and contradictory notion. what has been said upon this head, it sufficiently appears, that liberty is not in itself, and in the very notion of the thing, an absolute contradiction and impossibility, as the pleaders for necessity and fate contend that it is, and place the chief strength of their argument in that supposition. For, that which actually is, is certainly not impossible. And it has already been proved, that liberty actually is, nay that it is impossible for it not to be, in the first and supreme cause. The principal argument used by the maintainers of fate against the possibility of liberty, is this: That since every thing must have a cause, [68] every volition or determination of the will of an intelligent being must, as all other things, arise from some cause, and that cause from some other cause, and so on infinitely. But now, (besides that in this sort of reasoning, these men always ignorantly confound moral motives with physical efficients, between which two things there is no manner of relation; besides this, I say) this very argument really proves the direct contrary to what they intend. For since every thing must indeed have a cause of its being, either from without, or in the necessity of its own nature; and it is a plain contradiction (as has already been demonstrated) to suppose an infinite series of dependent effects, none of which are necessary in themselves or self-existent; therefore it is impossible but there must be in the universe some being whose existence is founded in the necessity of its

own nature; and which, being acted upon by nothing beyond itself, must of necessity have in itself a principle of acting, or power of beginning motion, which is the idea of liberty. It is true, this argument proves only the liberty of the first and supreme cause, and extends not indeed to any created being; but it evinces in general (which is sufficient to my present purpose) that liberty is so far from being impossible and contradictory in itself, that on the contrary it is impossible but that it must really be somewhere; and this being once established, it will be easy to show hereafter, that it is a power capable of being communicated to created beings. Of which, in its proper place.

[54] Ex necessitate divinæ naturæ, infinita infinitis modis sequi debent--Ethic. par. I. prop. 16.

[55] Alii putant Deum esse causam liberam, propterea quod potest, ut putant, efficere ut ea quæ ex ejus natura sequi diximus; hoc est, quæ in ejus potestate sunt, non fiant: Sed hoc idem est ac si dicerent quod Deus potest efficere, ut, ex natura trianguli, non sequatur ejus tres angulos æquales esse duobus rectis.--Ego me satis clare ostendisse puto, a summa Dei potentia, omnia necessario effluxisse, vel semper eadem necessitate sequi; eodem modo ac, ex natura trianguli, ab æterno et in æternum sequitur ejus tres angulos æquari duobus rectis.--Ethic, par. 1, schol. ad prop. 17. Omnia ex necessitate naturæ divinæ determinata sunt, non tantum ad existendum, sed etiam ad certo modo existendum et operandum; nullumque datur contingens.--Demonstrat. prop. 29. Si res alterius naturæ potuissent esse, vel alio modo ad operandum determinari, ut naturæ ordo alius esset: ergo Dei etiam natura alia posset esse quam jam est.--Prop. 33. demostrat. Quicquid concipimus in Dei potestate esse, id necessario est.--Prop.35. Deum non operari ex libertate voluntatis.--Corol. ad prop. 32. Res nullo alio modo, neque

alio ordine, a Deo produci potuerant quam productæ sunt.--Prop. 33.

[56] Ex necessitate divinæ naturæ, infinita infinitis modis sequi debent.--Prop. 16.

[57] Si res alterius naturæ potuissent esse, vel alio modo ad operandum determinari; ut naturæ ordo alius esset: Ergo Dei etiam natura alia posset esse quam jam est.--Prop. 33. demonstrat.

[58] Immo adversarii, [qui negant, ex necessitate divinæ naturæ, omnia necessario fluere,] Dei omnipotentiam negare videntur. Coguntur enim fateri, Deum infinita creabilia intelligere quæ tamen nunquam creare poterit: Nam alias; si scilicet omnia, quæ intelligit crearet, suam, juxta ipsos, exhauriret omnipotentiam, et se imperfectum redderet. Ut igitur Deum perfectum statuant, eo rediguntur, ut simul statuere debeant ipsum non posse omnia efficere, ad quæ ejus potentia se extendit.--Coroll. ad prop. 17.

[59] Nam dum cometæ moventur in orbibus valde eccentricis, undique; et quoquoversum in omnes coeli partes; utique nullo modo fieri potuit ut cæco fato tribuendum sit; quod planetæ in orbibus concentricis motu consimili ferantur eodem omnes.--Tam miram uniformitatem in planetarum systemate, necessario fatendum est intelligentia et consilio fuisse effectam.--Newton. Optic. page 345.

[60] Res nullo alio modo, neque alio ordine, a Deo produci potuerunt, quam productæ sunt.--Spinoza, ut supra.

[61] Idemque dici possit de uniformitate illa, quæ est in corporibus animalium, viz. necessario fatendum est intelligentia et consilio fuisse effectam.--Newton. Optic. page 346.

[62] Naturam finem nullum sibi præfixum habere; et omnes causas finales, nihil nisi humana esse figmenta.--Appendix ad prop. 36.

[63] Oculos ad videndum, dentes ad masticandum, herbas et animantia ad alimentum, solem ad illuminandum, mare ad alendum pisces, &c.--Ibid.

Nullas unquam rationes circa res naturales a fine, quem Deus aut natura in iis faciendis sibi proposuit, desumemus.--Cartes. Princip. par. 1. § 28.

[64] Ex necessitate divinæ naturæ infinita infinitis modis seque debent.--Ethic. par. 1. prop. 16.

[65] Unaquæque volitio non potest existere, neque ad operandum determinari; nisi ab alia causa determinetur, et hæc rursus ab alia; et sic porro in infinitum.--Prop. 33. demonst.

[66] Voluntas ad Dei naturam non magis pertinet quam reliqua naturalia; sed ad ipsam eodem modum sese habet, ut motus et quies. Deus non magis dici potest ex libertate voluntatis agere, quam dici potest ex libertate motus et quietis agere.--Coroll. ad prop.32.

[67] Corpus motum vel quiescens, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad motum vel quietem determinatum fuit ab alio; et illud iterum ab alio; et sic in infinitum.--Ethic. Par. 11. prop. 13. lemma 3.

[68] Mens ad hoc vel illud volendum determinatur a causa, quæ etiam ab alia determinata est, et hæc iterum ab alia, et sic in infinitum.--Spinoza Ethic. par. II, prop. 48.

Chapter 11

Proposition X. That the self-existent being must be all-powerful.

X. Proposition X. That the self-existent being must be all-powerful. The self-existent being, the supreme cause of all things, must of necessity have infinite power.--This proposition is evident, and undeniable. For since nothing (as has been already proved,) can possibly be self-existent, besides himself; and consequently all things in the universe were made by him, and are entirely dependent upon him; and all the powers of all things are derived from him, and must therefore be perfectly subject and subordinate to him; it is manifest that nothing can make any difficulty or resistance to the execution of his will, but he must of necessity have absolute power to do every thing he pleases, with the perfectest ease, and in the perfectest manner, at once, and in a moment, whenever he wills it. The descriptions the scripture gives of this power, are so lively and emphatical, that I cannot forbear mentioning one or two passages. Thus, Job ix. 4:--"He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength;--which removeth the mountains, and they know it not; which overturneth them in his anger. Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars thereof tremble. Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the stars. Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waters of the sea. Which doth great things past finding out, yea and wonders without number." Again: "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in his thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them. The pillars of Heaven tremble, and are astonished at his reproof. He divideth the sea with his power, and by his understanding

he smiteth through the proud. Lo, these are part of his ways, but how little a portion is heard of him? But the thunder of his power, who can understand?" Job xxvi. 6. So likewise, Isaiah xl. 12:--"Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out Heaven with the span; and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure; and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance. Behold, the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance; behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing. All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" But I do not urge authority to the persons I am at present speaking to. It is sufficiently evident, from reason, that the supreme cause must of necessity be infinitely powerful. The only question is, what the true meaning of what we call infinite power is; and to what things it must be understood to extend, or not to extend.

Now, in determining this question, there are some propositions about which there is no dispute; which therefore, I shall but just mention. As,

1st, Of working contradictions. That infinite power reaches to all possible things, but cannot be said to extend to the working any thing which implies a contradiction: As, that a thing should be and not be at the same time; that the same thing should be made and not be made, or have been and not have been; that twice two should not make four, or that that which is necessarily false should be true: The reason whereof is plain; because the power of making a thing to be, at the same time that it is not, is only a power of doing that which is nothing, that is, no power at all.

2dly. Or natural and moral evils. Infinite power cannot be said to

extend to those things which imply natural imperfection in the being to whom such power is ascribed; as, that it should destroy its own being, weaken itself, or the like. These things imply natural imperfection, and are by all men confessed to be such as cannot possibly belong to the necessary self-existent being. There are also other things which imply imperfection in another kind, viz. moral imperfection; concerning which, atheism takes away the subject of the question, by denying wholly the difference of moral good and evil; and therefore I shall omit the consideration of them until I come to deduce the moral attributes of God.

But some other instances there are, in the question about the extent of infinite power, wherein the principal difference between us and the atheists, (next to the question, whether the supreme cause be an intelligent being, or not,) does in great measure consist. As,

1st. Of the power of creating matter. That infinite power includes a power of creating matter. This has been constantly denied by all atheists, both ancient and modern, and as constantly affirmed by all who believe the being, and have just notions of the attributes of God. The only reason which the atheists have, or can pretend to allege, for their opinion, is, that the thing is in its own nature absolutely impossible. But how does it appear to be impossible? Why, only because they are not able to comprehend how it can be: For, to reduce it to a contradiction, (which is the alone real impossibility,) this they are by no means able to do. For, to say that something which once was not, may since have begun to exist, is neither directly, nor by any consequence whatsoever, to assert that that which is not, can be, while it is not; or that that which is, can not be, while it is. It is true, we who have been used to converse only with generations and corruptions, and never saw any thing made or created, but only formed

or framed, are apt to endeavour to conform our idea of creation to that of formation, and to imagine, that as in all formations there is some pre-existing matter, out of which a thing is formed, so in creation there must be considered a pre-existing nothing, out of which, as out of a real material cause, a thing is created; which looks, indeed, very like a contradiction. But this is only a confusion of ideas, just like children's imagining that darkness is some real thing, which in the morning is driven away by the light, or transformed into it; whereas the true notion of creation is not a forming something out of nothing, as out of a material cause, but only a bringing something into being that before had no being at all, or a causing something to exist now that did not exist before, or which, without this cause, would not have existed; which no man can ever reduce to a contradiction, any more than the formation of any thing into a shape which it had not before, can be reduced to a contradiction.

But further: The creation of matter is a thing not only not impossible in itself, but what, moreover, even by bare reason, is demonstrated to be true. For it is a contradiction (as I have shown above) to suppose matter necessarily existing.

2dly. Of the power of creating immaterial cogitative substances. It is possible to infinite power to create any immaterial cogitative substance, indued with a power of beginning motion, and with a liberty of will or choice. This also has been always denied by all atheists; and, because it is a proposition of the greatest consequence to religion and morality, therefore I shall be particular in endeavouring the proof of the several parts of it.

First, It is possible to infinite power to create any immaterial cogitative substance. That there can be such a thing as a cogitative substance, that is, a substance indued with consciousness and thought,

is granted by all, because every man's own experience convinces him that he himself is such a substance. Further: That if there be, or can be, any such thing as immaterial substances, then it is most reasonable to believe that such substances as are indued with consciousness and thought [properties the farthest distant from the known properties of matter, and the most unlike them that can possibly be imagined,] are those immaterial substances; this also will, I think, be granted by all men. The only point, therefore, that remains to be proved, is, that immaterial substances are not impossible, or, that a substance immaterial is not a contradictory notion. Now, whoever asserts that it is contradictory, must affirm, that whatever is not matter is nothing, and that to say any thing exists which is not matter, is saying that there exists something which is nothing; which, in other words, is plainly this: That whatever we have not an idea of, is nothing, and impossible to be; for there is no other way to reduce immaterial substance to a contradiction, but by supposing immaterial to signify the same as having no existence; and there is no possible way to prove that, but by saying we have no idea of it; and, therefore, it neither has nor can have any existence. By which same argument, material substance will in like manner be a contradiction; for of that also, (viz. of the substance to which solidity belongs,) we have no idea. But supposing it were true (as it is indeed most false,) that we had a clearer idea of the substance of matter, than we have of immaterial substance, still by the same argument, wherewith an atheist will prove immaterial substance to be impossible, a man born blind may demonstrate irrefragably that light or colour is an impossible and contradictory notion, because it is not a sound or a smell; for the power of seeing light or colour is, to a man born blind, altogether as incomprehensible and absolutely beyond the reach of all his ideas, as either the

operations and perceptions, or even the simple essence of a pure immaterial substance of spirit, can be to any of us. If, therefore, the blind man's want of ideas be not a sufficient proof of the impossibility of light or colour, how comes our bare want of ideas to be a demonstration of the impossibility of the being of immaterial substances? A blind man, they will say, has testimony of the existence of light: Very true; so also have we of the existence of immaterial substances. But there is this further advantage on our side in the comparison, that a blind man, excepting the testimony of others, finds not, by any reasoning within himself, the least likelihood or probability, no not in the lowest possible degree, that there can be any such thing as light or colour; but we, besides testimony, have great and strong arguments, both from experience and reason, that there are such things as immaterial substances, though we have no knowledge of their simple essence; as indeed of the substance even of matter itself (its simple substance, considered as abstract from, and as the foundation of that essential property of solidity,) we have no idea, (for to say that extension is the substance of matter, is the same way of thinking, as to say that existence, or that duration, is the substance of matter.) We have, I say, great and strong arguments both from experience and reason, that there are such things as immaterial substances, though we have no idea of their simple essence; even the very first and most universal principle of gravitation itself, in all matter, since it is ever proportional, not at all to the surfaces of bodies, or of their particles in any possible supposition, but exactly to the solid content of bodies, it is evident it cannot be caused by matter acting upon the surfaces of matter, which is all it can do, but must (either immediately or mediately) be caused by something which continually penetrates its solid substance. But in animals, which have

a power of self-motion, and in the perfecter sorts of them, which have still higher faculties, the thing is yet more evident; for we see and feel, and observe daily in ourselves and others, such powers and operations and perceptions, as undeniably evince themselves either to be the properties of immaterial substances; or else it will follow, that matter is something, of whose essential powers (as well as of its substance itself,) we have altogether as little idea as we have of immaterial beings; and then how are immaterial substances more impossible than material? But of this, more hereafter.

From Of the immateriality of human souls. what has been said on this head, it will be easy to answer all the objections, that have been brought by any atheists against the notion of human souls being immaterial substances, and distinct from body. See my letter to Mr Dodwell, with the four defences of it. For since it is possible there may be such things as immaterial substances; and since, if any such substance can be, there is all the reason in the world to believe that conscious and thinking substance is such, these properties being the most remote from the known properties of matter, that are possible to be conceived; the foundation of all the objections against the immateriality of the soul is entirely taken away. I shall not here tarry to consider the objections in particular, which have been often and fully answered by learned pens, but shall only mention one, on which all the rest depend, and to which they may all be reduced; and it is this: [69] That seeing the only means we have of perception, are the five senses; and these all plainly depend upon the organs of the body, therefore the soul, without the body, can have no perception, and consequently is nothing. Now (besides that these very senses or perceptions, however they may be obstructed by bodily indisposision, and so do indeed depend upon the organs of the body as to their present

excercise, yet in their nature are really entirely distinct powers, and cannot possibly, as has been* before shown, be absolutely founded in, or arise from, any of the known properties or qualities of matter; besides this, I say;) of him that thus argues, I would only ask this one question: are our five senses, by an absolute necessity in the nature of the thing, all and the only possible ways of perception? and is it impossible and contradictory that there should be any being in the universe, indued with ways of perception different from these that are the result of our present composition? or are these things, on the contrary, purely arbitrary; and the same power that gave us these, may have given others to other beings, and might (if he had pleased) have given to us others in this present state, and may yet have made us capable of different ones in another state? If they be purely arbitrary, then the want of these does by no means infer a total want of perception: but the same soul, which in the present state has the powers of reflection, reason and judgment; which are faculties entirely different from sense; may as easily in another state have different ways even of perception also. But if any one will contend, that these senses of ours are necessarily the only ways of perception; still the soul may be capable of having these very same ways of perception at any time restored to it. For as that which sees, does not cease to exist, when, in the dark, all objects are removed; so, that which perceives, does not necessarily cease to exist, when, by death, all organs of perception are removed. But what reason can any man allege, why he should imagine these present senses of ours to be necessarily the only ways of perception? Is it not infinitely more reasonable to suppose, that this is a mere prejudice arising from custom, [70] and an attending to bare sense in opposition to reason? For, supposing men had been created only with four senses, and had never known the use of

sight, would they not then have had the very same reason to conclude there were but four possible ways of perception, as they have now to fancy that there are but five? and would they not then have thought sight to have been an impossible, chimerical, and merely imaginary power; with absolutely the same reason as they now presume the faculties of immaterial beings to be so? that is, with no reason at all. One would think, men should be ashamed therefore to be so vain, as, from their own mere negative ignorance, without any appearance or pretence of any positive argument, to dispute against the possibility of the being of things, which (excepting only that they cannot frame to themselves an image or notion of them,) there is a concurrence of all the reasons in the world to persuade them that such things really are. And then, as to the difficulty of conceiving the nature and manner of the union between soul and body, we know altogether as much of that as we do of the nature of the union or cohesion of the infinitely divisible parts of body, which yet no man doubts of. And therefore our ignorance can be no more an argument against the truth of the one, than it is a bar to our belief of the other.

Secondly. Of induing creatures with the power of beginning motion. It is possible to infinite power to indue a creature with the power of beginning motion. This is constantly denied by all atheists; because the consequence of it is a liberty of will, of which I shall have occasion to speak presently. But that the proposition is true, I thus prove. If the power of beginning motion be in itself a possible thing, and also possible to be communicated; then a creature may be indued with that power. Now, that the power of beginning motion is in itself a possible thing, I have already proved, by showing there must necessarily be somewhere a power of beginning motion; because otherwise motion must have been from eternity, without any external cause of its

being; and yet it is a thing that has no necessity of existence in its own nature. So that, if there be not somewhere a principle or power of beginning motion, motion must exist, without any cause or reason at all of its existence either within itself, or from without, which, as I have before shown, is an express contradiction. Wherefore, a principle or power of beginning motion there must of necessity be somewhere or other; and consequently it is not in itself an impossible thing. I add; as a power of beginning motion is not in itself an impossible thing, because it must of necessity be in the supreme cause; so neither is it impossible to be communicated to created beings. The reason is plain; because no powers are impossible to be communicated, but only those which imply self-existence and absolute independency.--That a subordinate being should be self-existent or absolutely independent, is indeed a contradiction; but it is no contradiction; to suppose it indued with any other power whatsoever, separate from these. I know, the maintainers of fate are very confident that a power of beginning motion is nothing less than being really independent, or being able to act independently, from any superior cause. But this is only a childish trifling with words. For a power of acting independently in this sense, communicated at the pleasure of the supreme cause, and continued only during the same good pleasure, is no more a real and absolute independency, than the power of existing, (which I suppose the defenders of fate are not so fond to make a continual creation, as they are to make the power of self-motion a continual external impulse;) or than the power of being conscious, or any other power whatsoever, can be said to imply independency. In reality, it is altogether as hard to conceive how consciousness, or the power of perception, should be communicated to a created being, as how the power of self-motion should be so, unless perception be nothing else but a mere passive reception

of impulse, which I suppose is as clear that it is not, as that a triangle is not a sound, or that a globe is not a colour. Yet no man doubts, but that he himself, and all others, have truly a power of perception. And therefore in like manner, (however hard it may be to conceive, as to the manner of it, yet since, as has been now proved, it can never be shown to be impossible and expressly contradictory, that a power of self-motion should be communicated,) I suppose no considering man can doubt but that he actually has also a power of self-motion. For the arguments drawn from continual experience and observation, to prove that we have such a power, are so strong that nothing less than a strict demonstration that the thing is absolutely impossible, and that it implies an express contradiction, can make us in the least doubt that we have it not. We have all the same experience, the same marks and evidence exactly, of our having really a power of self-motion, as the most rigid fatalist could possibly contrive to require, if he was to make the supposition of a man's being indued with that power. There is no one thing that such a man can imagine ought to follow from the supposition of self-motion, which every man does not now as much feel and actually experience in himself, as it can possibly be imagined any man would do, supposing the thing were true. Wherefore to affirm, not withstanding all this, that the spirits, by which a man moves the members of his body, and ranges the thoughts of his mind, are themselves moved wholly by air, or subtler matter inspired into the body, and that again by other external matter, and so on, as the wheels of a clock are moved by the weights, and those weights by gravitation, and so on, without a man's having the least power, by any principle within himself, to think any one thought, or impel his own spirits, in order to move any member of his body. All this is so contrary to experience and the reason of things, that, unless the idea of

self-motion were in itself as evidently and clearly a contradiction, as that two and two should make five, a man ought to be ashamed to talk at that rate. Nay, a man of any considerable degree of modesty would even in that case be almost tempted rather to doubt the truth of his faculties, than take upon him to assert one such intolerable absurdity, merely for the avoiding of another. There are some, indeed, who, denying men the power of beginning motion, would yet seem in some manner to account for their actions, by allowing them a power of determining motion. But this also is a mere ludicrous trifling with words; for if that power of determining motion be no other in a man than that which is in a stone to reflect a ball one certain way, this is just nothing at all. But if he has a power of determining the motion of his spirits any way, as he himself pleases, this is in all respects the very same as the power of beginning motion.

Thirdly, Of the possibility of induing a creature with freedom or liberty of will. It is possible to infinite power to indue a creature with freedom or liberty of will. It might suffice that this is at once proved by the same arguments, and in the same method, as I just now proved self-motion, or a power of beginning motion, to be possible, viz. because liberty must of necessity be in the supreme cause; (as is at large proved in the ninth general head of this discourse;) and therefore cannot be impossible and contradictory in the nature of the thing itself, and because it implies no contradiction to suppose it communicated, as being no harder to conceive than the fore-mentioned power of beginning motion; and because the arguments drawn from experience and observation are stronger on the one side of the question than those arising merely from the difficulty of our apprehending the thing, can be on the other. But forasmuch as this is the question of the greatest concern of all in matters both of religion and human life,

and both Spinoza and Mr Hobbes, and their followers, have with great noise and confidence denied it; I shall therefore (not contenting myself with this,) endeavour to show, moreover, in particular, the weakness of the principal arguments by which these men have pretended to demonstrate, that there cannot possibly be any such power in man as a liberty of will. As to the propriety of the terms, whether the will be properly the seat of liberty or not?--is not now to the purpose to inquire; the question being, not where the seat of liberty is, but whether there be at all in man any such power, as a liberty of choice and of determining his own actions, or on the contrary, his actions be all as necessary as the motions of a clock? The arguments by which Spinoza and Mr Hobbes have attempted to maintain this latter side of the question, are all plainly reducible to these two.

1st. That, since every effect must needs be produced by some cause, therefore, as every motion in a body must have been caused by the impulse of some other body, and the motion of that by the impulse of a third; so every volition, or determination of the will of man, must needs be produced by some external cause, and that in like manner be the effect of some third; and consequently, that there cannot possibly be any such thing in nature as liberty or freedom of will.

2dly. That thinking, and all its modes, as willing and the like, are qualities or affections of matter; and, consequently, since it is manifest that matter has not in itself a power of beginning motion, or giving itself any manner of determination whatsoever, therefore it is evident likewise, that it is impossible there should be any such thing as freedom of will.

Now, An answer to Mr. Hobbes's and Spinoza's arguments against the possibility of liberty. to these arguments I oppose, and shall endeavour briefly to demonstrate, the three following propositions.

1st. That every effect cannot possibly be the product of external causes; but there must of necessity be somewhere a beginning of operation, or a power of acting, without being antecedently acted upon; and that this power may be, and is, in man.

2dly. That thinking and willing neither are, nor can be, qualities and affections of matter, and consequently are not included under the laws thereof.

3dly. That even supposing the soul not to be a distinct substance from body, but that thinking and willing could be, and were indeed, only qualities or affections of matter, yet even this would not at all affect the present question, nor prove freedom of will to be impossible.

1st. That there must be somewhere a beginning of operation. Every effect cannot possibly be the product of external causes, but there must of necessity be somewhere a beginning of operation, or a power of acting without being antecedently acted upon; and this power may be, and is, in man. The several parts of this proposition have been already proved in the second and ninth general head of this discourse, and in that part of this tenth head which is concerning the possibility of the power of self-motion being communicated to created beings. I shall not therefore here repeat the proofs; but only apply them to Spinoza's and Mr. Hobbes's arguments, so far as is necessary to show the weakness of what they have said upon this head, in opposition to the possibility of liberty or freedom of will. Now, the manner of their arguing upon this head, is this. That every effect must needs be owing to some cause; and that cause must produce the effect [71] necessarily, because, if it be a sufficient cause, the effect cannot but follow; and if it be not a sufficient cause it will not be at all a cause of that thing. Thus, for instance, [72] whatever body is moved, must be moved by some other

body, which itself likewise must be moved by some third, and so on without end. That the will, [73] in like manner, of any voluntary agent, must of necessity be determined to some external cause, and not by any power of determining itself, inherent in itself; and that external cause must be determined necessarily by some other cause, external to it; and so on without end. From all which it evidently appears, that all that these men urge against the possibility of freedom extends equally to all other beings (not excepting the Supreme) as well as to men; and Spinoza in express words confesses it. [74]) Wherefore, consequently, whatever noise they make of the strength and demonstrative force of their arguments, all that they say amounts at last to no more but this one most absurd conclusion; that there neither is anywhere, nor can possibly be, any principle of motion, or beginning of operation at all; but every thing is caused necessarily, by an eternal chain of dependent causes and effects, without any independent original. All their arguments, therefore, on this head are already answered in the second and ninth general heads of this discourse; (where I proved that there must of necessity be an original, independent, and free principle of motion or action; and that, to suppose an endless succession of dependent causes and effects, without any original or first and self-actuating principle, is supposing a series of dependent things to be from eternity produced by nothing, which is the very same absurdity and contradiction as to suppose things produced by nothing at any definite time; the ability of nothing to produce any thing being plainly the same in time or in eternity.) And I have moreover proved, ex abundanti, in the foregoing part of this tenth head, that the power of beginning motion is not only possible and certain in itself, but also possible to be communicated to finite beings, and that it actually is in man.

2dly. That thinking and willing neither are nor can be affections of matter. Thinking and willing neither are, nor can be, qualities or affections of matter; and consequently are not concluded under the laws thereof. That it is possible there* may be immaterial substances, the notion not implying a contradiction in itself, hath already been shown under the present general proposition. Further, that thinking and willing are powers entirely different from solidity, figure, and motion, and if they be different, that then they cannot possibly arise from them, or be compounded of them, hath likewise been already proved under the eighth general head of this discourse. It follows, therefore, that thinking and willing may possibly be, nay, that they certainly and necessarily are, faculties or powers of immaterial substances; seeing they cannot possibly be qualities or affections of matter, unless we will confound (as some have done,) the ideas of things; and mean by matter, not what that word in all other cases signifies, a solid substance capable of division, figure, and motion, and of whatever properties can arise from the modifications of these, but substance in general, capable of unknown powers or properties entirely different from these, and from whatever can possibly result from these. In which confused sense of the word, could matter be supposed never so capable of thinking and willing, yet, in that sense, (as I shall show presently,) it would signify nothing at all to the purpose or advantage of our adversaries. In the meantime, how great an absurdity it is to suppose thinking and willing to be qualities or affections of matter, in the proper and usual sense of the word, may sufficiently appear, without any foreign argument, from the senselessness of Mr. Hobbes's own explication of the nature and original of sensation and consciousness. The immediate cause of sensation, [75] saith he, is this; the object, or something flowing from it, presseth the outermost

part of the organ, and that pressure is communicated to the innermost parts of the organ, where, by the resistance or reaction of the organ, causing a pressure outwards contrary to the pressure of the object inwards, there is made up a phantasm, or image; which phantasm, [76] saith he, is the sensation itself, Again; the cause of sensation, [77] saith he, is an object pressing the organ, which pressure is by means of the nerves conveyed to the brain, and so to the heart, where, by the resistance or counterpressure of the heart, outwards, is made an image or phantasm which is sensation. Now, what is there in all this, that does in any the least measure tend to explain or make intelligible the real and inward nature of sense or consciousness? The object, by communicating a pressure through the organ to the sensory, does indeed raise a phantasm or image, that is, make a certain impression on the brain; but wherein consists the power of perceiving this impression, and of being sensible of it? or what similitude hath this impression to the sense itself, that is, to the thought excited in the mind? why, exactly the very same that a square has to blueness, or a triangle to sound, or a needle to the sense of pain; or the reflecting of a tennis ball to the reason and understanding of a man. So that Mr. Hobbes's definition of sensation,--that it is itself, the inmost and formal nature of it, nothing but the phantasm or image made in the brain by the pressure communicated from the object,--is, in other words, defining blueness to be the image of a square, or sound the picture of a triangle, or pain the similitude of a sharp-pointed needle. I do not here misrepresent him in the least. For he himself expressly confesses, [78] that all sensible qualities, such as colour, sound, and the like, are in the objects themselves nothing but motion; and, [79] because motion can produce nothing but motion, (as likewise it is evident that figure and all its possible compositions can produce nothing but

figure,) therefore in us also the perceptions of these sensible qualities are nothing but different motions. If, then, the phantasm, that is, the image of the object made in the brain by figure and motion, be (as he says,) the sensation itself, is not sensation bare figure and motion? and are not all the forementioned absurdities unavoidable consequences of his opinion?

Mr Hobbes (as I have elsewhere observed,) seems, indeed, not to have been altogether unaware of this insuperable difficulty, but he industriously endeavours to conceal it from his readers, and to impose upon them by the ambiguity of the word phantasm. Yet for a reserve, in case he should be too hard pressed, [80] he gives us a hint, that possibly sensation may be something more, viz. a power of perception or consciousness naturally and essentially inherent in all matter, only that it wants the organs and memory of animals to express its sensation; [81] and that, as a man, if he were supposed to have no other sense but seeing, and that so ordered as that his eyes were always immoveably fixed upon one and the same object, and that also unchangeable and without any the least variety, such a man could not properly be said to see, but only to be under an unintelligible kind of amazement: So all unorganized bodies may possibly have sensation or perception; but, because for want of organs there is no variety in it, neither any memory or means of expressing that sensation, therefore to us it seems as if they had no such thing at all. This opinion, I say, Mr Hobbes mentions as possible, but he does it with such hesitancy, diffidence, and sparingness, as shows plainly that he meant it only as a last subterfuge to recur to, when he should be pressed with the fore-mentioned absurdities, unavoidably consequent upon the supposition of sensation being only figure and motion. And, indeed, well might he be sparing, and, as it were, ashamed of this subterfuge. For it is a

thing altogether as absurd as even the other opinion itself, of thought being mere motion; for what can be more ridiculous than to imagine that matter is as essentially conscious as it is extended? Will it not follow from that supposition, that every piece of matter being made up of endlessly separable parts, (that is, of parts which are as really distinct beings, notwithstanding their contiguity, as if they had been at never so great a distance one from another,) is made up also of innumerable consciousnesses and infinite confusion? But it is a shame to trouble the reader with so much as the mention of any of the numberless absurdities following from that monstrous supposition. Others, therefore, who would make thinking to be an affection of matter, and yet are ashamed to use either of the fore-mentioned ways, contend that God, by his almighty and supreme power, indues certain systems of matter with a faculty of thinking, according to his own good pleasure. But this also amounts to nothing; for (besides the absurdity of supposing God to make an innumerable company of distinct beings, such as the particles of every system of matter necessarily are, to be at the same time one individual conscious being; besides this, I say,) either our idea of matter is a true and distinct idea, or it is not: If it be a true and distinct idea, that is, if our idea (not of the substance of matter, for of simple substance we have no idea, but if our idea of the properties which essentially distinguish and denominate the substance,) be a right idea, viz. that matter is nothing but a solid substance, capable only of division, figure, and motion, with all the possible effects of their several compositions, as to us it appears to be, upon the best examination we are able to make of it, and the greatest part of our adversaries themselves readily allow; then it is absolutely impossible for thinking to belong to matter, because thinking, as has been before shown, cannot possibly arise from any

modification or composition of any or all of these qualities. But if any man will say that our idea of matter is wrong, and that by matter he will not here mean, as in all other cases, a solid substance, capable only of division, figure, and motion, with all the possible effects of their several compositions, but that he means substance in general, capable of thinking and of numberless unknown properties besides; then he trifles only in putting an ambiguous signification upon the word matter, where he ought to use the word substance. And, in that sense, to suppose thinking, or any other active property, possible to be in matter, as signifying only substance in general, of whose powers and capacities we have no certain idea, would make nothing at all to the present purpose, in our adversaries' advantage, and is at least not a clearer and more intelligible way of talking than to attribute the same properties to an immaterial substance, and keep the idea of matter and its properties clear and distinct. For I affirm,

3dly. That if thinking and willing were qualities of matter, yet nevertheless liberty might be possible. That even supposing (in these men's confused way,) that the soul was really not a distinct substance from body, but that thinking and willing could be, and were indeed only qualities or affections of matter; yet even this would not at all affect the present question about liberty, nor prove freedom of will to be an impossible thing. For, since it has been already demonstrated, that thinking and willing cannot possibly be effects or compositions of figure and motion, whosoever will make thinking and willing to be qualities or affections of matter must suppose matter capable of certain properties entirely different from figure and motion. And if it be capable of properties entirely different from figure and motion, then it can never be proved, from the effects of figure and motion being all necessary, that the effects of other and totally distinct

properties must likewise be necessary.

Mr Hobbes, A shameful fallacy of Mr. Hobbes and his followers.

therefore, and his followers, are guilty of a most shameful fallacy in that very argument, wherein they place their main and chief strength: for, supposing matter to be capable of thinking and willing, they contend that the soul is mere matter; and, knowing that the effects of figure and motion must needs be all necessary, they conclude that the operations of the mind must all therefore be necessary; that is, when they would prove the soul to be mere matter, then they suppose matter capable not only of figure and motion, but also of other unknown properties: and, when they would prove the will, and all other operations of the soul to be necessary, then they divest matter again of all its unknown properties, and make it mere solidity, indued only with figure and motion again. Wherefore, distinguishing their ambiguous and confused use of the word matter, they are unavoidably reduced to one of these two concessions: If, by matter, they mean a solid substance indued only with figure and motion, and all the possible effects of the variations and compositions of these qualities, then the soul cannot be mere matter, because, (as Mr. Hobbes himself confesses) figure and motion can never produce any thing but figure and motion; [82] and consequently (as hath been before demonstrated,) they can never produce so much as any secondary quality,--sound, colour, and the like,--much less thinking and reasoning; from whence it follows, that the soul being unavoidably a substance immaterial, they have no argument left to prove that it cannot have a power of beginning motion, which is a plain instance of liberty: But if, on the other hand, they will by matter mean substance in general, capable of unknown properties, totally different from figure and motion, then they must no longer argue against the possibility of liberty, from the effects of

figure and motion being all unavoidably necessary, because liberty will not consist in the effects of figure and motion, but in those other unknown properties of matter, which these men can no more explain or argue about than about immaterial substances. The truth therefore is, they must needs suppose thinking to be merely an effect or composition of figure and motion, if they will give any strength to their arguments against liberty; and then the question will be, not whether God can make matter think or no, (for in that question they only trifle with a word, abusing the word matter, to signify substance in general,) but the question will be, Whether figure and motion, in any composition or division, can possibly be perception and thought; which (as has been before said) is just such a question as if a man should ask, Whether it be possible that a triangle should be a sound, or a globe a colour. The sum is this, if the soul be an immaterial substance, (as it must needs be, if we have any true idea of the nature and properties of matter;) then Mr Hobbes' arguments against the possibility of liberty, drawn all from the properties of matter, are vain, and nothing to the purpose; but if our adversaries will be so absurd as to contend that the soul is nothing but mere matter, then, either by matter they must understand substance in general,--substance indued with unknown powers, with active as well as passive properties, which is confounding and taking away our idea of matter, and at the same time destroying all their own arguments against liberty, which they have founded wholly on the known properties of matter, or else they must speak out, (as they really mean,) that thinking and willing are nothing but effects and compositions of figure and motion, which I have already shown to be a contradiction in terms.

There are some other arguments against the possibility of liberty, which men, by attempting to answer, have made to appear considerable;

when in reality they are altogether beside the question. As for instance, those drawn from the necessity of the will's being determined by the last judgment of the understanding; and from the certainty of the divine prescience.

As to the Of the will being necessarily determined by the last judgment of the understanding. former, viz. the necessity of the will's being determined by the last judgment of the understanding: This is only a necessity upon supposition; that is to say, a necessity that a man should will a thing, when it is supposed that he does will it; just as if one should affirm, that every thing which is, is therefore necessary to be, because, when it is, it cannot but be. It is exactly the same kind of argument, as that by which the true church is proved to be infallible, because truth cannot err; and they who are in the right cannot possibly, while they are so, be in the wrong. Thus, whatever a man at any time freely wills or does, it is evident (even upon supposition of the most perfect liberty,) that he cannot (at that time) but will or do it, because it is impossible any thing should be willed and not willed, (whether it be freely or necessarily,) or that it should be done and not done, at the same time. The necessity therefore of the will's being determined by the last judgment of the understanding, is (I say) only a necessity upon supposition,--a necessity that a man should will a thing, when it is supposed that he does will it. For the last judgment of the understanding is nothing else but a man's final determining, (after more or less consideration,) either to choose or not to choose a thing; that is, it is the very same with the act of volition. Or else, if the act of volition be distinguished from the last judgment of the understanding, then the act of volition, or rather the beginning of action, consequent upon the last judgment of the understanding, is not determined or caused by that

last judgment, as by the physical efficient, but only as the moral motive. For the true, proper, immediate, physical efficient cause of action is the power of self-motion in men, which exerts itself freely in consequence of the last judgment of the understanding. But the last judgment of the understanding is not itself a physical efficient, but merely a moral motive, upon which the physical efficient or motive power begins to act. The necessity, therefore, by which the power of acting follows the judgment of the understanding, is only a moral necessity, that is, no necessity at all, in the sense wherein the opposers of liberty understand necessity, for moral necessity is evidently consistent with the most perfect natural liberty. For instance, a man entirely 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 absurd and mischievous, and morally impossible for him to choose to do it; which also is the very 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. Here, therefore, seems at last really to lie the fundamental error both of those who argue against the liberty of the will, and of those who but too confusedly defend it; they do not make a clear distinction between moral motives and causes physically efficient, which two things have no similitude at all. Lastly, if the maintainers of fate shall allege, that, after all, they think a man, free from all pain of body and disorder of mind, is under not only a

moral but also a natural impossibility of hurting or destroying himself, because neither his judgment nor his will, without some impulse external to both, can any more possibly be determined to any action, than one body can begin to move, without being impelled by another: I answer, this is forsaking the argument drawn from the necessity of the will's following the understanding, and recurs to the former argument of the absolute impossibility of there being anywhere a first principle of motion at all, which has been abundantly answered already.

Some ingenious and able writers have spoken with much confusedness upon this head, by mistaking (as it seems to me) the subject of the question, and wherein the nature of liberty consists.

For it being evident, that a free agent cannot choose whether he shall have a will or no will,--that is, whether he shall be what he is, or no; but (the two contradictories of acting or not acting, being always necessarily before him,) he must of necessity, and essentially to his being a free agent, perpetually will one of these two things, either to act or to forbear acting: this has raised in the minds, even of some considerate persons, great doubts concerning the possibility of liberty.

But this difficulty (if it be any difficulty,) arises merely from not apprehending rightly what liberty is. For the essence of liberty consists--not in the agent's choosing whether he shall have a will or no will; that is, whether he shall be at all an agent, or no; whether he shall be what he is, or no; but it consists in his being an agent, that is, in his having a continual power of choosing, whether he shall act, or whether he shall forbear acting: Which power of agency or free choice, (for these are precisely identical terms and a necessary agent is an express contradiction,) is not at all prevented by chains or

prisons; for a man who chooses to endeavour to move out of his place is therein as much a free agent as he that actually moves out of his place. Nor is this free agency at all diminished by the impossibility of his choosing two contradictories at once; or by the necessity that one of two contradictories must always be done. A man that sits, whether he be or be not a free agent, cannot possibly both sit and rise up at the same time; nor can he possibly choose both to act and not to act at the same time. Not, for want of freedom, but because the exercise of that very freedom, his freely choosing the one, does itself necessarily make the contrary to be at that time impossible. Nor does freedom of will in any manner suppose a power, in the agent, of choosing whether he shall will at all, or no. For a free agent may be, and indeed essentially every free agent must be, necessarily free; that is, has it not in his power not to be free.

God is, by necessity of nature, a free agent; and he can no more possibly cease to be so, than he can cease to exist. He must of necessity, every moment, either choose to act or choose to forbear acting; because two contradictories cannot possibly be true at once: But which of these two he shall choose, in this he is at perfect liberty; and to suppose him not to be so, is contradictorily supposing him not to be the first cause, but to be acted by some superior power, so as to be himself no agent at all.

Man also is, by necessity, (not in the nature of things, but through God's appointment) a free agent: And it is no otherwise in his power to cease to be such than by depriving himself of life.

The necessity therefore of continually choosing one of the two, either to act or to forbear acting; (which necessity, nothing but a free agent can possibly be capable of; for necessary agents, as they are called, can neither chose to act, nor to forbear acting; they being indeed no

agents at all:) the necessity, I say, of continually choosing one of the two, either to act or to forbear acting, is not inconsistent with, or an argument against, liberty; but is itself the very essence of liberty.

The other argument The certainty of divine fore-knowledge not inconsistent with the liberty of men's actions. which I said has also frequently been urged against the possibility of liberty, is the certainty of the divine prescience. But this also is entirely besides the question. For if there be no other arguments, by which it can be proved antecedently, that all actions are necessary, it is certain it can never be made to appear to follow, from prescience alone, that they must be so. That is, if upon other accounts there be no impossibility, but that the actions of men may be free; the bare certainty of the divine fore-knowledge can never be proved to destroy that freedom, or make any alteration in the nature of men's actions: and consequently the certainty of prescience, separated from other arguments, is altogether besides the question concerning liberty. As to the other arguments usually intermingled with this question, they have all, I think, been answered already. And now, that the bare certainty of the divine fore-knowledge (if upon other accounts there be no impossibility for the actions of men to be free,) can never be proved to destroy that freedom, is very evident. For bare fore-knowledge has no influence at all in any respect; nor affects, in any measure, the manner of the existence of any thing. All that the greatest opposers of liberty have ever urged, or can urge, upon this head, amounts only to this; that fore-knowledge implies certainty, and certainty implies necessity. But neither is it true, that certainty implies necessity; neither does fore-knowledge imply any other certainty, than such a certainty only as would be equally in things, though there was no fore-knowledge.

For (1st.) The certainty of fore-knowledge does not cause the certainty of things, but is itself founded on the reality of their existence. Whatever now is, it is certain that it is; and it was yesterday and from eternity as certainly true, that the thing would be to-day as it is now certain that it is. And this certainty of event is equally the same, whether it be supposed that the thing could be fore-known or not. For whatever at any time is, it was certainly true from eternity, as to the event, that that thing would be: and this certain truth of every future event would not at all have been the less, though there had been no such thing as fore-knowledge. Bare prescience, therefore, has no influence at all upon any thing; nor contributes, in the least, towards the making it necessary. We may illustrate this in some measure by the comparison of our own knowledge. We know certainly that some things are; and when we know that they are, they cannot but be: yet it is evident our knowledge does not at all affect the things, to make them more necessary or more certain. Now fore-knowledge in God is the very same as knowledge. All things are to him-as if they were equally present, to all the purposes of knowledge and power. He knows perfectly every thing that is: and he knows whatever shall be, in the same manner as he knows what is. As, therefore, knowledge has no influence on things that are; so neither has fore-knowledge on things that shall be. It is true, the manner how God can foresee future things, without a chain of necessary causes, is impossible for us to explain distinctly: though some sort of general notion we may conceive of it. For, as a man who has no influence over another person's actions, can yet often perceive before-hand what that other will do; and a wiser and more experienced man, still with greater probability foresee what another, whose disposition he is perfectly acquainted with, will in certain circumstances do; and an angel, with still much less degrees of error,

may have a further prospect into men's future actions; so it is very reasonable to apprehend that God, without influencing men's wills by his power, yet by his foresight cannot but have as much certainer a knowledge of future free events, than either men or angels can possibly have, as the perfection of his nature is greater than that of theirs. The distinct manner how he foresees these things is indeed impossible for us to explain: But so also are numberless other things, which yet no man doubts the truth of. And if there were any strength in this argument, it would prove, not against liberty, but against prescience itself. For if these two things were really inconsistent, and one of them must be destroyed, the introducing an absolute and universal fatality, which evidently destroys all religion and morality, would tend more of the two to the dishonour of God, than the denying him a fore knowledge, which upon this supposition would be impossible, and imply a contradiction to conceive him to have; and the denying of which would in such case be no more a diminution of his omniscience, than the denying him the power of working contradictions, is taking away his omnipotence. But the case is not thus. For though we cannot indeed clearly and distinctly explain the manner of God's foreseeing the actions of free agents, yet thus much we know, that the bare fore-knowledge of any action that would upon all other accounts be free, cannot alter or diminish that freedom, it being evident that fore-knowledge adds no other certainty to any thing, than what it would equally have though there was no fore-knowledge. Unless therefore we be antecedently certain that nothing can possibly be free; and that liberty is in itself absolutely an inconsistent and contradictory notion, (as I have above shown that it is not,) bare fore-knowledge, which makes no alteration at all in any thing, will not be any way inconsistent with liberty; how great difficulty soever there may be in

comprehending the manner of such fore-knowledge. For if liberty be in itself possible, the bare foresight of a free action before it be done, is nothing different (to any purpose in the present question,) from a simple knowledge of it, when it is done: both these kinds of knowledge, implying plainly a certainty only of the event, (which would be the same though there was no such knowledge;) and not at all any necessity of the thing.

For (2dly,) as fore-knowledge implies not any other certainty than such as would be equally in things, though there was no fore-knowledge; so neither does this certainty of event in any sort imply necessity. For let a fatalist suppose, (what he does not yet grant,) that there was in man, (as we assert,) a power of beginning motion, that is, of acting freely; and let him suppose further, if he please, that those actions could not possibly be fore-known; will there not yet, notwithstanding this supposition, be in the nature of things the same certainty of event in every one of the man's actions, as if they were never so fatal and necessary? For instance; suppose the man, by an internal principle of motion, and an absolute freedom of will, without any external cause or impulse at all, does some particular action to-day; and suppose it was not possible that this action should have been foreseen yesterday; was there not nevertheless the same certainty of event as if it had been foreseen? That is; would it not, notwithstanding the supposed freedom, have been as certain a truth yesterday and from eternity, that this action was an event to be performed to-day, (though supposed never so impossible to have been fore-known,) as it is now a certain and infallible truth that it is performed? Mere certainty of event, therefore, does not in any measure imply necessity: and consequently fore-knowledge, however difficult to be explained as to the manner of it, yet, (since it is manifest it implies no other certainty but only

that certainty of event which the thing would equally have without being fore-known,) it is evident that it also implies no necessity.

And now having, as I hope, sufficiently proved both the possibility and the real existence of liberty, I shall, from what has been said on this head, draw only this one inference, that hereby we are enabled to answer that ancient and great question, [Pothen to kakon:] What is the cause and original of evil? For liberty implying a natural power of doing evil, as well as good; and the imperfect nature of finite beings making it possible for them to abuse this their liberty to an actual commission of evil; and it being necessary to the order and beauty of the whole, and for displaying the infinite wisdom of the Creator, that there should be different and various degrees of creatures, whereof consequently some must be less perfect than others; hence there necessarily arises a possibility of evil, notwithstanding that the Creator is infinitely good. In short, thus: All that we call evil is either an evil of imperfection, as the want of certain faculties and excellencies which other creatures have; or natural evil, as pain, death, and the like; or moral evil, as all kinds of vice. The first of these is not properly an evil; for every power, faculty, or perfection, which any creature enjoys, being the free gift of God, which he was no more obliged to bestow than he was to confer being or existence itself, it is plain the want of any certain faculty or perfection in any kind of creatures, which never belonged to their nature, is no more an evil to them than their never having been created or brought into being at all, could properly have been called an evil. The second kind of evil, which we call natural evil, is either a necessary consequence of the former, as death to a creature on whose nature immortality was never conferred, and then it is no more properly an evil than the former; or else it is counterpoised in the whole, with as great or greater good as

the afflictions and sufferings of good men, and then also it is not properly an evil; or else, lastly,--it is a punishment, and then it is a necessary consequent of the third and last sort of evil, viz. moral evil. And this arises wholly from the abuse of liberty, which God gave to his creatures for other purposes, and which it was reasonable and fit to give them for the perfection and order of the whole creation; only they, contrary to God's intention and command, have abused what was necessary for the perfection of the whole, to the corruption and depravation of themselves. And thus all sorts of evils have entered into the world, without any diminution to the infinite goodness of the creator and governor thereof.

[69]

--Si immortalis natura animæ est,
Et sentire potest secreta a corpore nostro;
Quinque (ut opinor) eam faciendum est sensibus auctam:
Nec ratione alia nosmet proponere nobis,
Possumus infernas animas Acheronte vagare.
Pictores itaque; et scriptorum secla priora.
Sic animas introduxerunt sensibus auctas.
At neque seorsum oculi, &c.--
Nec sensus ipsi seorsum consistere possunt
Naribus atque manu, atque oculis, atque auribus, atque
Lingua; nec per se possunt sentire, nec esse.
Lucret. lib. 3. Oson gar estin archon energeia he somatike delon hoti tautas aneu somatos adunaton husarchein hoion badizein aneu podon.--Aristot.

[70] Has tamen imagines [mortuorum,] loqui volebant; quod fieri nec sine lingua, nec sine palato, nec sine faucium, laterum, pulmonum vi et figura potest. Nihil enim animo, (speaking of such as attributed to

spirits the same power, and senses only, as they saw men indued with in this present state,) videre poterant: ad oculos omnia referebant. Magni autem ingenii est, revocare mentem a sensibus, et cogitationem a consuetudine abducere.--Cicero Tuscul. Qu. 1.

[71] Quicunque unquam effectus productus sit, productus est a causa necessaria. Nam quod productum est, causam habuit integram, hoc est, omnia ea quibus suppositis effectum non sequi intelligi non possit: ea vera causa necessaria est.--Hobbes Philosophia prima, cap. 9.

[72] Corpus motum vel quiescens, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad motum vel quietem determinatum fuit ab alio, et illud iterum ab alio, et sic in infinitum.--Spinoza Ethic. par. II. prop. 13. lemma 3.

[73] Unaquæque volitio non potest existere, neque ad operandum determinari, nisi ab alia causa determinetur, et hæc rursus ab alia, et sic porro in infinitum.--Id Ethic. par. I. prop. 32. demonstr. I conceive nothing taketh beginning from itself, but from the action of some immediate agent without itself; and that therefore, when first a man had an appetite or will to something, to which, immediately before, he had no appetite or will, the cause of his will is not the will itself, but something else not in his own disposing.--Hobbes's Debate with Bishop Bramhall, p. 289. In mente nulla est absoluta sive libera voluntas; sed mens ad hoc vel illud volendum determinatur a causa, quæ etiam ab alia determinata est, et hæc iterum ab alio, et sic in infinitum.--Spinoza, Ethic. par. II. prop. 48.

[74] Hinc sequitur, Deum non operari ex libertate voluntatis.--Ethic. par. I. coroll. ad prop. 32.

[75] Ex quo intelligitur, sensionis immediatam causam esse in eo, quod sensionis organum primum et tangit et premit. Si enim organi pars extima prematur; illa cedente, premetur quoque pars quæ versus

interiora illi proxima est; et ita propagabitur pressio, sive motus ille, per partes organi omnes, usque ad intimam.--Quoniam autem motui ab objecto per media ad organi partem intimam propagato, fit aliqua totius organi resistentia sive reactio, per motum ipsius organi internum naturalem; fit propterea conatui ab objecto, conatus ab organo contrarius. Ut, cù m conatus ille ad intima, ultimus actus sit eorum qui fiunt in actu sensionis; tum demum ex ea reactione aliquandiu durante, ipsum existant phantasma; quod, propter conatum versus externa, semper videtur tanquam aliquid situm extra organum.--Hobbes de Sensione et Motu Animali.

[76] Phantasma est sentiendi actus.--Id. Ibid.

[77] Causa sensionis est externum corpus sive objectum quod premit organum proprium; et premendo, (mediantibus nervis et membranis,) continuum efficit motum introrsum ad cerebrum et inde ad cor; unde nascitur cordis resistentia et contra-pressio seu antitupia, sive conatus cordis liberantis se a pressione per motum tendentem extrorsum; qui motus propterea apparet tanquam aliquid externum: atque apparitio hæc, sive phantasma, est id quod vocamus sensionem.--Leviathan. cap. 1.

[78] Quæ qualitates omnes nominari solent sensibiles, et sunt in ipso objecto nihil aliud præter materiæ motum, quo objectum in organa sensuum diversimode operatur. Neque in nobis aliud sunt, quam diversi motus. Motus enim nihil generat præter motum.--Leviathan, cap. 1.

[79] See Four Defences of a letter to Mr. Dodwell.

[80] Scio fuisse philosophos quosdam, eosdemque viros doctos, qui corpora omnia sensu prædita esse sustinuerunt. Nec video, si natura sensionis in reactione sola collocaretur, quomodo refutari possint. Sed etsi, ex reactione etiam corporum aliorum, phantasma aliquod nasceretur, illud tamen, remoto objecto, statim cessaret. Nam nisi ad retinendum motum impressum, etiam remoto objecto, apta habeant organa,

ut habent animalia; ita tantum sentient, ut nunquam sensisse se recordentur.--Sensioni ergo, quæ vulgo ita appellatur, necessario adhæret memoria aliqua, &c.--Hobbes' Physic. cap. 24, sec. 5. See also No. 2 and 11 of the Appendix to a collection of papers which passed between Mr Leibnitz and Dr Clarke.

[81] Itaque et sensioni adhæret proprie dictæ, ut ei aliqua insita sit perpetua phantasmatum varietas; ita ut aliud ab alio discerni possit. Si supponemus enim esse hominem, oculis quidem claris, cæterisque videndi organis recte se habentibus compositum, nullo autem alio sensu præditum, eumque ad eandem rem eodem semper colore et specie sine ulla vel minima varietate apparentem obversum esse; mihi certe, quicquid dicant alii, non videre videretur.--Attonitum esse, et fortasse aspectare eum, sed stupentem dicerem, videre non dicerem. Adeo sentire semper idem, et non sentire, ad idem recidunt.--Id. Ibid.

[82] Motus nihil generat præter motum.--Leviath. cap. 1.

Proposition XI. That the supreme cause and author of all things must of

necessity be infinitely wise.

XI. Proposition XI. That the supreme cause and author of all things must of necessity be infinitely wise. The supreme cause and author of all things must of necessity be infinitely wise. This proposition is evidently consequent upon those that have already been proved; and those being established, this, as admitting no further dispute, needs not to be largely insisted upon. For nothing is more evident than that an infinite, omnipresent, intelligent being, must know perfectly all things that are; and that he who alone is self-existent and eternal, the sole cause and author of all things, from whom alone all the powers of all things are derived, and on whom they continually depend, must also know perfectly all the consequences of those powers, that is, all possibilities of things to come, and what in every respect is best and wisest to be done: And that, having infinite power, he can never be controlled or prevented from doing what he so knows to be fittest. From all which, it manifestly follows, that every effect of the supreme cause must be the product of infinite wisdom: More particularly; the supreme being, because he is infinite, must be everywhere present; and because he is an infinite mind or intelligence, therefore wherever he is, his knowledge is, which is inseparable from his being, and must therefore be infinite likewise; and wherever his infinite knowledge is, it must necessarily have a full and perfect prospect of all things, and nothing can be concealed from its inspection: he includes and surrounds every thing with his boundless presence, and penetrates every part of their substance with his all-seeing eye: so that the inmost nature and

essence of all things are perfectly naked and open to his view, and even the deepest thoughts of intelligent beings themselves manifest in his sight. Further, all things being not only present to him, but also entirely depending upon him, and having received both their being itself and all their powers and faculties from him; it is manifest that, as he knows all things that are, so he must likewise know all possibilities of things, that is, all effects that can be. For, being himself alone self-existent, and having alone given to all things all the powers and faculties they are indued with; it is evident he must of necessity know perfectly what all and each of those powers and faculties, which are derived wholly from himself, can possibly produce: and seeing, at one boundless view, all the possible compositions and divisions, variations and changes, circumstances and dependences of things; all their possible relations one to another, and their dispositions or fitnesses to certain and respective ends,--he must, without possibility of error, know exactly what is best and properest in every one of the infinite possible cases or methods of disposing things; and understand perfectly how to order and direct the respective means, to bring about what he so knows to be, in its kind, or in the whole, the best and fittest in the end. This is what we mean by infinite wisdom. And having before shown, (which indeed is also evident of itself,) that the supreme cause is moreover all-powerful; so that he can no more be prevented by force or opposition, than he can be hindered by error or mistake, from effecting always what is absolutely fittest and wisest to be done: it follows undeniably, that he is actually and effectually, in the highest and most complete sense, infinitely wise; and that the world, and all things therein, must be and are effects of infinite wisdom. This is demonstration à priori. The proof à posteriori, of the infinite wisdom of God, from the

consideration of the exquisite perfection and consummate excellency of his works, is no less strong and undeniable. But I shall not enlarge upon this argument; because it has often already been accurately and strongly urged, to the everlasting shame and confusion of the atheists, by the ablest and learnedest writers both of ancient and modern times. See Galen de Usu Partium; Tully de Natura Deorum; Boyle, of Final Causes; MrRay, of the Wisdom of God in the Creation; Mr Derham's Physico-Theology. &c. I shall here observe only this one thing; that the older the world grows, and the deeper men inquire into things, and the more accurate observations they make, and the more and greater discoveries they find out, the stronger this argument continually grows; which is a certain evidence of its being founded in truth. [83] If Galen, so many ages since, could find, in the construction and constitution of the parts of a human body, such undeniable marks of contrivance and design as forced him then to acknowledge and admire the wisdom of its author; what would he have said, if he had known the late discoveries in anatomy and physic, the circulation of the blood, the exact structure of the heart and brain, the uses of numberless glands and valves for the secretion and motion of the juices in the body, besides several veins and other vessels and receptacles not at all known, or so much as imagined to have any existence in his days; but which now are discovered to serve the wisest and most exquisite ends imaginable! If the arguments against the belief of the being of an all-wise creator and governor of the world, which Epicurus, and his follower Lucretius, drew from the faults which they imagined they could find in the frame and constitution of the earth, were so poor and inconsiderable, that, even in that in fancy of natural philosophy, the generality of men contemned and despised them as of no force; how would they have been ashamed if they had lived in these days, when those very

things which they thought to be faults and blunders in the constitution of nature, are discovered to be very useful, and of exceeding benefit to the preservation and well-being of the whole? And to mention no more: If Tully, from the partial and very imperfect knowledge in astronomy, which his times afforded, could be so confident of the heavenly bodies being disposed and moved by a wise and understanding mind, as to declare that, in his opinion, whoever asserted the contrary, was himself [84] void of all understanding; what would he have said if he had known the modern discoveries in astronomy?--the immense greatness of the world, (I mean that part of it which falls under our observation,) which is now known to be as much greater than what in his time they imagined it to be, as the world itself, according to their system, was greater than Archimedes's sphere?--the exquisite regularity of all the planets' motions, without epicycles, stations, retrogradations, or any other deviation or confusion whatsoever?--the inexpressible nicety of the adjustment of the primary velocity and original direction of the annual motion of the planets, with their distance from the central body and their force of gravitation towards it?--the wonderful proportion of the diurnal motion of the earth and other planets about their own centres, for the distinction of light and darkness, without that monstrously disproportionate whirling of the whole heavens which the ancient astronomers were forced to suppose?--the exact accommodating of the densities of the planets [85] to their distances from the sun, and consequently to the proportion of heat which each of them is to bear respectively; so that neither those which are nearest the sun are destroyed by the heat, nor those which are farthest off, by the cold; but each one enjoys a temperature suited to its proper uses, as the earth to ours?--the admirable order, number, and usefulness of the several moons, (as I may very properly call

them,) never dreamt of by antiquity, but now by the help of telescopes clearly and distinctly seen to move about their respective planets, and whose motions are so exactly known, that their very eclipses are as certainly calculated and foretold as those of our own moon?--the strange adjustment of our moon's motion about its own centre once in a month, with its motion about the earth in the same period of time, to such a degree of exactness, that by that means the same face is always obverted to the earth without any sensible variation?--the wonderful motions of the comets, which are now known to be as exact, regular, and periodical, as the motions of other planets?--lastly,--the preservation of the several systems, and of the several planets and comets in the same system, from falling upon each other, which, in infinite past time, (had there been no intelligent governor of the whole,) could not but have been the effect of the smallest possible resistance made by the finest æther, and even by the rays of light themselves, to the motions (supposing it possible there ever could have been any motions) of those bodies?--what (I say,) would Tully, that great master of reason, have thought and said, if these and other newly discovered instances of the inexpressible accuracy and wisdom of the works of God, had been found out and known in his time? Certainly atheism, which then was altogether unable to withstand the arguments drawn from this topic, must now, upon the additional strength of these later observations, (which are every one an unanswerable proof of the incomprehensible wisdom of the Creator,) be utterly ashamed to show its head. We now see, with how great reason the author of the Book of Ecclesiasticus, after he had described the beauty of the sun and stars, and all the then visible works of God in heaven and earth, concluded, chap. xliii, v. 32, (as we, after all the discoveries of later ages, may, no doubt, still truly say,) "There are yet hid greater things than these, and we

have seen but a few of his works."

[83] Opinionum commenta delet dies, naturæ judicia confirmat.--Cic.

[84] Coelestem ergo admirabilem ordinem incredibilemque constantiam, ex qua conservatio et salus omnium omnis oritur, qui vacare mente putat; is ipse mentis expers habendus est.--De Natura Deorum, lib. 2.

[85] Planetarum densitates fere sunt, ut radices diametrorum apparentium applicatæ ad diametros veros, hoc est, reciproce ut distantiæ planetarum a sole, ductæ in radices diametrorum apparentium. Collocavit igitur Deus planetas in diversis distantiis a sole, ut quilibet, pro gradu densitatis, calore solis majore vel minore fruatur.--Newton. Princip. lib. 3, prop. 8.

Proposition XII. The supreme author of all things must be infinitely good, just,

and true.

XII. Proposition XII. The supreme author of all things must be infinitely good, just, and true. Lastly; the supreme cause and author of all things must of necessity be a being of infinite goodness, justice, and truth, and all other moral perfections, such as become the supreme governor and judge of the world. That there are different relations of things one towards another, is as certain as that there are different things in the world. That from these different relations of different things there necessarily arises an agreement or disagreement of some things to others, or a fitness or unfitness of the application of different things or different relations, one to another, is likewise as certain as that there is any difference in the nature of things, or that different things do exist. Further, that there is a fitness or suitableness of certain circumstances to certain persons, and an unsuitableness of others, founded in the nature of things and in the qualifications of persons, antecedent to will and to all arbitrary or positive appointment whatsoever, must unavoidably be acknowledged by every one who will not affirm that it is equally fit and suitable, in the nature and reason of things, that an innocent being should be extremely and eternally miserable as that it should be free from such misery. There is, therefore, such a thing as fitness and unfitness, eternally, necessarily, and unchangeably in the nature and reason of things. Now, what these relations of things, absolutely and necessarily are in themselves; that also they appear to be, to the understanding of all intelligent beings except those only who understand things to be

what they are not, that is, whose understandings are either very imperfect or very much depraved; and by this understanding or knowledge of the natural and necessary relations of things, the actions likewise of all intelligent beings are constantly directed, (which, by the way, is the true ground and foundation of all morality,) unless their will be corrupted by particular interest or affection, or swayed by some unreasonable and prevailing lust. The supreme cause, therefore, and author of all things, since (as has already been proved,) he must of necessity have infinite knowledge, and the perfection of wisdom, so that it is absolutely impossible he should err, or be in any respect ignorant of the true relations and fitness or unfitness of things, or be by any means deceived or imposed upon herein; and since he is likewise self-existent, absolutely independent and all-powerful; so that, having no want of any thing, it is impossible his will should be influenced by any wrong affection, and having no dependence, it is impossible his power should be limited by any superior strength,--it is evident he must of necessity, (meaning, not a necessity of fate, but such a moral necessity as I before said was consistent with the most perfect liberty,) do always what he knows to be fittest to be done; that is, he must act always according to the strictest rules of infinite goodness, justice, and truth, and all other moral perfections. In particular, the supreme cause must, in the first place, be infinitely good; that is, he must have an unalterable disposition to do and to communicate good or happiness; because, being himself necessarily happy in the eternal enjoyment of his own infinite perfections, he cannot possibly have any other motives to make any creatures at all, but only that he may communicate to them his own perfections, according to their different capacities, arising from that variety of natures which it was fit for infinite wisdom to produce; and

according to their different improvements, arising from that liberty which is essentially necessary to the constitution of intelligent and active beings. That he must be infinitely good, appears likewise further from hence; that, being necessarily all-sufficient, he must consequently be infinitely removed from all malice and envy, and from all other possible causes or temptations of doing evil, which, it is evident, can only be effects of want and weakness, of imperfection or depravation. Again, the supreme cause and author of all things, must in like manner be infinitely just; because, the rule of equity being nothing else but the very nature of things, and their necessary relations one to another; and the execution of justice being nothing else but a suiting the circumstances of things to the qualifications of persons, according to the original fitness and agreeableness which I have before shown to be necessarily in nature, antecedent to will and to all positive appointment, it is manifest that he who knows perfectly this rule of equity, and necessarily judges of things as they are; who has complete power to execute justice according to that knowledge, and no possible temptation to deviate in the least therefrom; who can neither be imposed upon by any deceit, nor swayed by any bias, nor awed by any power,--must, of necessity, do always that which is right, without iniquity, and without partiality; without prejudice, and without respect of persons. Lastly, that the supreme cause and author of all things must be true and faithful, in all his declarations and all his promises, is most evident. For the only possible reason of falsifying, is either rashness or forgetfulness, inconstancy or impotency, fear of evil, or hope of gain; from all which [86] an infinitely wise, all-sufficient, and good being must of necessity be infinitely removed; and consequently, as it is impossible for him to be deceived himself, so neither is it possible for him in anywise to

deceive others. In a word, all evil and all imperfections whatsoever arise plainly either from shortness of understanding, defect of power, or faultiness of will; and this last, evidently from some impotency, corruption, or depravation; being nothing else but a direct choosing to act contrary to the known reason and nature of things. From all which, it being manifest that the supreme cause and author of all things cannot but be infinitely removed, it follows undeniably that he must of necessity be a being of infinite goodness, justice, and truth, and all other moral perfections.

To this argumentation a priori, there can be opposed but one objection that I know of drawn on the contrary, a posteriori, from experience and observation of the unequal distributions of providence in the world. But (besides the just vindication of the wisdom and goodness of providence in its dispensations, even with respect to this present world only, which Plutarch and other heathen writers have judiciously made,) the objection itself is entirely wide of the question. For, concerning the justice and goodness of God, (as of any governor whatsoever,) no judgment is to be made from a partial view of a few small portions of his dispensations, but from an entire consideration of the whole; and, consequently, not only the short duration of this present state, but moreover all that is past and that is still to come, must be taken into the account; and then every thing will clearly appear just and right.

From this account of the moral attributes of God, it follows:

1st. The necessity of God's moral attributes consistent with perfect liberty. That though all the actions of God are entirely free, and consequently the exercise of his moral attributes cannot be said to be necessary, in the same sense of necessity as his existence and eternity are necessary; yet these moral attributes are really and truly

necessary, by such a necessity, as, though it be not at all inconsistent with liberty, yet is equally certain, infallible, and to be depended upon, as even the existence itself, or the eternity of God. For though nothing is more certain (as has been already proved in the ninth proposition of this discourse,) than that God acts, not necessarily, but voluntarily, with particular intention and design, knowing that he does good, and intending to do so, freely and out of choice, and when he has no other constraint upon him but this, that his goodness inclines his will to communicate himself and to do good; so that the divine nature is under no necessity but such as is consistent with the most perfect liberty and freest choice; (which is the ground of all our prayers and thanksgivings,--the reason, why we pray to him to be good to us and gracious, and thank him for being just and merciful; whereas no man prays to him to be omnipresent, or thanks him for being omnipotent, or for knowing all things:) though nothing, I say, is more certain than that God acts, not necessarily, but voluntarily; yet it is nevertheless as truly and absolutely impossible for God not to do (or to do any thing contrary to) what his moral attributes require him to do; as if he was really not a free but a necessary agent. And the reason hereof is plain: because infinite knowledge, power, and goodness in conjunction, may, notwithstanding the most perfect freedom and choice, act with altogether as much certainty and unalterable steadiness, as even the necessity of fate can be supposed to do. Nay, these perfections cannot possibly but so act; because free choice, in a being of infinite knowledge, power, and goodness, can no more choose to act contrary to these perfections, than knowledge can be ignorance, power be weakness, or goodness malice; so that free choice, in such a being, may be as certain and steady a principle of action as the necessity of fate. We may, therefore, as

certainly and infallibly rely upon the moral as upon the natural attributes of God; it being as absolutely impossible for him to act contrary to the one as to divest himself of the other; and as much a contradiction to suppose him choosing to do any thing inconsistent with his justice, goodness, and truth, as to suppose him divested of infinity, power, or existence. The one is contrary to the immediate and absolute necessity of his nature, the other to the unalterable rectitude of his will: The one is in itself an immediate contradiction in the terms, the other is an express contradiction to the necessary perfections of the divine nature. To suppose the one, is saying absolutely that something is, at the same time that it is not; to suppose the other, is to say that infinite knowledge can act ignorantly, infinite power weakly, or that infinite wisdom and goodness can do things not good or wise to be done: All which are equally great and equally manifest absurdities. This, I conceive, is a very intelligible account of the moral attributes of God, satisfactory to the mind, and without perplexity and confusion of ideas: I might have said it at once, (as the truth most certainly is,) that justice, goodness, and all the other moral attributes of God, are as essential to the divine nature as the natural attributes of eternity, infinity, and the like. But because all atheistical persons, after they are fully convinced that there must needs be in the universe some one eternal, necessary, infinite, and all-powerful being, will still, with unreasonable obstinacy, contend that they can by no means see any necessary connexion of goodness, justice, or any other moral attribute, with these natural perfections; therefore, I chose to endeavour to demonstrate the moral attributes by a particular deduction, in the manner I have now done.

2dly. Of the necessity of God's doing always what is best and fittest

in the whole. From hence it follows, that though God is a most perfectly free agent, yet he cannot but do always what is best and wisest in the whole. The reason is evident; because perfect wisdom and goodness are as steady and certain principles of action as necessity itself. And an infinitely wise and good being, indued with the most perfect liberty, can no more choose to act in contradiction to wisdom and goodness than a necessary agent can act contrary to the necessity by which it is acted: it being as great an absurdity and impossibility in choice, for infinite wisdom to choose to act unwisely, or infinite goodness to choose what is not good; as it would be in nature for absolute necessity to fail of producing its necessary effect. There was indeed no necessity in nature, that God should at first create such beings as he has created, or indeed any beings at all; because he is in himself infinitely happy and all-sufficient. There was also no necessity in nature that he should preserve and continue things in being after they were created; because he would be as self-sufficient without their continuance, as he was before their creation. But it was fit, and wise, and good, that infinite wisdom should manifest, and infinite goodness communicate itself. And therefore it was necessary (in the sense of necessity I am now speaking of,) that things should be made at such time, and continued so long, and indued with various perfections in such degrees, as infinite wisdom and goodness saw it wisest and best that they should. And when and whilst things are in being, the same moral perfections make it necessary that they should be disposed and governed according to the exactest and most unchangeable laws of eternal justice, goodness, and truth; because, while things and their several relations are, they cannot but be what they are; and an infinitely wise being cannot but know them to be what they are, and judge always rightly concerning the several fitnesses or unfitnesses of

them; and an infinitely good being cannot but choose to act always according to this knowledge of the respective fitness of things; it being as truly impossible for such a free agent, who is absolutely incapable of being deceived or depraved, to choose by acting contrary to these laws, to destroy its own perfections, as for necessary existence to be able to destroy its own being.

3dly. Of the impossibility of his doing evil. From hence it follows, that, though God is both perfectly free, and also infinitely powerful, yet he cannot possibly do any thing that is evil. The reason of this also is evident. Because, as it is manifest infinite power cannot extend to natural contradictions, which imply a destruction of that very power by which they must be supposed to be effected; so neither can it extend to moral contradictions, which imply a destruction of some other attributes as necessarily belonging to the divine nature as power. I have already shown that justice, goodness, and truth, are necessarily in God; even as necessarily as power, and understanding, and knowledge of the nature of things. It is therefore as impossible and contradictory to suppose his will should choose to do any thing contrary to justice, goodness, or truth, as that his power should be able to do any thing inconsistent with power. It is no diminution of power not to be able to do things which are no object of power: and it is in like manner no diminution either of power or liberty to have such a perfect and unalterable rectitude of will as never possibly to choose to do any thing inconsistent with that rectitude.

4thly. That liberty is not in itself an imperfection, but a perfection. From hence it follows, that liberty, properly speaking, is not in itself an imperfection but a perfection. For it is, in the highest and completest degree, in God himself: every act, wherein he exercises any moral attribute, as goodness, justice, or truth, proceeding from the

most perfect liberty and freest choice; without which, goodness would not be goodness, nor justice and truth any excellencies; these things, in the very idea and formal notion of them, utterly excluding all necessity. It has indeed been sometimes taught, that liberty is a great imperfection; because it is the occasion of all sin and misery: But, if we will speak properly, it is not liberty that exposes us to misery, but only the abuse of liberty. It is true, liberty makes men capable of sin, and consequently liable to misery; neither of which they could possibly be, without liberty. But he that will say every thing is an imperfection, by the abuse whereof a creature may become more unhappy than if God had never given it that power at all, must say that a stone is a more excellent and perfect creature than man, because it is not capable of making itself miserable, as man is. And, by the same argument, reason and knowledge, and every other perfection, nay even existence itself, will be proved to be an imperfection; because it is that without which a creature could not be miserable. The truth therefore is; the abuse of liberty, that is, the corruption and depravation of that without which no creatures could be happy, is the alone cause of their misery: but as for liberty itself, it is a great perfection; and the more perfect any creature is, the more perfect is its liberty; and the perfectest liberty of all is such liberty as can never, by any ignorance, deceit, or corruption, be biassed or diverted from choosing what is the proper object of free choice, the greatest good.

5thly. That the highest moral perfections of rational creatures do not exclude natural liberty. From hence it follows, that though probably no rational creature can be, in a strict philosophical sense, impeccable, yet we may easily conceive how God can place such creatures, as he judges worthy of so excellent a gift, in such a state of knowledge and

near communion with himself, where goodness and holiness shall appear so amiable, and where they shall be exempt from all means of temptation and corruption; that it shall never be possible for them, notwithstanding the natural liberty of their will, to be seduced from their unchangeable happiness in the everlasting choice and enjoyment of their greatest good: Which is the state of good angels and of the saints in heaven.

Lastly; That the grounds of all moral obligations are eternal and necessary, and depend not on any laws. From what hath been said upon this head, it follows that the true ground and foundation of all eternal moral obligations, is this; that the same reasons, (viz. the fore-mentioned necessary and eternal different relations which different things bear one to another: and the consequent fitness or unfitness of the application of different things, or different relations, one to another, unavoidably arising from that difference of the things themselves;) these very same reasons, I say, which always and necessarily do determine the will of God, as hath been before shown, ought also constantly to determine the will of all subordinate intelligent beings. And when they do not, then such beings, setting up their own unreasonable self-will in opposition to the nature and reason of things, endeavour (as much as in them lies) to make things be what they are not, and cannot be; which is the highest presumption and greatest insolence imaginable: It is acting contrary to their own reason and knowledge; it is an attempting to destroy that order by which the universe subsists, and it is also, by consequence, offering the highest affront imaginable to the creator of all things, who himself governs all his actions by these rules, and cannot but require the same of all his reasonable creatures. They who found all moral obligations ultimately in the will of God must recur at length to the

same thing; only with this difference, that they do not clearly explain how the nature and will of God himself must be necessarily good and just, as I have endeavoured to do. They who found all moral obligations only upon laws made for the good of societies, hold an opinion which, (besides that it is fully confuted by what has been already said concerning the eternal and necessary difference of things,) is moreover so directly and manifestly contradictory and inconsistent with itself, that it seems strange it should not have been more commonly taken notice of. For, if there be no difference between good and evil, antecedent to all laws, there can be no reason why any laws should be made at all, when all things are naturally indifferent. To say that laws are necessary to be made for the good of mankind, is confessing that certain things tend to the good of mankind, that is, to the preserving and perfecting of their nature; which wise men therefore think necessary to be established by laws. And if the reason why certain things are established by wise and good laws is, because those things tend to the good of mankind, it is manifest they were good antecedent to their being confirmed by laws: Otherwise, if they were not good antecedent to all laws, it is evident there could be no reason why such laws should be made, rather than the contrary; which is the greatest absurdity in the world.

AND The conclusion. now from what has been said upon this argument, I hope it is in the whole sufficiently clear that the being and attributes of God are, to attentive and considering minds, abundantly capable of just proof and demonstration, and that the adversaries of God and religion have no reason on their side, (to which they would pretend to be strict adherers,) but merely vain confidence, and great blindness and prejudice, when they desire it should be thought, that, in the fabric of the world, God has left himself wholly without

witness, and that all the arguments of nature are on the side of atheism and irreligion. Some men, I know, there are, who, having never turned their thoughts to matters of this nature, think that these things are all absolutely above our comprehension; and that we talk about we know not what, when we dispute about these questions. But since the most considerable atheists that ever appeared in the world, and the pleaders for universal fatality, have all thought fit to argue in this way, in their attempts to remove the first foundations of religion, it is reasonable and necessary that they should be opposed in their own way, it being most certain, that no argumentation, of what kind soever, can possibly be made use of on the side of error, but may also be used with much greater advantage on the behalf of truth.

2. From what has been said upon this argument, we may see how it comes to pass, that though nothing is so certain and undeniable as the necessary existence of God, and the consequent deduction of all his attributes, yet men, who have never attended to the evidence of reason, and to the notices that God hath given us of himself, may easily be in great measure ignorant of both. That the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right ones is so certain and evident, that whoever affirms the contrary affirms what may very easily be reduced to an express contradiction; yet whoever turns not his mind to consider it at all, may easily be ignorant of this and numberless other the like mathematical and most infallible truths.

3. Yet the notices that God has been pleased to give us of himself are so many and so obvious,--in the constitution, order, beauty, and harmony of the several parts of the world,--in the frame and structure of our own bodies, and the wonderful powers and faculties of our souls,--in the unavoidable apprehensions of our own minds, and the common consent of all other men,--in every thing within us, and every

thing without us; that no man of the meanest capacity and greatest disadvantages whatsoever, with the slightest and most superficial observation of the works of God, and the lowest and most obvious attendance to the reason of things, can be ignorant of Him, but he must be utterly without excuse. Possibly he may not, indeed, be able to understand or be affected by nice and metaphysical demonstrations of the being and attributes of God, but then for the same reason he is obliged also not to suffer himself to be shaken and unsettled by the subtile sophistries of sceptical and atheistical men, which he cannot perhaps answer, because he cannot understand; but he is bound to adhere to those things which he knows, and those reasonings he is capable to judge of, which are abundantly sufficient to determine and to guide the practice of sober and considering men.

4. But this is not all: God has, moreover, finally,--by a clear and express revelation of himself, brought down from heaven by his own Son, our blessed Lord and Redeemer, and suited to every capacity and understanding,--put to silence the ignorance of foolish, and the vanity of sceptical and profane men; and, by declaring to us himself, his own nature and attributes, he has effectually prevented all mistakes which the weakness of our reason, the negligence of our application, the corruption of our nature, or the false philosophy of wicked and profane men, might have led us into;--and so has infallibly furnished us with sufficient knowledge to enable us to perform our duty in this life, and to obtain our happiness in that which is to come. But this exceeds the bounds of my present subject, and deserves to be handled in a particular discourse.

[86] Ouk estin ou heneka an theos pseudoito.--Komide hara ho theos haploun kai alethes en te ergo kai en lugo. Kai oute allous exapata, oute kata phantasias, oute kata logous, oute kata semeion pompas, outh

hupar oud' onar.--Plato de Repub. lib. 2, sub finem.

Chapter 14

BEING EIGHT SERMONS PREACHED AT THE CATHEDRAL

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

THE UNCHANGEABLE OBLIGATIONS OF

NATURAL RELIGION

AND THE

TRUTH AND CERTAINTY

OF THE

CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, IN THE YEAR 1705, AT THE

LECTURE FOUNDED BY THE HONOURABLE

ROBERT BOYLE, ESQ.

THE PREFACE.

MOST REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

THOMAS,

LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, AND PRIMATE OF ALL ENGLAND;

SIR HENRY ASHURST, BARONET;

SIR JOHN ROTHERAM, KNIGHT, SERGEANT AT LAW;

JOHN EVELIN, ESQ.

TRUSTEES APPOINTED BY THE HONOURABLE ROBERT BOYLE, ESQ.

THIS DISCOURSE

IS HUMBLY DEDICATED.

I SHOULD not have presumed to publish these papers in vindication of natural and revealed religion, after so many excellent discourses already written upon that subject, had I not thought myself obliged to it, in order to pursue more fully the design of the honourable founder of this lecture, and to answer the expectation of the most reverend and the honourable trustees appointed by him. The honourable Robert Boyle, Esq. was a person no less zealously solicitous for the propagation of true religion, and the practice of piety and virtue, than diligent and successful in improving experimental philosophy, and enlarging our knowledge of nature; and it was his settled opinion, that the advancement and increase of natural knowledge would always be of service to the cause and interest of true religion, in opposition to atheists and unbelievers of all sorts. Accordingly he, in his life-time, made excellent use of his own observations to this purpose in all his writings, and made provision after his death for carrying on the same design perpetually. In pursuance of which end I endeavoured, in my former discourse, to strengthen and confirm the arguments which

prove to us the being and attributes of God, partly by metaphysical reasoning, and partly from the discoveries (principally those that have been lately made,) in natural philosophy. And in the present treatise I have attempted, in a plainer and easier method, to establish the unalterable obligations of natural religion, and the truth and certainty of the Christian revelation. If what I have said, may, in any measure, promote the interest of true religion in this sceptical and profane age, and answer the design for which this lecture was founded, I have my end.

It may perhaps be expected, that I should take some notice of certain remarks which have been published upon my former sermons. Had the author of those remarks entered into the merits of the cause, or offered any considerable reasons in opposition to what I had laid down, I should have thought myself obliged to give him a particular answer; but since his book is made up chiefly of railing and gross misconstructions, and all that he pretends to say, by way of argument, depends entirely upon supposition of the truth of the Cartesian hypothesis, which the best mathematicians in the world have demonstrated to be false, I presume it may be sufficient to show here the insincerity of that author, and the weakness of his reasoning, by a few brief observations.

The only argument he alleges against me, in his whole book, is this: that if we know not distinctly what the essence of God, [87] and what the essence of matter is, wé cannot possibly demonstrate them at all to be two different essences.

To which I answer: It is plain we know not the essences of things by intuition, but can only reason about them from what we know of their different properties or attributes. Now, from the demonstrable attributes of God, and from the known properties of matter, we have as

unanswerable reasons to convince and satisfy us that their essences are entirely different, though we know not distinctly what those essences are, as our faculties can afford us, in judging of any the certainest things whatsoever. For instance: the demonstrable attributes of God are, that he is self-existent, independent, eternal, infinite, unchangeable, incorruptible, intelligent, free, all-powerful, wise, just, and good: The known properties of matter are, that it is not necessary or self-existent, but dependent, finite; (nay, that it fills but a few very small and inconsiderable portions of space,) that it is divisible, passive, unintelligent, and consequently incapable of any active powers. Now nothing can be more certain and evident, than that the substances to which these incompatible attributes or properties belong, or the essences from which they flow, are entirely different one from the other, though we do not distinctly know what the inmost substances or essences themselves are. If any man will think a mere hypothesis (the Cartesian or any other,) concerning the inmost nature of substances to be a more satisfactory discovery of the different essences of things than we can attain by reasoning thus from their demonstrable properties, and will choose rather to draw fond consequences from such hypotheses and fictions founded upon no proof at all, than to make use of such philosophy as is grounded only upon clear reason or good experiments,--I know no help for it, but he must be permitted to enjoy his opinion quietly.

The rest of the book is all either an indecent and unreasonable reviling of the learned Mr Locke, from whom I neither cited any one passage, nor (that I know of) borrowed any argument from him; and therefore is altogether impertinent: or else it consists of gross misrepresentations of my sense, and very unfair constructions and false citations of my words, of which I shall presently give some instances.

The first 8, and the 35th and 36th pages of the remarks, are spent in attempting to prove, that, if we do not first know what the essence of God, and what the essence of matter is, (that is, if the Cartesian hypothesis or fiction concerning the essences of spiritual and material substance be not granted to be true,)--there is no way left by which it can be proved at all that the essence of God and matter is not one and the same: To which I have already given an answer, viz. that, from the demonstrable attributes of God, and from the known properties of matter (being incompatible with each other,) we have as absolute certainty of their essences or substances being different, though we do not distinctly know what those essences are, as our faculties enable us to attain in any metaphysical question; for incompatible properties can no more possibly be in any unknown than in any known subject.

Page 12.--The author of the Remarks asserts, that Des Cartes and his followers have mathematically proved that the essence of matter consists in length, breadth, and depth: And upon this confident assertion, his whole book depends in every part. To this, therefore, I answer, that that hypothesis is really so far from being mathematically proved to be true, that, on the contrary, he cannot but know (if he knows any thing of these matters,) that the greatest mathematicians of the present age, men confessedly greater in that science than any that ever lived before them, have clearly proved (as I before said) that it is absolutely false. [88] And not to take the least notice of this throughout his whole book argues either great insincerity or great ignorance.

I had affirmed, that to imagine an eternal and infinite nothing was being reduced to the necessity of imagining a contradiction or impossibility: For this he argues against me (Remark. pag. 14,) as if I had asserted, that it was possible to imagine an eternal and infinite

nothing, whereas I asserted that it was impossible, and an express contradiction so to do: This is great insincerity.

I had charged the Cartesians with being unavoidably reduced to the absurdity of making matter a necessarily-existing being. In citing this passage, (Remark, pages 14 and 15,) he ridiculously represents me as saying that this absurdity consisted in making extension necessary; though he knew that in that very passage I supposed matter and extension to be entirely different things: This likewise is great insincerity.

I have said, that the idea of immensity was an idea that no way belonged to matter. Instead of this, he cites me asserting, senselessly, (Remark, page 15,) that extension no way belongs to matter; as if that which is not immense or infinite, is, therefore, not extended at all: This is the greatest disingenuity in the world.

Remark, page 15.--He says, I am sure this author cannot produce one, no not one Cartesian, that ever made matter a necessarily-existing being,--that ever contradicted himself in words upon this subject,--that ever was mightily, or not mightily, or at all perplexed with what Mr Clarke calls his argument;--nay, that ever heard of that thing he calls his argument. Why are they thus misrepresented and imposed upon? To this I answer: it had been sufficient to make good my charge, to have shown, that, from the Cartesian hypothesis, it followed, by unavoidable consequence, that matter must be a necessarily-existing being, though the Cartesians themselves had not seen that consequence. Yet I cited, moreover, a passage out of Regis, wherein it is plain he perceived and owned that consequence. But, because the Remarker seems not satisfied with this, and pretends to triumph here with great pleasure and assurance, I will for once comply with his challenge, and produce him another, and that an

unexceptionable Cartesian, even Des Cartes himself, who was greatly perplexed with the argument I mentioned, and was unavoidably reduced to make matter a necessarily-existing being, and at the same time did contradict himself in words upon this subject. It was objected to Des Cartes by some very learned men, that [89] if extension and matter were the same thing, it seemed to them to follow, that God could neither possibly make the world finite, nor annihilate any part of matter, without creating, at the same time, just as much more to supply its place. To this he answers; [90] that, according to his hypothesis, it does indeed imply a contradiction to suppose the world to be finite, or to suppose God annihilating any part of matter; but yet he will not say God cannot do it, or that God cannot cause that two and three shall not make five, or any other contradiction whatsoever: Is not this making matter a necessarily-existing being, to own that it is a contradiction to suppose God annihilating it, or setting bounds to it? Is not this contradicting himself, for a man to affirm (as Cartes does in all his writings,) that the world was created by God, and depends upon him, and yet at the same time to declare that it implies as plain a contradiction to suppose any part of matter annihilable by the power of God, as to suppose that two and three should not make five? Is not this really a ridiculing of the power of God? And was not Des Cartes, therefore, greatly perplexed with the argument I mentioned? And is not an hypothesis, from which such consequences unavoidably and confessedly follow, a fine land-mark of distinction between spiritual and material substances? and whatever opposes this hypothesis, [91] a depriving us of the means of proving the existence of the one only true God?

The Remarker humbly desires his reader (page 16,) to be persuaded that he is of no particular sect in matters of philosophy, but only of the party of truth wherever he meets with it. Yet the same man had declared

before, (page 12,) that he believed Des Cartes had mathematically proved his hypothesis; and takes not the least notice of its having since been fully confuted by mathematicians confessedly far more eminent in that science than Des Cartes was. This is a very singular mark of impartiality, and of being addicted to no party in matters of philosophy.

Speaking of the Cartesian argument drawn from the idea of God, I had used these words:--Our first certainty of the existence of God arises not from this, that, in the idea we frame of him in our minds, or rather in the definition that we make of the word [God,] as signifying a being of all possible perfections, we include self-existence: but, &c.--meaning, that, according to that argument, self-existence was rather made only a part of the definition of the word than proved to be a real attribute of the being itself. Instead of this the Remarker, (pages 17 and 19,) by a childish misunderstanding of the syntax of the sentence, and referring the particle [or] to a wrong member of the period, cites my words in a quite different manner: as if I had said, in the idea we frame of God in our own minds, or rather in the idea we frame of him in the definition that we make of the word, &c. and he is very facetious (pages 17 and 19,) in ridiculing this framing of an idea in a definition, which he calls, as it truly is, a real piece of nonsense. But when, upon the review, he finds himself the true and only author of it, for want of understanding grammar, I suppose it will make him more modest and careful.

He accuses me (Remark, pages 18, 20, &c.) of not understanding the Cartesian argument drawn from the idea of God. I confess myself very ready to submit to this charge; and I can show him much more learned writers than either of us, who have likewise [92] not understood that argument. If he does understand it, he will do the world a very

acceptable piece of service to make it out.

What he says in his 21st, 22d, 23d, and 24th pages, is such a heap of misconstructions, and so entirely void of sense, that I confess I cannot at all tell what he means.

From my using the word mere matter, he concludes (page 29,) that I imagine there is another sort of matter which is not a mere bare, pure, incogitative matter; and that these terms necessarily import this sense. Whereas, in every one of the places he cites, it is as express and evident as words can make it, that by mere matter I understand the matter of which the world consists, not as opposed to another sort of matter, but either as opposed to motion and to the form of the world, or as considered by itself, and without the government and direction of a supreme intelligent mind. This, therefore, is the highest degree of insincerity.

He charges me, (pages 4 and 29, and 30,) with making a translation quite different from Spinoza's sense and words. How I could mistranslate what I did not translate at all, I understand not: but whether I have misrepresented Spinoza's sense, or no, (as I think I have not,) this I can only leave to the learned world to judge.

I reduced Spinoza's opinion to this, that the material world, and every part of it, with the order and manner of being of each part, is the only self-existing or necessarily-existing being; and this I think is as clearly contained in the words I cited from him [93] as any thing can be. Here the Remarker asserts (page 30,) that Spinoza never taught this doctrine; nay, that he taught the quite contrary. To prove which, he cites a passage, where Spinoza affirms, that [94] all who have in any degree considered the divine nature, deny that God is corporeal. Now, this also is extremely insincere; for, had this author cited here the whole sentence of Spinoza, as he had cited it before in his 26th

page, it would have appeared evidently, that Spinoza, by denying God to be corporeal, meant only fallaciously to deny his being any particular piece of matter, any [95] finite body, and of a certain figure. For, that he believed infinite corporeal substance, that is, the whole material universe, to be God, (besides the places I had cited from him,) he in express words acknowledges, [96] in a passage which this very author cites in the 4th page of his remarks; and he maintains it at large through the whole of that very scholium [97] from whence the remarker has with the greatest insincerity taken the present objection. But, besides; suppose Spinoza had not explained himself in this place, and had in this single passage contradicted what he had plainly taught throughout the rest of his book, would this have been any just reason to say that Spinoza never taught the doctrine I imputed to him? nay, that he taught the quite contrary?

He charges me (page 32,) with arguing only against the accessories of atheism, and leaving the essential hypothesis in its full force; nay, with confirming and establishing (page 11,) Spinoza's atheism. It seems, in the opinion of this author, that proving the material world to be, not a necessary but a dependent being, made, preserved, and governed, by a self-existent, independent, eternal, infinite mind, of perfect knowledge, wisdom, power, justice, goodness and truth--is arguing only against the accessories of atheism, and that the essential hypothesis of atheism is left untouched, nay, confirmed and established, by all who will not presume to define the essence of that supreme mind according to the unintelligible language of the schools and the groundless imagination of Des Cartes concerning the substance or essence of matter and spirit. I confess it appears to me, on the contrary, that the essence of atheism lies in making God either an unintelligent being, [such as is the material world,] or at least a

necessary agent, [such as Spinoza makes his one substance to be,] void of all freedom, wisdom, power, and goodness; and that other metaphysical disputes are only about the accessories; and that there is much more ground, on the other side, to suspect that very hypothesis, of which this writer is so fond, to be favourable to the atheist's main purpose. For if, from Des Cartes's notion of the essence of matter, it follows (as he himself, in the places now cited, confesses in express words,) that it implies a contradiction to suppose the material world finite, or to suppose any part of matter can be annihilated by the power of God, I appeal to this author, whether this does not naturally tend to make men think matter a necessary and self-existent being?

He charges me (page 33,) with falsely accusing Spinoza of making God a mere necessary agent; and cites a passage or two out of Spinoza, wherein that author seems to assert the contrary. The words which I cited from Spinoza do as clearly express what I charged him with, as it is possible for any thing to be expressed; for he asserts plainly, [98] that from the power of God all things proceed necessarily; that all things are determined by the necessity of the divine nature; that whatever is in the power of God must necessarily exist; that things could not have been produced by God in any other manner or order than they now are; and that God does not act by a liberty of will. All this the Remarker very insincerely passes over, without the least notice. And the words which he cites out of Spinoza do not at all prove the contrary to what I asserted. For when Spinoza says, [99] that God alone is a free cause, and that God acts by the laws of his own nature, without being forced by any; it is evident he does not there mean a freedom of will, but only fallaciously signifies, that the necessity by which all things exist in the manner they do, is an inward necessity in the nature of the things themselves, in opposition to any force put

upon them from without; which external force, it is plain indeed that [the to pan] the whole universe (the God of Spinoza) cannot be subject to; because it is supposed to contain all things within itself. But, besides, supposing (as I said before) that Spinoza had directly contradicted himself in this one passage, how would that have proved my charge against him to have been false?

He says (page 34,) that I am guilty myself of what I groundlessly imputed to Spinoza, viz. of making God a mere necessary agent; namely, by affirming that there is a necessary difference between good and evil, and that there is such a thing as fitness and unfitness, eternally, necessarily, and unchangeably in the nature and reason of things, antecedently to will and to all positive or arbitrary appointment whatsoever. This, he says, is a groundless and positive assertion, and plainly imports the eternal necessary co-existence of all things as much as Spinoza's hypothesis does. Is not this an admirable consequence? because I affirm the proportions of things, and the differences of good and evil, to be eternal and necessary, that therefore I affirm the existence of the things themselves to be also eternal and necessary? because I affirm the proportion, suppose between a sphere and a cylinder, to be eternal and necessary, that therefore I affirm the existence of material spheres and cylinders to be likewise eternal and necessary? because I affirm the difference between virtue and vice to be eternal and necessary, that therefore I affirm men, who practise virtue or vice, to have existed eternally? This accusation shows both extreme ignorance, and great malice, in the author of the remarks.

I had used these words, (Demonstrat, page 8:)--"How an eternal duration can now be actually past, is a thing utterly as impossible for our narrow understandings to comprehend, as any thing that is not an

express contradiction can be imagined to be; and yet, to deny the truth of the proposition, that an eternal duration is now actually past, is to assert something still far more unintelligible, even a real and express contradiction." Instead of this, the Remarker, (page 39,) citing my words, with extreme disingenuity leaves out one half of the sentence and makes me to say, absolutely, that something is still far more unintelligible than that which is utterly impossible to be understood. Such gross misrepresentations as these, in leaving out one part of a sentence, to make the rest nonsense, can very hardly proceed but from want of honesty.

Lastly, (page 41,) he says, that in my Sermons there is not one argument offered to prove, against Spinoza, that God is a spirit. I persuaded myself, that the proving God to be a being absolutely distinct from the material world, self-existent, intelligent, free, all-powerful, wise, and good, had been proving him to be a spirit. But it seems no proof is of any force with this author, if it be not agreeable to the Cartesian philosophy, in which alone he seems to have any knowledge. To this, therefore, I am not obliged to trouble either myself or the reader with giving any further answer.

[87] Note--That in this whole question, the word essence is not to be taken in the proper metaphysical sense of the word, as signifying that by which a thing is what it is; for in that sense the attributes of God do constitute his essence; and solidity, or impenetrability, is the essence of matter. But essence is all along to be understood as signifying here the same with substance.

[88] See Sir Isaac Newton's Principia, page 384 and 402. Edit. tertia.

[89] Quæro an a Deo fieri potuisset ut mundus esset finitus?--Epist. ad Cartesium68, partis primæ. Nondum illud possum concoquere, eam esse inter res corporeas connexionem, ut nec mundum Deus creare potuerit

nisi infinitum, nec ullum corpus in nihilum redigere, quin eo ipso teneatur aliud paris quantitatis statim creare.--Epist. 5. partis secundæ.

[90] Puto implicare contradictionem ut mundus sit finitus.--Cartes. Epist.69, partis primæ. Mihi autem non videtur de ulla unquam re esse dicendum, ipsam a Deo fieri non posse. Cum enim omnis ratio veri et boni ab ejus omnipotentia dependeat; ne quidem dicere ausim, Deum facere non posse ut mons sit sine valle, vel ut unum et duo non sint tria; sed tantum dico, talia implicare contradictionem in meo conceptu. Quod idem etiam de spatio, quod sit plane vacuum, &c.--Epist. 6, partis secundæ.

[91] Remark, page 25.

[92] See Cudworth's System, page 721, &c.

[93] Præter Deum nulla dari neque concipi potest substantia.--Spinoza ethic. par. prop. 14. Una substantia non potest produci ab alia substantia.--Prop. 6. Res nullo alio modo neque alio ordine a Deo produci potuerunt quam productæ sunt.--Prop. 33. Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet existere.--Prop. 7.

[94] Omnes qui naturam divinam aliquo modo contemplati sunt, Deum esse corporeum negant--Ethic. par. I. prop. 15. Schol.

[95] Per corpus intelligimus quamcunque quantitatem longam, latam, et profundam, certa aliqua figura terminatum; quo nihil absurdius de Deo, ente scilicet absolute infinito, dici potest.--Ibid.

[96] Substantiam corpoream quæ non nisi infinita concipi potest, nulla ratione natura divina indignam esse dici potest.

[97] Schol. ad prop. 15. par 1.

[98] A summa Dei potentia omnia necessario effluxisse. Omnia ex necessitate divinæ naturæ determinata sunt, &c. Quicquid concipimus in Dei potestate esse, id necessario est. Res nullo alio modo, neque alio

ordine, a Deo produci potuerunt quam productæ sunt. Deum non operari ex libertate voluntatis.

[99] Sequitur, soum Deum esse causam liberam. Deus ex solis suæ naturæ legibus, et a nemine coactus, agit.

Chapter 16

Isa. v. 20. Wo unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

THE UNCHANGEABLE OBLIGATIONS OF

NATURAL RELIGION,

AND THE

TRUTH AND CERTAINTY OF THE

CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet

and sweet for bitter.

Rom. i. 22. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

1 Cor. ii. 10. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit.

Chapter 17

HAVING, The introduction. in a former discourse, endeavoured to lay

firmly the first foundations of religion, in the certainty of the existence and of the attributes of God, by proving, severally and distinctly:--

That something must needs have existed from eternity, and how great soever the difficulties are, which perplex the conceptions and apprehensions we attempt to frame of an eternal duration, yet they neither ought nor can raise in any man's mind any doubt or scruple concerning the truth of the assertion itself that something has really been eternal:

That there must have existed from eternity some one unchangeable and independent being, because, to suppose an eternal succession of merely dependent beings, proceeding one from another in an endless progression, without any original independent cause at all, is supposing things that have in their own nature no necessity of existing, to be from eternity caused or produced by nothing; which is the very same absurdity and express contradiction as to suppose them produced by nothing at any determinate time:

That that unchangeable and independent being, which has existed from eternity, without any external cause of its existence, must be self-existent, that is, necessarily-existing:

That it must of necessity be infinite or everywhere present; a being most simple, uniform, invariable, indivisible, incorruptible, and infinitely removed from all such imperfections as are the known qualities and inseparable properties of the material world:

That it must of necessity be but one; because, to suppose two, or more,

different self-existent independent principles may be reduced to a direct contradiction:

That it must necessarily be an intelligent being:

That it must be a free and voluntary, not a necessary agent:

That this being must of necessity have infinite power, and that in this attribute is included, particularly, a possibility of creating or producing things, and also a possibility of communicating to creatures the power of beginning motion, and a possibility of induing them with liberty or freedom of will; which freedom of will is not inconsistent with any of the divine attributes:

That he must of necessity be infinitely wise:

And lastly, that he must necessarily be a being of infinite goodness, justice, and truth, and all other moral perfections; such as become the supreme governor and judge of the world.

It remains now, in order to complete my design of proving and establishing the truth and excellency of the whole superstructure of our most holy religion, that I proceed, upon this foundation of the certainty of the being and attributes of God, to demonstrate in the next place the unalterable obligations of natural religion, and the certainty of divine revelation, in opposition to the vain arguings of certain vicious and profane men, who, merely upon account of their incredulity, would be thought to be strict adherers to reason, and sincere and diligent inquirers into truth; when, indeed, on the contrary, there is but too much cause to fear that they are not at all sincerely and really desirous to be satisfied in the true state of things, but only seek, under the pretence and cover of infidelity, to excuse their vices and debaucheries which they are so strongly inslaved to that they cannot prevail with themselves upon any account to forsake them: And yet a rational submitting to such truths, as just evidence

and unanswerable reason would induce them to believe, must necessarily make them uneasy under those vices, and self condemned in the practice of them. It remains therefore, (I say) in order to finish the design I proposed to myself, of establishing the truth and excellency of our holy religion, in opposition to all such vain pretenders to reason as these, that I proceed at this time, by a continuation of the same method of arguing, by which I before demonstrated the being and attributes of God, to prove distinctly the following propositions:--

I. That the same necessary and eternal different relations that different things bear one to another, and the same consequent fitness or unfitness of the application of different things or different relations one to another, with regard to which the will of God always and necessarily does determine itself to choose to act only what is agreeable to justice, equity, goodness, and truth, in order to the welfare of the whole universe, ought likewise constantly to determine the wills of all subordinate rational beings, to govern all their actions by the same rules, for the good of the public in their respective stations: That is, these eternal and necessary differences of things make it fit and reasonable for creatures so to act: they cause it to be their duty, or lay an obligation upon them, so to do, even separate from the consideration of these rules being the positive will or command of God, and also antecedent to any respect or regard, expectation or apprehension, of any particular private and personal advantage or disadvantage, reward or punishment, either present or future, annexed, either by natural consequence, or by positive appointments, to the practising or neglecting those rules.

II. That though these eternal moral obligations are, indeed, of themselves incumbent on all rational beings, even antecedent to the consideration of their being the positive will and command of God, yet

that which most strongly confirms, and in practice most effectually and indispensably enforces them upon us, is this, that both from the nature of things, and the perfections of God, and from several other collateral considerations, it appears, that as God is himself necessarily just and good in the exercise of his infinite power in the government of the whole world, so he cannot but likewise positively require that all his rational creatures should in their proportion be so too, in the exercise of each of their powers in their respective spheres: That is, as these eternal moral obligations are really in perpetual force merely from their own nature and the abstract reason of things, so also they are moreover the express and unalterable will, command, and law of God to his creatures, which he cannot but expect should, in obedience to his supreme authority, as well as in compliance with the natural reason of things, be regularly and constantly observed through the whole creation.

III. That, therefore, though these eternal moral obligations are also incumbent, indeed, on all rational creatures, antecedent to any respect of particular reward or punishment, yet they must certainly and necessarily be attended with rewards and punishments; because the same reasons which prove God himself to be necessarily just and good, and the rules of justice, equity, and goodness, to be his unalterable will, law, and command, to all created beings, prove also that he cannot but be pleased with and approve such creatures as imitate and obey him by observing those rules, and be displeased with such as act contrary thereto; and, consequently, that he cannot but some way or other make a suitable difference in his dealings with them, and manifest his supreme power and absolute authority, in finally supporting, maintaining, and vindicating effectually the honour of these his divine laws, as becomes the just and righteous governor and disposer of all things.

IV. That consequently, though, in order to establish this suitable difference between the fruits or effects of virtue and vice, so reasonable in itself, and so absolutely necessary for the vindication of the honour of God, the nature of things and the constitution and order of God's creation was originally such, that the observance of the eternal rules of justice, equity, and goodness does indeed of itself tend, by direct and natural consequence, to make all creatures happy, and the contrary practice to make them miserable; yet since, through some great and general corruption and depravation, (whencesoever that may have arisen, the particular original whereof could hardly have been known now without revelation;) since, I say, the condition of men in this present state is such, that the natural order of things in this world is an event manifestly perverted, and virtue and goodness are visibly prevented, in great measure, from obtaining their proper and due effects in establishing men's happiness proportionable to their behaviour and practice; therefore it is absolutely impossible, that the whole view and intention, the original and the final design, of God's creating such rational beings as men are, and placing them in this globe of earth, as the chief and principal, or indeed (may we not say) the only inhabitants, for whose sake alone this part at least of the creation is evidently fitted up and accommodated; it is absolutely impossible (I say) that the whole of God's design in all this should be nothing more than to keep up eternally a succession of such short-lived generations of men as at present are, and those in such a corrupt, confused, and disorderly state of things as we see the world is now in, without any due observation of the eternal rules of good and evil, without any clear and remarkable effect of the great and most necessary differences of things, and without any final vindication of the honour and laws of God in the proportionable reward of the best, or punishment

of the worst of men. And consequently it is certain and necessary, (even as certain as the moral attributes of God before demonstrated,) that, instead of continuing an eternal succession of new generations in the present form and state of things, there must at some time or other be such a revolution and renovation of things, such a future state of existence of the same persons, as that, by an exact distribution of rewards or punishments therein, all the present disorders and inequalities may be set right, and that the whole scheme of providence, which to us who judge of it by only one small portion of it, seems now so inexplicable and much confused, may appear at its consummation to be a design worthy of infinite wisdom, justice, and goodness.

V. That, though the indispensable necessity of all the great and moral obligations of natural religion, and also the certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments, be thus in general deducible even demonstrably, by a chain of clear and undeniable reasoning, (yet in the present state of the world, by what means soever it came originally to be so corrupted, of which more hereafter,) such is the carelessness, inconsiderateness, and want of attention of the greater part of mankind; so many the prejudices and false notions imbibed by evil education; so strong and violent the unreasonable lusts, appetites, and desires of sense; and so great the blindness, introduced by superstitious opinions, vicious customs, and debauched practices, through the world,--that very few are able, in reality and effect, to discover these things clearly and plainly for themselves; but men have great need of particular teaching, and much instruction, to convince them of the truth and certainty, and importance of these things; to give them a due sense, and clear and just apprehensions concerning them; and to bring them effectually to the practice of the plainest and most necessary duties.

VI. That, though in almost every age there have indeed been in the heathen world some wise, and brave, and good men, who have made it their business to study and practice these things themselves, and to teach and exhort others to do the like, who seem therefore to have been raised up by providence as instruments to reprove in some measure, and put some kind of check to the extreme superstition and wickedness of the nations wherein they lived: Yet none of these have ever been able to reform the world with any considerably great and universal success; because they have been but very few that have in earnest set themselves about this excellent work; and they that have indeed sincerely done it have themselves been entirely ignorant of some doctrines, and very doubtful and uncertain of others, absolutely necessary for the bringing about that great end; and those things which they have been certain of and in good measure understood, they have not been able to prove and explain clearly enough, and those that they have been able both to prove and explain by sufficiently clear reasoning, they have not yet had authority enough to enforce and inculcate upon men's minds with so strong an impression as to influence and govern the general practice of the world.

VII. That therefore there was plainly wanting a divine revelation to recover mankind out of their universally degenerate estate, into a state suitable to the original excellency of their nature; which divine revelation, both the necessities of men and their natural notions of God gave them reasonable ground to expect and hope for, as appears from the acknowledgments which the best and wisest of the heathen philosophers themselves have made, of their sense of the necessity and want of such a revelation, and from their expressions of the hopes they had entertained that God would some time or other vouchsafe it unto them.

VIII. That there is no other religion now in the world, but the Christian, that has any just pretence or tolerable appearance of reason to be esteemed such a divine revelation; and therefore if Christianity be not true, there is no revelation of the will of God at all made to mankind.

IX. That the Christian religion, considered in its primitive simplicity, and as taught in the Holy Scriptures, has all the marks and proofs of its being actually and truly a divine revelation that any divine revelation, supposing it was true, could reasonably be imagined or desired to have.

X. That the practical duties which the Christian religion enjoins, are all such as are most agreeable to our natural notions of God, and most perfective of the nature, and conducive to the happiness and well-being of men: That is, Christianity,--even in this single respect, as containing alone, and in one consistent system, all the wise and good precepts (and those improved, augmented, and exalted to the highest degree of perfection,) that ever were taught singly and scatteredly, and many times but very corruptly, by the several schools of the philosophers; and this without any mixture of the fond, absurd, and superstitious practices of any of those philosophers,--ought to be embraced and practised by all rational and considering deists, who will act consistently, and steadily pursue the consequences of their own principles; as at least the best scheme and sect of philosophy that ever was set up in the world, and highly probable, even though it had no external evidence, to be of divine original.

XI. That the motives, by which the Christian religion enforces the practice of these duties, are such as are must suitable to the excellent wisdom of God, and most answerable to the natural expectations of men.

XII. That the peculiar manner and circumstances with which it enjoins these duties and urges these motives, are exactly consonant to the dictates of sound reason, or the unprejudiced light of nature, and most wisely perfective of it.

XIII. That all the [credenda, or] doctrines, which the true, simple, and uncorrupted Christian religion teaches,--(that is, not only those plain doctrines which it requires to be believed as fundamental and of necessity to eternal salvation, but even all the doctrines which it teaches as matters of truths,)--are, though indeed many of them not discoverable by bare reason unassisted with revelation, yet, when discovered by revelation, apparently most agreeable to sound unprejudiced reason, have every one of them a natural tendency, and a direct and powerful influence, to reform men's lives and correct their manners, and do together make up an infinitely more consistent and rational scheme of belief than any that the wisest of the ancient philosophers ever did, or the cunningest of modern unbelievers can invent or contrive.

XIV. That as this revelation, to the judgment of right and sober reason, appears even of itself highly credible and probable, and abundantly recommends itself in its native simplicity, merely by its own intrinsic goodness and excellency, to the practice of the most rational and considering men, who are desirous in all their actions to have satisfaction, and comfort, and good hope within themselves, from the conscience of what they do; so it is moreover positively and directly proved to be actually and immediately sent to us from God, by the many infallible signs and miracles which the Author of it worked publicly as the evidence of his divine commission, by the exact completion both of the prophecies that went before concerning him, and of those that he himself delivered concerning things that were to

happen after, and by the testimony of his followers, which in all its circumstances was the most credible, certain, and convincing evidence, that was ever given to any matter of fact in the world.

XV. And lastly, that they who will not, by such arguments and proofs as these, be convinced of the truth and certainty of the Christian religion, and be persuaded to make it the rule and guide of all their actions, would not be convinced, (so far as to influence their hearts, and reform their lives,) by any other evidence whatsoever; no, not though one should rise on purpose from the dead to endeavour to convince them.

I might here, Of the several sorts of deists. before I enter upon the particular proof of these several propositions, justly be allowed to premise, that, having now to deal with another sort of men than those against whom my former discourse was directed, and being consequently in some parts of this treatise to make use of some other kinds of arguments than those which the nature of that discourse permitted and required, the same demonstrative force of reasoning, and even mathematical certainty, which in the main argument was there easy to be obtained, ought not here to be expected; but that such moral evidence, or mixed proofs, from circumstances and testimony, as most matters of fact are only capable of, and wise and honest men are always satisfied with, ought to be accounted sufficient in the present case: Because all the principles indeed upon which atheists attempt to build their schemes, are such as may, by plain force of reason, and undeniably demonstrative argumentations, be reduced to express and direct contradictions. But deists pretend to own all the principles of reason, and would be thought to deny nothing but what depends entirely on testimony and evidence of matter of fact, which they think they can easily evade.

But, if we examine things to the bottom, we shall find that the matter does not in reality lie here. For I believe there are in the world, at least in any part of the world where the Christian religion is in any tolerable purity professed, very few such deists as will truly stand to all the principles of unprejudiced reason, and sincerely, both in profession and practice, own all the obligations of natural religion, and yet oppose Christianity merely upon account of their not being satisfied with the strength of the evidence of matter of fact. A constant and sincere observance of all the laws of reason and obligations of natural religion, will unavoidably lead a man to Christianity, if Christianity be fairly proposed to him in its natural simplicity and he has due opportunities of examining things and will steadily pursue the consequences of his own principles. And all others, who pretend to be deists without coming up to this, can have no fixed and settled principles at all, upon which they can either argue or act consistently, but must of necessity sink into downright atheism, (and consequently fall under the force of the former arguments,) as may appear by considering the several sorts of them.

1. Of the first sort of deists: And of Providence. Some men would be thought to be deists, because they pretend to believe the existence of an eternal, infinite, independent, intelligent being; and, to avoid the name of Epicurean atheists, teach also that this supreme being made the world: though [100] at the same time they agree with the Epicureans in this, that they fancy God does not at all concern himself in the government of the world, nor has any regard to, or care of, what is done therein. But if we examine things duly, this opinion must unavoidably terminate in absolute atheism. For though to imagine that God, at the creation of the world, or at the formation of any particular part of it, could (if he had pleased,) by his infinite

wisdom, foresight, and unerring design, have originally so ordered, disposed, and adapted all the springs and series of future necessary and unintelligent causes, that, without the immediate interposition of his almighty power upon every particular occasion, they should regularly, by virtue of that original disposition, have produced effects worthy to proceed from the direction and government of infinite wisdom: though this, I say, may possibly by very nice and abstract reasoning be reconcileable with a firm belief both of the being and attributes of God, and also with a consistent notion even of providence itself; yet to fancy that God originally created a certain quantity of matter and motion, and left them to frame a world at adventures, without any determinate and particular view, design, or direction; this can no way be defended consistently, but must of necessity recur to downright atheism, as I shall show presently, after I have made only this one observation, that as that opinion is impious in itself, so the late improvements in mathematics and natural philosophy have discovered that, as things now are, that scheme is plainly false and impossible in fact. For, not to say, that, seeing matter is utterly incapable of obeying any laws, the very original laws of motion themselves cannot continue to take place but by something superior to matter, continually exerting on it a certain force of power according to such certain and determinate laws; it is now evident, beyond question, that the bodies of all plants and animals, much the most considerable parts of the world, could not possibly have been formed by mere matter, according to any general laws of motion. And not only so, but that most universal principle of gravitation itself, the spring of almost all the great and regular inanimate motions in the world, answering (as I hinted in my former discourse,) not at all to the surfaces of bodies, (by which alone they can act one upon another,) but entirely to their solid

content; cannot possibly be the result of any motion originally impressed on matter, but must of necessity be caused (either immediately or mediately) by something which penetrates the very solid substance of all bodies, and continually puts forth in them a force or power entirely different from that by which matter acts on matter: Which is, by the way, an evident demonstration, not only of the world's being made originally by a supreme intelligent cause, but moreover that it depends every moment on some superior being, for the preservation of its frame; and that all the great motions in it are caused by some immaterial power, not having originally impressed a certain quantity of motion upon matter, but perpetually and actually exerting itself every moment in every part of the world. Which preserving and governing power, whether it be immediately the power and action of the same supreme cause that created the world, of him without whom not a sparrow falls to the ground, and with whom the very hairs of our head are all numbered; or whether it be the action of some subordinate instruments appointed by him to direct and preside respectively over certain parts thereof; does either way equally give us a very noble idea of providence. Those men, indeed, who, merely through a certain vanity of philosophising, have been tempted to embrace that other opinion, of all things being produced and continued only by a certain quantity of motion, originally impressed on matter without any determinate design or direction, and left to itself to form a world at adventures; those men, I say, who, merely through a vanity of philosophising, have been tempted to embrace that opinion, without attending whither it would lead them, ought not, indeed, to be directly charged with all the consequences of it. But it is certain, that many, under that cover, have really been atheists; and the opinion itself (as I before said) leads necessarily, and by unavoidable consequence, to plain atheism.

For if God be an all-powerful, omnipresent, intelligent, wise, and free being, (as it hath been before demonstrated that he necessarily is), he cannot possibly but know, at all times and in all places, every thing that is; and foreknow what at all times and in all places it is fittest and wisest should be; and have perfect power, without the least labour, difficulty, or opposition, to order and bring to pass what he so judges fit to be accomplished: and consequently it is impossible but he must actually direct and appoint [101] every particular thing and circumstance that is in the world, or ever shall be, excepting only what by his own pleasure he puts under the power and choice of subordinate free agents. If, therefore, God does not concern himself in the government of the world, nor has any regard to what is done therein, it will follow that he is not an omnipresent, all-powerful, intelligent and wise being; and, consequently, that he is not at all. Wherefore the opinion of this sort of deists stands not upon any certain consistent principles, but leads unavoidably to downright atheism; and, however in words they may confess a God, [102] yet in reality and in truth they deny him.

If, Human affairs not beneath the regard of Providence. to avoid this, they will own God's government and providence over the greater and more considerable parts of the world, but deny his inspection and regard to human affairs here upon earth, as being too minute and small for the supreme governor of all things to concern himself in; [103] this still amounts to the same. For if God be omnipresent, all-knowing, and all-powerful, he cannot but equally know, and with equal ease be able to direct and govern, [104] all things as any, and the minutest things [105] as the greatest. So that if he has no regard nor concern for these things, his attributes must, as before, be denied, and consequently his being. But, besides, human affairs are by no means the

minutest and most inconsiderable part of the creation: For, (not to consider now, that excellency of human nature which Christianity discovers to us,) let a deist suppose the universe as large as the widest hypothesis of astronomy will give him leave to imagine, or let him suppose it as immense as he himself pleases, and filled with as great numbers of rational creatures as his own fancy can suggest; yet the system wherein we are placed will at least, for ought he can reasonably suppose, be as considerable as any other single system; and the earth whereon we dwell as considerable as most of the other planets in this system, and mankind manifestly the only considerable inhabitants on this globe of earth. Man, therefore, has evidently a better claim to the particular regard and concern of providence than any thing else in this globe of ours; and this our globe of earth as just a pretence to it as most other planets in the system; and this system as just a one, as far as we can judge, as any system in the universe. If therefore there be any providence at all, and God has any concern for any part of the world, mankind, even separate from the consideration of that excellency of human nature which the Christian doctrine discovers to us, may as reasonably be supposed to be under its particular care and government as any other part of the universe.

2. Of the second sort of deists. Some others there are that call themselves deists, because they believe, not only the being, but also the providence of God; that is, that every natural thing that is done in the world is produced by the power, appointed by the wisdom, and directed by the government of God. Though not allowing any difference between moral good and evil, they suppose that God takes no notice of the morally good or evil actions of men; these things depending, as they imagine, merely on the arbitrary constitution of human laws. But how handsomely soever these men may seem to speak of the natural

attributes of God, of his knowledge, wisdom, and power, yet neither can this opinion be settled on any certain principles, nor defended by any consistent reasoning; nor can the natural attributes of God be so separated from the moral but that he who denies the latter may be reduced to a necessity of denying the former likewise. For since (as I have formerly proved,) there cannot but be eternal and necessary differences of different things, one from another, and, from these necessary differences of things, there cannot but arise a fitness or unfitness of the application of different things or different relations one to another; and infinite knowledge can no more fail to know, or infinite wisdom to choose, or infinite power to act, according to these eternal reasons and proportions of things, than knowledge can be ignorance, wisdom be folly, or power weakness; and consequently the justice and goodness of God are as certain and necessary as his wisdom and power;--it follows unavoidably, that he who denies the justice or goodness of God, or, which is all one, denies his exercise of these attributes in inspecting and regarding the moral actions of men, must also deny, either his wisdom, or his power, or both; and, consequently, must needs be driven into absolute atheism: For though in some moral matters men are not indeed to be judged of by the consequences of their opinions, but by their profession and practice, yet in the present case([106] it matters not at all what men affirm, or how honourably they may seem to speak of some particular attributes of God; but what, notwithstanding such profession, must needs in all reason be supposed to be their true opinion; and their practice generally appears answerable to it.

For, Profane and debauched deists not capable of being argued with.

concerning these two sorts of deists, it is observable, that as their opinions can terminate consistently in nothing but downright atheism,

so their practice and behaviour is generally agreeable to that of the most openly professed atheists. They not only oppose the revelation of Christianity, and reject all the moral obligations of natural religion, as such, but generally they despise also the wisdom of all human constitutions made for the order and benefit of mankind, and are as much contemners of common decency as they are of religion. They endeavour to ridicule and banter all human as well as divine accomplishments; all virtue and government of a man's self, all learning and knowledge, all wisdom and honour, and every thing for which a man can justly be commended or be esteemed more excellent than a beast. They pretend commonly, in their discourse and writings, to expose the abuses and corruptions of religion; but (as is too manifest in some of their books as well as in their talk, they aim really against all virtue in general, and all good manners, and against whatsoever is truly valuable and commendable in men. They pretend to ridicule certain vices and follies of ignorant or superstitious men; but the many very profane and very lewd images, with which they industriously affect to dress up their discourse, show plainly that they really do not so much intend to expose and deride any vice or folly, as on the contrary to foment and please the debauched and vicious inclinations of others as void of shame as themselves. They discover clearly, that they have no sense at all of the dignity of human nature, nor of the superiority and excellency of their reason above even the meanest of the brutes. They will sometimes in words seem to magnify the wisdom, and other natural attributes of God, but in reality, by ridiculing whatever bears any resemblance to it in men, they show undeniably that they do not indeed believe there is any real difference in things, or any true excellency in one thing more than in another. By turning every thing alike, and without exception, into

ridicule and mockery, they declare plainly that they do not believe any thing to be wise, any thing decent, any thing comely or praiseworthy at all. They seem not to have any esteem or value for those distinguishing powers and faculties; by induing them wherewith God has "taught them more than the beasts of the field, and made them wiser than the fowls of heaven." [107] In a word; "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise;" [108] these things they make the constant subject of their mockery and abuse, ridicule and raillery. On the contrary, whatsoever things are profane, impure, filthy, dishonourable, and absurd; these things they make it their business to represent as harmless and indifferent, and to laugh men out of their natural shame and abhorrence of them; nay, even to recommend them with their utmost wit. Such men as these are not to be argued with, till they can be persuaded to use arguments instead of drollery: For banter is not capable of being answered by reason; not because it has any strength in it, but because it runs out of all the bounds of reason and good sense, by extravagantly joining together such images as have not in themselves any manner of similitude or connexion; by which means all things are alike easy to be rendered ridiculous, by being represented only in an absurd dress. These men, therefore, are first to be convinced of the true principles of reason before they can be disputed with; and then they must of necessity either retreat into downright atheism, or be led by undeniable reasoning to acknowledge and submit to the obligations of morality, and heartily repent of their profane abuse of God and religion.

3. Of the third sort of deists. Another sort of deists there are, who, having right apprehensions concerning the natural attributes of God,

and his all-governing providence, seem also to have some notion of his moral perfections also. That is, as they believe him to be a being infinitely knowing, powerful, and wise, so they believe him to be also in some sense a being of infinite justice, goodness, and truth, and that he governs the universe by these perfections, and expects suitable obedience from all his rational creatures. But then, having a prejudice against the notion of the immortality of human souls, they believe that men perish entirely at death, and that one generation shall perpetually succeed another, without any thing remaining of men after their departure out of this life, and without any future restoration or renovation of things. And imagining that justice, and goodness in God, are not the same as in the ideas we frame of these perfections, when we consider them in men, or when we reason about them abstractly in themselves, but that in the supreme governor of the world they are something transcendent, and of which we cannot make any true judgment, nor argue with any certainty about them: they fancy, though there does not indeed seem to us to be any equity or proportion in the distributions of rewards and punishments in this present life, yet that we are not sufficient judges concerning the attributes of God, to argue from thence with any assurance for the certainty of a future state. But neither does this opinion stand on any consistent principles. For if justice and goodness be not [109] the same in God, as in our ideas, then we mean nothing, when we say that God is necessarily just and good; and for the same reason it may as well be said that we know not what we mean, when we affirm that he is an intelligent and wise being, and there will be no foundation at all left on which we can fix any thing. Thus the moral attributes of God, however they be acknowledged in words, yet in reality they are by these men entirely taken away; and upon the same grounds the natural attributes may also be denied. And so

upon the whole, this opinion likewise, if we argue upon it consistently, must finally recur to absolute atheism.

4. Of the fourth sort of deists. The last sort of deists are those who, if they did indeed believe what they pretend, have just and right notions of God, and of all the divine attributes in every respect; who declare they believe that there is one eternal, infinite, intelligent, all-powerful, and wise being, the creator, preserver, and governor of all things; that this supreme cause is a being of infinite justice, goodness, and truth, and all other moral as well as natural perfections; that he made the world for the manifestation of his power and wisdom, and to communicate his goodness and happiness to his creatures; that he preserves it by his continual all-wise providence, and governs it according to the eternal rules of infinite justice, equity, goodness, mercy, and truth; that all created rational beings, depending continually upon him, are bound to adore, worship, and obey him, to praise him for all things they enjoy, and to pray to him for every thing they want; that they are all obliged to promote, in their proportion, and according to the extent of their several powers and abilities, the general good and welfare of those parts of the world wherein they are placed, in like manner as the divine goodness is continually promoting the universal benefit of the whole; that men, in particular, are every one obliged to make it their business, by an universal benevolence, to promote the happiness of all others; that, in order to this, every man is bound always to behave himself so towards others, as in reason he would desire they should in like circumstances deal with him; that, therefore, he is obliged to obey and submit to his superiors in all just and right things, for the preservation of society and the peace and benefit of the public; to be just and honest, equitable and sincere, in all his dealings with his equals, for the

keeping inviolable the everlasting rule of righteousness, and maintaining an universal trust and confidence, friendship and affection, amongst men; and, towards his inferiors, to be gentle, and easy, and affable,--charitable, and willing to assist as many as stand in need of his help, for the preservation of universal love and benevolence amongst mankind, and in imitation of the goodness of God, who preserves and does good to all creatures, which depend entirely upon him for their very being and all that they enjoy; that, in respect of himself, every man is bound to preserve, as much as in him lies, his own being, and the right use of all his faculties, so long as it shall please God, who appointed him his station in this world, to continue him therein; that, therefore, he is bound to have an exact government of his passions, and carefully to abstain from all debaucheries or abuses of himself, which tend either to the destruction of his own being, or to the disordering of his faculties, and disabling him from performing his duty, or hurrying him into the practice of unreasonable and unjust things: Lastly, that accordingly as men regard or neglect these obligations, so they are proportionably acceptable or displeasing unto God, who, being supreme governor of the world, cannot but testify his favour or displeasure at some time or other; and, consequently, since this is not done in the present state, therefore there must be a future state of rewards and punishments in a life to come. But all this, the men we are now speaking of profess to believe only so far as it is discoverable by the light of nature alone, without believing any divine revelation. These, I say, are the only true deists, and indeed the only persons who ought in reason to be argued with, in order to convince them of the reasonableness, truth, and certainty of the Christian revelation. But, alas! there is, as I before said, too much reason to believe, that there are very few such deists as these, among

modern deniers of revelation. For such men as I have now described, if they would at all attend to the consequences of their own principles, could not fail of being quickly persuaded to embrace Christianity. For, being fully convinced of the obligations of natural religion, and the certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments; and yet observing, at the same time, how little use men generally are able to make of the light of reason, to discover the one, or to convince themselves effectually of the certainty and importance of the other; it is impossible but they must be sensible of the want of a revelation; it is impossible but they must earnestly desire God would be pleased, by some direct discovery of his will, to make these things more clear and plain, more easy and obvious, more certain and evident to all capacities; it is impossible but they must wish God would be pleased particularly to signify expressly the acceptableness of repentance, and his willingness to forgive returning sinners; it is impossible but they must be very solicitous to have some more particular and certain information concerning the nature of that future state, which reason teaches them in general to expect. The consequence of this, is; that they must needs be possessed beforehand with a strong hope that the Christian revelation may, upon a due examination, appear to be true. They must be infinitely far from ridiculing and despising any thing that claims to be a divine revelation, before they have sincerely and thoroughly examined it to the bottom. They must needs be before-hand very much disposed in its favour; and be very willing to be convinced that what tends to the advancing and perfecting the obligation of natural religion, to the securing their great hopes, and ascertaining the truth of a future state of rewards and punishments, and can any way be made appear to be worthy of God, and consistent with his attributes, and has any reasonable proof of the matters of fact it depends upon--

is, really and truly, what it pretends to be, a divine revelation. And now, is it possible that any man, with these opinions and these dispositions, should continue to reject Christianity, when proposed to him in its original and genuine simplicity, without the mixture of any corruptions or inventions of men? Let him read the sermons and exhortations of our Saviour as delivered in the gospels, and the discourses of the apostles, preserved in their acts and their epistles, and try if he can withstand the evidence of such a doctrine, and reject the hopes of such a glorious immortality so discovered to him. That there is now no consistent scheme of deism in the world. The heathen philosophers, those few of them who taught and lived up to the obligations of natural religion, had indeed a consistent scheme of deism so far as it went; and they were very brave and wise men, if any of them could keep steady and firm to it. But the case is not so now. The same scheme of deism is not any longer consistent with its own principles, if it does not now lead men to embrace and believe revelation, as it then taught them to hope for it. Deists, in our days, who obstinately reject revelation when offered to them, are not such men as Socrates and Tully were; but, under pretence of deism, it is plain they are generally ridiculers of all that is truly excellent even in natural religion itself. Could we see a deist, whose mind was heartily possessed with worthy and just apprehensions of all the attributes of God, and a deep sense of his duty towards that supreme author and preserver of his being,--could we see a deist who lived in an exact performance of all the duties of natural religion, and by the practice of righteousness, justice, equity, sobriety, and temperance, expressed in his actions, as well as words, a firm belief and expectation of a future state of rewards and punishments; in a word, could we see a deist, who, with reverence and modesty, with sincerity

and impartiality, with a true and hearty desire of finding out and submitting to reason and truth, would inquire into the foundations of our belief, and examine thoroughly the pretensions which pure and uncorrupt Christianity has to be received as a divine revelation,--I think we could not doubt to affirm, of such a person, as our Saviour did of the young man in the Gospel, that he was not far from the kingdom of God; and that, being willing to do his will, he should know of the doctrine whether it was of God. But, as I have said, there is great reason to doubt there are few or none such deists as these among the infidels of our days. This, indeed, is what they sometimes pretend, and seem to desire should be thought to be their case. But, alas, their trivial and vain cavils; their mocking and ridiculing, without and before examination; their directing the whole stress of their objections against particular customs, or particular and perhaps uncertain opinions, or explications of opinions, without at all considering the main body of religion; their loose, vain, and frothy discourses; and, above all, their vicious and immoral lives,--show plainly and undeniably, that they are not really deists, but mere atheists; and consequently not capable to judge of the truth of Christianity. If they were truly and in earnest such deists as they pretend, and would sometimes be thought to be, those principles (as has been already shown in part, and will more fully appear in the following discourse,) would unavoidably lead them to Christianity; but, being such as they really are, they cannot possibly avoid recurring to downright atheism.

The sum is this: There is now [110] no such thing as a consistent scheme of deism. That which alone was once such, namely, the scheme of the best heathen philosophers, ceases now to be so, after the appearance of revelation; because (as I have already shown, and shall

more largely prove in the sequel of this discourse,) it directly conducts men to the belief of Christianity. All other pretences to deism may, by unavoidable consequence, be forced to terminate in absolute atheism. He that cannot prevail with himself to obey the Christian doctrine, and embrace those hopes of life and immortality which our Saviour has brought to light through the Gospel, cannot now be imagined to maintain with any firmness, steadiness, and certainty, the belief of the immortality of the soul and a future state of rewards and punishments after death; because all the main difficulties and objections lie equally against both. For the same reason, he who disbelieves the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments, cannot defend, to any effectual purpose, or enforce with any sufficient strength, the obligations of morality and natural religion, notwithstanding that they are indeed incumbent upon men, from the very nature and reason of the things themselves. Then, he who gives up the obligations of morality and natural religion, cannot possibly have any just and worthy notion of the moral attributes of God, or any true sense of the nature and necessary difference of things; and he that once goes thus far has no foundation left upon which he can be sure of the natural attributes or even of the existence of God; because, to deny what unavoidably follows from the supposition of his existence and natural attributes, is in reality denying those natural attributes and that existence itself. On the contrary, he who believes the being and natural attributes of God, must of necessity (as has been shown in my former discourse) confess his moral attributes also. Next, he who owns, and has just notions of the moral attributes of God, cannot avoid acknowledging the obligations of morality and natural religion. In like manner, he who owns the obligations of morality and natural religion must needs, to support those obligations, and make

them effectual in practice, believe a future state of rewards and punishments. And, finally, he who believes both the obligations of natural religion and the certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments, has no manner of reason left why he should reject the Christian revelation, when proposed to him in its original and genuine simplicity. Wherefore, since those arguments which demonstrate to us the being and attributes of God are so closely connected with those which prove the reasonableness and certainty of the Christian revelation, that there is now no consistent scheme of deism left,--all modern deists being forced to shift from one cavil to another, and having no fixed and certain set of principles to adhere to;--I thought I could no way better prevent their ill designs, and obviate all their different shifts and objections, than by endeavouring, in the same method of reasoning by which I before demonstrated the being and attributes of God, to prove, in like manner, by one direct and continued thread of arguing, the reasonableness and certainty of the Christian revelation also.

To proceed therefore to the proof of the propositions themselves.

[100]

Omnis enim per se divûm natura necesse est
Immortali ævo summa cum pace fruatur.
Semota a nostris rebus, sejunctaque longe.
Nam privata dolore omni, privata periclis,
Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil, indiga nostri,
Nec bene promeritis capitur, nec tangitur ira.

Lucret. lib. 1. To makarion kai aphtharton, oute auto pragmata echei, oute allo parechei; hoste oute argais, oute charisi sunechetai.--Laert. in Vita Epicuri. Nor is the doctrine of those modern philosophers much different, who ascribe every thing to matter and motion, exclusive of

final causes, and speak of God as an intelligentia supramundana; which is the very cant of Epicurus and Lucretius.

[101] Quo confesso, confitendum est eorum consilio mundum administrari.--Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. 2.

[102] Epicurum verbis reliquisse Deos, re sustulisse.--Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. 2.

[103] Eisi gar tines hi nomizousin heinai ta theia, kai toiauta o logos auta exephenen, agatha, kai dunamin echonta ten akrotaten, kai gnosin ten teleiotaten, ton mentoi anthropinon kataphronein, hos mikron kai heutelon onton, kai anaxion tes heauton epimeleias.--Simplic. in Epictet.

[104] Deorum providentia mundus administratur; iidemque consulunt rebus humanis; neque solum universis, verum etiam singulis.--Cic. de Divinat. lib. 1.

[105] All' ouden tach? anisos eie chalepon endeixasthai toutoge, hos epimeleis smikron eisi theoi, ouk epion e ton megethei diapheronton--Plato de Leg. lib.10. Ei de tou holou kosmou ho theos hou pimeleitai ananke kai ton meron auto8u pronoein; hosper kai hai technai poiousi. Kai gar iatros tou holou somatos epimelethenai prothemenos, ouk an ameleseie ton meron; oude strategos oueu' oikonomos, e politikos aner ton gar meron ameloumenon, ananke cheironos to holon diatithesthai.--Simplic. in Epictet.

[106] Quasi ego id curem, quid ille aiat aut neget: Illud quæro, quid et consentaneum sit dicere, qui, &c.--Cic. de Finib. lib. 2.

[107] Job xxxv. 11.

[108] Phil. iv. 8.

[109] Kath' hemas gar he aute arete esti ton makarion panton; hoste kai he aute arete anthropou kai Theou.--Orig. contr. Cel. lib. 4.

[110] Ita sit, ut si ab illa rerum summa, quam superius comprehendimus,

aberravercs, omnis ratio intereat, et ad nihilum omnia revertantur.--Lactan, lib.7.

Proposition I.

I. Proposition I. The same necessary and eternal different relations that different things bear one to another, and the same consequent fitness or unfitness of the application of different things or different relations one to another, with regard to which the will of God always and necessarily does determine itself, to choose to act only what is agreeable to justice, equity, goodness, and truth, in order to the welfare of the whole universe, ought likewise constantly to determine the wills of all subordinate rational beings, to govern all their actions by the same rules, for the good of the public, in their respective stations; that is, these eternal and necessary differences of things make it fit and reasonable for creatures so to act; They cause it to be their duty, or lay an obligation upon them so to do, even separate from the consideration of these rules being the positive will or command of God, and also antecedent to any respect or regard, expectation or apprehension, of any particular private and personal advantage or disadvantage, reward or punishment, either present or future, annexed either by natural consequence, or by positive appointment, to the practising or neglecting of those rules.

The several parts of this proposition may be proved distinctly, in the following manner.

I. That there are eternal and necessary differences of things. That there are differences of things, and different relations, respects, or proportions, of some things towards others, is as evident and undeniable as that one magnitude or number is greater, equal to, or smaller than another. That from these different relations of different things there necessarily arises an agreement or disagreement of some

things with others, or a fitness or unfitness of the application of different things or different relations one to another, is likewise as plain as that there is any such thing as proportion or disproportion in geometry and arithmetic, or uniformity or difformity in comparing together the respective figures of bodies. Further, that there is a fitness or suitableness of certain circumstances to certain persons, and an unsuitableness of others, founded in the nature of things and the qualifications of persons antecedent to all positive appointment whatsoever; also, that, from the different relations of different persons one to another, there necessarily arises a fitness or unfitness of certain manners of behaviour of some persons towards others; is as manifest as that the properties which flow from the essences of different mathematical figures have different congruities or incongruities between themselves, or that, in mechanics, certain weights or powers have very different forces, and different effects one upon another, according to their different distances, or different positions and situations in respect of each other: For instance; that God is infinitely superior to men is as clear as that infinity is larger than a point, or eternity longer than a moment; and it is as certainly fit that men should honour and worship, obey and imitate God, than on the contrary in all their actions endeavour to dishonour and disobey him, as it is certainly true that they have an entire dependence on him, and he, on the contrary, can in no respect receive any advantage from them; and not only so, but also that his will is as certainly and unalterably just and equitable in giving his commands as his power is irresistible in requiring submission to it. Again: It is a thing absolutely and necessarily fitter in itself, that the supreme author and creator of the universe should govern, order, and direct all things to certain and constant regular ends, than that every thing

should be permitted to go on at adventures, and produce uncertain effects merely by chance and in the utmost confusion, without any determinate view or design at all. It is a thing manifestly fitter in itself, that the all-powerful governor of the world should do always what is best in the whole, and what tends most to the universal good of the whole creation, than that he should make the whole continually miserable, or that, to satisfy the unreasonable desires of any particular depraved natures, he should at any time suffer the order of the whole to be altered and perverted. Lastly, it is a thing evidently and infinitely more fit, that any one particular innocent and good being should, by the supreme ruler and disposer of all things, be placed and preserved in an easy and happy estate, than that, without any fault or demerit of its own, it should be made extremely, remedilessly, and endlessly miserable. In like manner, in men's dealing and conversing one with another, it is undeniably more fit, absolutely and in the nature of the thing itself, that all men should endeavour to promote the universal good and welfare of all, than that all men should be continually contriving the ruin and destruction of all. It is evidently more fit, even before all positive bargains and compacts, that men should deal one with another according to the known rules of justice and equity, than that every man, for his own present advantage, should, without scruple, disappoint the most reasonable and equitable expectations of his neighbours, and cheat and defraud, or spoil by violence, all others, without restraint. Lastly, it is, without dispute, more fit and reasonable in itself, that I should preserve the life of an innocent man, that happens at any time to be in my power, or deliver him from any imminent danger, though I have never made him any promise so to do, than that I should suffer him to perish, or take away his life, without any reason or provocation at all.

These The absurdity of those who deny the eternal and necessary differences of things. things are so notoriously plain and self-evident that nothing but the extremest stupidity of mind, corruption of manners, or perverseness of spirit, can possibly make any man entertain the least doubt concerning them. For a man indued with reason, to deny the truth of these things, is the very same thing as if a man that has the use of his sight should, at the same time that he beholds the sun, deny that there is any such thing as light in the world; or as if a man that understands geometry or arithmetic, should deny the most obvious and known proportions of lines or numbers, and perversely contend that the whole is not equal to all its parts, or that a square is not double to a triangle of equal base and height. Any man of ordinary capacity, and unbiassed judgment, plainness, and simplicity, who had never read, and had never been told, that there were men and philosophers who had in earnest asserted, and attempted to prove, that there is no natural and unalterable difference between good and evil, would, at the first hearing, be as hardly persuaded to believe that it could ever really enter into the heart of any intelligent man to deny all natural difference between right and wrong, as he would be to believe that ever there could be any geometer who would seriously and in good earnest lay it down, as a first principle, that a crooked line is as straight as a right one. So that indeed it might justly seem altogether a needless undertaking to attempt to prove and establish the eternal difference of good and evil, had there not appeared certain men, as Mr. Hobbes and some few others, who have presumed, contrary to the plainest and most obvious reason of mankind, to assert, and not without some subtilty endeavoured to prove, that there is no such real difference originally, necessarily, and absolutely in the nature of things; but that all obligation of duty to God arises merely from his absolute irresistible

power, and all duty towards men merely from positive compact; and have founded their whole scheme of politics upon that opinion: Wherein, as they have contradicted the judgment of all the wisest and soberest part of mankind, so they have not been able to avoid contradicting themselves also; for, not to mention now, that they have no way to show how compacts themselves come to be obligatory, but by inconsistently owning an eternal original fitness in the thing itself, which I shall have occasion to observe hereafter: Besides, this, I say, if there be naturally and absolutely in things themselves no difference between good and evil, just and, unjust, then, in the state of nature, before any compact be made, it is equally as good, just, and reasonable, for one man to destroy the life of another, not only when it is necessary for his own preservation, but also arbitrarily and without any provocation at all, [111] or any appearance of advantage to himself, as to preserve or save another man's life, when he may do it without any hazard of his own: The consequence of which is, that not only the first and most obvious way for every particular man to secure himself effectually, would be, (as Mr Hobbes teaches) to endeavour to prevent and cut off all others, but also that men might destroy one another upon every foolish and peevish, or arbitrary humour, even when they did not think any such thing necessary for their own preservation: And the effect of this practice must needs be, that it would terminate in the destruction of all mankind; which being undeniably a great and insufferable evil, Mr Hobbes himself confesses it reasonable that, to prevent this evil, men should enter into certain compacts to preserve one another. Now, if the destruction of mankind by each other's hands be such an evil, that, to prevent it, it was fit and reasonable that men should enter into compacts to preserve each other, then, before any such compacts, it was manifestly a thing unfit and unreasonable in

itself that mankind should all destroy one another. And if so, then for the same reason it was also unfit and unreasonable, antecedent to all compacts, that any one man should destroy another arbitrarily and without any provocation, or at any time when it was not absolutely and immediately necessary for the preservation of himself; which is directly contradictory to Mr. Hobbes's first supposition, [112] of there being no natural and absolute difference between good and evil, just and unjust, antecedent to positive compact. And in like manner, all others, who, upon any pretence whatsoever, teach that good and evil depend originally on the constitution of positive laws, whether divine or human, must unavoidably run into the same absurdity: For, if there be no such thing as good and evil in the nature of things, antecedent to all laws, then neither can any one law be better than another, nor any one thing whatever be more justly established and enforced by laws, than the contrary; nor can [113] any reason be given why any laws should ever be made at all: But all laws equally will be either arbitrary and tyrannical, [114] or frivolous and needless, because the contrary might with equal reason have been established, if, before the making of the laws, all things had been alike indifferent in their own nature. There is no possible way to avoid this absurdity, but by saying, that, out of things in their own nature absolutely indifferent, those are chosen by wise governors to be made obligatory by law, the practice of which they judge will tend to the public benefit of the community. But this is an express contradiction in the very terms. For, if the practice of certain things tends to the public benefit of the world, and the contrary would tend to the public disadvantage, then those things are not in their own nature indifferent, but were good and reasonable to be practised before any law was made, and can only for that very reason be wisely enforced by the authority of laws. Only here

it is to be observed, that, by the public benefit, must [115] not be understood the interest of any one particular nation, to the plain injury or prejudice of the rest of mankind, any more than the interest of one city or family, in opposition to their neighbours of the same country. But those things only are truly good in their own nature which either tend to the universal benefit and welfare of all men, or at least are not destructive of it. The true state, therefore, of this case, is plainly this: Some things are in their own nature good and reasonable, and fit to be done; such as keeping faith, and performing equitable compacts, and the like; and these receive not their obligatory power from any law or authority, but are only declared, confirmed, and enforced by penalties upon such as would not perhaps be governed by right reason only. Other things are in their own nature absolutely evil; such as breaking faith, refusing to perform equitable compacts, cruelly destroying those who have neither directly nor indirectly given any occasion for any such treatment, and the like: And these cannot, by any law or authority whatsoever, be made fit and reasonable, or excusable to be practised. Lastly, other things are in their own nature indifferent; that is, (not absolutely and strictly so; as such trivial actions, which have no way any tendency at all either to the public welfare or damage; for, concerning such things, it would be childish and trifling to suppose any laws to be made at all; but they are) such things, whose tendency to the public benefit or disadvantage is either so small or so remote, or so obscure and involved, that the generality of people are not able of themselves to discern on which side they ought to act; and these things are made obligatory by the authority of laws, though perhaps every one cannot distinctly perceive the reason and fitness of their being enjoined; of which sort are many particular penal laws in several countries and

nations. But to proceed:

The An answer to the objection drawn from the variety of the opinions of learned men, and the laws of different nations concerning right and wrong. principal thing that can, with any colour of reason, seem to countenance the opinion of those who deny the natural and eternal difference of good and evil, (for Mr. Hobbes's false reasonings I shall hereafter consider by themselves,) is the difficulty there may sometimes be, to define exactly the bounds of right and wrong, the variety [116] of opinions that have obtained even among understanding and learned men concerning certain questions of just and unjust, especially in political matters, and the many contrary laws that have been made in divers ages and in different countries concerning these matters. But as, in painting, two very different colours, by diluting each other very slowly and gradually, may, from the highest intenseness in either extreme, terminate in the midst insensibly, and so run one into the other, that it shall not be possible even for a skilful eye to determine exactly where the one ends and the other begins; and yet the colours may really differ as much as can be, not in degree only, but entirely in kind, as red and blue, or white and black; so, though it may perhaps be very difficult, in some nice and perplexed cases, (which yet are very far from occurring frequently,) to define exactly the bounds of right and wrong, just and unjust, and there may be some latitude in the judgment of different men and the laws of divers nations; yet right and wrong are nevertheless in themselves totally and essentially different; even altogether as much as white and black, light and darkness. The Spartan law, perhaps, which [117] permitted their youth to steal, may, as absurd as it was, bear much dispute whether it was absolutely unjust or no, because every man having an absolute right in his own goods, it may seem that the members of any

society may agree to transfer or alter their own properties upon what conditions they shall think fit; but if it could be supposed that a law had been made at Sparta, or at Rome, or in India, or in any other part of the world, whereby it had been commanded or allowed, that every man might rob by violence, and murder whomsoever he met with, or that no faith should be kept with any man, nor any equitable compacts performed, no man, with any tolerable use of his reason, whatever diversity of judgment might be among them in other matters, would have thought that such a law could have authorised or excused, much less have justified such actions, and have made them become good; because, it is plainly not in men's power to make falsehood be truth, though they may alter the property of their goods as they please. Now, if, in flagrant cases, the natural and essential difference between good and evil, right and wrong, cannot but be confessed to be plainly and undeniably evident, the difference between them must be also essential and unalterable in all, even the smallest, and nicest, and most intricate cases, though it be not so easy to be discerned and accurately distinguished; for, if, from the difficulty of determining exactly the bounds of right and wrong in many perplexed cases, it could truly be concluded that just and unjust were not essentially different by nature, but only by positive constitution and custom, it would follow equally, that they were not really, essentially, and unalterably different, even in the most flagrant cases that can be supposed; which is an assertion so very absurd, that Mr. Hobbes himself could hardly vent it without blushing, and discovering plainly, by his shifting expressions, his secret self-condemnation. There are, therefore, certain necessary and eternal differences of things, and certain consequent fitnesses or unfitnesses of the application of different things, or different relations one to another, not depending on any

positive constitutions, but founded unchangeably in the nature and reason of things, and unavoidably arising from the differences of the things themselves; which is the first branch of the general proposition I proposed to prove.

2. That the will of God always determines itself to act according to the eternal reason of things. Now, what these eternal and unalterable relations, respects, or proportions of things, with their consequent agreements or disagreements, fitnesses, or unfitnesses, absolutely and necessarily are in themselves, that also they appear to be, to the understandings of all intelligent beings, except those only who understand things to be what they are not, that is, whose understandings are either very imperfect or very much depraved. And by this understanding or knowledge of the natural and necessary relations, fitnesses, and proportions of things, the wills likewise of all intelligent beings are constantly directed, and must needs be determined to act accordingly, excepting those only who will things to be what they are not and cannot be; that is, whose wills are corrupted by particular interest or affection, or swayed by some unreasonable and prevailing passion. Wherefore, since the natural attributes of God, his infinite knowledge, wisdom, and power, set him infinitely above all possibility of being deceived by any error, or of being influenced by any wrong affection, it is manifest his divine will cannot but always and necessarily determine itself to choose to do what in the whole is absolutely best and fittest to be done; that is, to act constantly according to the eternal rules of infinite goodness, justice, and truth; as I have endeavoured to show distinctly in my former discourse, in deducing severally the moral attributes of God.

3. That all rational creatures are obliged to govern themselves in all their actions, by the same eternal rule of reason. And now that the

same reason of things, with regard to which the will of God always and necessarily does determine itself to act in constant conformity to the eternal rules of justice, equity, goodness, and truth, ought also constantly to determine the wills of all subordinate rational beings, to govern all their actions by the same rules, is very evident. For, as it is absolutely impossible in nature that God should be deceived by any error, or influenced by any wrong affection, so it is very unreasonable and blame-worthy in practice, that any intelligent creatures, whom God has made so far like unto himself, as to indue them with those excellent faculties of reason and will, whereby they are enabled to distinguish good from evil, and to choose the one and refuse the other, should either negligently suffer themselves to be imposed upon and deceived in matters of good and evil, right and wrong, or wilfully and perversely allow themselves to be over-ruled by absurd passions, and corrupt or partial affections, to act contrary to what they know is fit to be done. Which two things, viz. negligent misunderstanding, and wilful passions or lusts, are, as I said, the only causes which can make a reasonable creature act contrary to reason, that is, contrary to the eternal rules of justice, equity, righteousness, and truth: For, was it not for these inexcusable corruptions and depravations, it is impossible but the same proportions and fitnesses of things, which have so much weight, and so much excellency, and beauty in them, that the all-powerful creator and governor of the universe, (who has the absolute and uncontrollable dominion of all things in his own hands, and is accountable to none for what he does, yet) thinks it no diminution of his power to make this reason of things the unalterable rule and law of his own actions in the government of the world, and does nothing by mere will and arbitrariness; it is impossible, (I say,) if it was not for inexcusable

corruption and depravation, but the same eternal reason of things must much more have weight enough to determine constantly the wills and actions of all subordinate, finite, dependent, and accountable beings. Proved from the original nature of things. For originally, and in reality, it is as natural and (morally speaking) necessary, that the will should be determined in every action by the reason of the thing, and the right of the case, as it is natural and (absolutely speaking) necessary, that the understanding should submit to a demonstrated truth; and it is as absurd and blame-worthy, to mistake negligently plain right and wrong, that is, to understand the proportions of things in morality to be what they are not, or wilfully to act contrary to known justice and equity, that is, to will things to be what they are not and cannot be, as it would be absurd and ridiculous for a man, in arithmetical matters, ignorantly to believe that twice two is not equal to four, or wilfully and obstinately to contend, against his own clear knowledge, that the whole is not equal to all its parts. The only difference is, that assent to a plain speculative truth is not in a man's power to withhold; but to act according to the plain right and reason of things, this he may, by the natural liberty of his will, forbear; but the one he ought to do, and it is as much his plain and indispensable duty, as the other he cannot but do, and it is the necessity of his nature to do it: He that will-fully refuses to honour and obey God, from whom he received his being, and to whom he continually owes his preservation, is really guilty of an equal absurdity and inconsistency in practice, as he that in speculation denies the effect to owe any thing to its cause, or the whole to be bigger than its part. He that refuses to deal with all men equitably, and with every man as he desires they should deal with him, is guilty of the very same unreasonableness and contradiction in one case, as he

that in another case should affirm one number or quantity to be equal to another, and yet that other at the same time not to be equal to the first: Lastly, he that acknowledges himself obliged to the practice of certain duties both towards God and towards men, and yet takes no care either to preserve his own being, or at least not to preserve himself in such a state and temper of mind and body, as may best enable him to perform those duties, is altogether as inexcusable and ridiculous as he that in any other matter should affirm one thing at the same time that he denies another, without which the former could not possibly be true; or undertake one thing at the same time that he obstinately omits another, without which the former is by no means practicable: Wherefore all rational creatures, whose wills are not constantly and regularly determined, and their actions governed by right reason and the necessary differences of good and evil, according to the eternal and invariable rules of justice, equity, goodness, and truth, but suffer themselves to be swayed by unaccountable arbitrary humours and rash passions, by lusts, vanity, and pride, by private interest, or present sensual pleasures; these, setting up their own unreasonable self-will in opposition to the nature and reason of things, endeavour (as much as in them lies) to make things be what they are not, and cannot be; which is the highest presumption and greatest insolence, as well as the greatest absurdity imaginable: It is acting contrary to that understanding, reason, and judgment, which God has implanted in their natures, on purpose to enable them to discern the difference between good and evil;--it is attempting to destroy that order by which the universe subsists;--it is offering the highest affront imaginable to the creator of all things, who made things to be what they are, and governs every thing himself according to the laws of their several natures;--in a word, all wilful wickedness and perversion of right is

the very same insolence and absurdity in moral matters, as it would be in natural things for a man to pretend to alter the certain proportions of numbers,--to take away the demonstrable relations and properties of mathematical figures,--to make light darkness, and darkness light,--or to call sweet bitter, and bitter sweet.

Further: And from the sense that all, even wicked men, unavoidably have of their being under such an obligation. As it appears thus, from the abstract and absolute reason and nature of things, that all rational creatures ought, that is, are obliged to take care that their wills and actions be constantly determined and governed by the eternal rule of right and equity: so the certainty and universality of that obligation is plainly confirmed, and the force of it particularly discovered and applied to every man by this; that, in like manner as no one who is instructed in mathematics can forbear giving his assent to every geometrical demonstration, of which he understands the terms, either by his own study, or by having had them explained to him by others; so no man, who either has patience and opportunities to examine and consider things himself, or has the means of being taught and instructed in any tolerable manner by others, concerning the necessary relations and dependencies of things, can avoid giving his assent to the fitness and reasonableness of his governing all his actions by the law or rule before mentioned, even though his practice, through the prevalence of brutish lusts, be most absurdly contradictory to that assent. That is to say, by the reason of his mind, he cannot but be compelled to own and acknowledge that there is really such an obligation indispensably incumbent upon him; even at the same time that in the actions of his life he is endeavouring to throw it off and despise it: For the judgment and conscience of a man's own mind, concerning the reasonableness and fitness of the thing, that his actions should be

conformed to such or such a rule or law, is the truest and formallest obligation, even more properly and strictly so than any opinion whatsoever of the authority of the giver of a law, or any regard he may have to its sanction by rewards and punishments. For whoever acts contrary to this sense and conscience of his own mind, is necessarily self-condemned; and the greatest and strongest of all obligations is that which a man cannot break through without condemning himself. The dread of superior power and authority, and the sanction of rewards and punishments, however, indeed, absolutely necessary to the government of frail and fallible creatures, and truly the most effectual means of keeping them in their duty, is yet really in itself only a secondary and additional obligation or enforcement of the first. The original obligation of all (the ambiguous use of which word, as a term of art, has caused some perplexity and confusion in this matter,) is the eternal reason of things; that reason, which God himself, who has no superior to direct him, and to whose happiness nothing can be added nor any thing diminished from it, yet constantly obliges himself to govern the world by: And the more excellent and perfect (or the freer from corruption and depravation) any creatures are, the more cheerfully and steadily are their wills always determined by this supreme obligation, in conformity to the nature, and in imitation of the most perfect will of God: So far, therefore, as men are conscious of what is right and wrong, so far they are under an obligation to act accordingly; and, consequently, that eternal rule of right which I have been hereto describing, it is evident ought as indispensably to govern men's actions, as it cannot but necessarily determine their assent.

Now that the case is truly thus; that the eternal And from the judgment of mens' consciences upon their own past actions. differences of good and evil, the unalterable rule of right and equity, do necessarily and

unavoidably determine the judgment, and force the assent of all men that use any consideration, is undeniably manifest from the universal experience of mankind; for no man willingly and deliberately transgresses this rule in any great and considerable instance, but he acts contrary to the judgment and reason of his own mind, and secretly reproaches himself for so doing: And no man observes and obeys it steadily, especially in cases of difficulty and temptation, when it interferes with any present interest, pleasure, or passion, but his own mind commends and applauds him for his resolution in executing what his conscience could not forbear giving its assent to, as just and right: And this is what St. Paul means, when he says, (Rom. ii. 14, 15,) that when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves; which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another.

It Of that natural knowledge which Plato thought to be reminiscence. was a very wise observation of Plato, which he received from Socrates, that if you take a young man, impartial and unprejudiced, one that never had any learning, nor any experience in the world, and examine him about the natural relations and proportions of things, [or the moral differences of good and evil,] you may, only by asking him questions, without teaching him any thing at all directly, cause him to express in his answers just and adequate notions of geometrical truths, [and true and exact determinations concerning matters of right and wrong.] From whence he thought it was to be concluded, that all knowledge and learning is nothing but memory, or only a recollecting, upon every new occasion, what had been before known in a state of pre-existence. And some others, both ancients and moderns, have

concluded that the ideas of all first and simple truths, either natural or moral, are innate and originally impressed or stamped upon the mind. In their inference from the observation, the authors of both these opinions seem to be mistaken; but thus much it proves unavoidably,--that the differences, relations, and proportions of things, both natural and moral, in which all unprejudiced minds thus naturally agree, are certain, unalterable, and real in the things themselves, and do not at all depend on the variable opinions, fancies, or imaginations of men prejudiced by education, laws, customs, or evil practices: And also that the mind of man naturally and unavoidably gives its assent, as to natural and geometrical truth, so also to the moral differences of things, and to the fitness and reasonableness of the obligation of the everlasting law of righteousness, whenever fairly and plainly proposed.

Some men, The most profligate men not utterly insensible of the difference of good and evil. indeed, who, by means of a very evil and vicious education, or through a long habit of wickedness and debauchery, have extremely corrupted the principles of their nature, and have long accustomed themselves to bear down their own reason by the force of prejudice, lust, and passion, that they may not be forced to confess themselves self-condemned, will confidently and absolutely contend that they do not really see any natural and necessary difference between what we call right and wrong, just and unjust; that the reason and judgment of their own mind does not tell them they are under any such indispensable obligations as we would endeavour to persuade them; and that they are not sensible they ought to be governed by any other rule than their own will and pleasure. But even these men, the most abandoned of all mankind, however industriously they endeavour to conceal and deny their self-condemnation, yet they cannot avoid

making a discovery of it sometimes when they are not aware of it. For example, there is no man so vile and desperate who commits at any time a murder and robbery, with the most unrelenting mind, but would choose, [118] if such a thing could be proposed to him to obtain all the same profit or advantage, whatsoever it be that he aims at, without committing the crime, rather than with it, even though he was sure to go unpunished for committing the crime. Nay, I believe there is no man even in Mr Hobbes's state of nature, and of Mr Hobbes's own principles, but if he was equally assured of securing his main end, his self-preservation, by either way, would choose to preserve himself rather without destroying all his fellow-creatures, than with it, even supposing all impunity, and all other future conveniences of life, equal in either case. Mr. Hobbes's own scheme, of men's agreeing by compact to preserve one another, can hardly be supposed without this. And this plainly evinces, that the mind of man unavoidably acknowledges a natural and necessary difference between good and evil, antecedent to all arbitrary and positive constitution whatsoever.

But Men's natural sense of eternal moral obligations, proved from the judgment they all pass upon the actions of others. the truth of this, that the mind of man naturally and necessarily assents to the eternal law of righteousness, may still better, and more clearly, and more universally appear, from the judgment that men pass upon each other's actions, than from what we can discern concerning their consciousness of their own. For men may dissemble and conceal from the world the judgment of their own conscience; nay, by a strange partiality, they may even impose upon and deceive themselves, (for who is there that does not sometimes allow himself, nay, and even justify himself in that wherein he condemns another?) But men's judgments concerning the actions of others, especially where they have no relation to

themselves, or repugnance to their interest, are commonly impartial; and from this we may judge what sense men naturally have of the unalterable difference of right and wrong. Now the observation which every one cannot but make in this matter is this; that virtue and true goodness, righteousness and equity, are things so truly noble and excellent, so lovely and venerable in themselves, and do so necessarily approve themselves to the reason and consciences of men, that even those very persons who, by the prevailing power of some interest or lust, are themselves drawn aside out of the paths of virtue, [119] can yet hardly ever forbear to give it its true character and commendation in others. And this observation holds true, not only in the generality of vicious men, but very frequently even in the worst sort of them, viz. those who persecute others for being better than themselves. Thus the officers who were sent by the Pharisees to apprehend our Saviour, could not forbear declaring [120] that he spake as never man spake; and the Roman governor, when he gave sentence that he should be crucified, could not at the same instant forbear openly declaring that he found no fault in him. [121] Even in this case men cannot choose but think well of those persons whom the dominion of their lusts will not suffer them to imitate, or whom their present interest and the necessity of their worldly affairs compels them to discourage. They cannot but desire, that they themselves were the men they are not, and wish, with Balaam, that though they imitate not the life, yet at least they might die the death of the righteous, and that their last end might be like theirs.
And hence it is that Plato judiciously observes, [122] that even the worst of men seldom or never make so wrong judgment concerning persons as they do concerning things, there being in virtue an unaccountable and as it were divine force, which, whatever confusion men endeavour to introduce in things by their vicious discourses and debauched

practices, yet almost always compels them to distinguish right concerning persons, and makes them admire and praise just and equitable, and honest men. On the contrary, vice and injustice, profaneness and debauchery, are things so absolutely odious in their own nature, that however they insinuate themselves into the practice, yet they can never gain over to themselves the judgment of mankind. They who do evil, yet see and approve what is good, and condemn in others what they blindly allow in themselves; nay, and very frequently condemn even themselves also, not without great disorder and uneasiness of mind, in those very things wherein they allow themselves. At least, there is hardly any wicked man, but when his own case is represented to him under the person of another, will freely enough pass sentence against the wickedness he himself is guilty of; and, with sufficient severity, exclaim against all iniquity. This shows abundantly, that all variation from the eternal rule of right is absolutely and in the nature of the thing itself to be abhorred and detested, and that the unprejudiced mind of man as naturally disapproves injustice in moral matters, as in natural things it cannot but dissent from falsehood, or dislike incongruities. Even in reading the histories of past and far distant ages, where it is plain we can have no concern for the events of things, nor prejudices concerning the characters of persons; who is there, that does not praise and admire, nay highly esteem, and in his imagination love (as it were) the equity, justice, truth, and fidelity of some persons, and, with the greatest indignation and hatred, detest the barbarity, injustice, and treachery of others? Nay, further, when the prejudices of corrupt minds lie all on the side of injustice, as when we have obtained some very great profit or advantage through another man's treachery or breach of faith; ye [123] who is there, that, upon that very occasion, does not (even to a proverb,) dislike

the person and the action, how much soever he may rejoice at the event? But when we come ourselves to suffer by iniquity, then where are all the arguments and sophistries by which unjust men, while they are oppressing others, would persuade themselves that they are not sensible of any natural difference between good and evil? When it comes to be these men's own case to be oppressed by violence, or overreached by fraud, where then are all their pleas against the eternal distinction of right and wrong? How, on the contrary, do they then cry out for equity, and exclaim against injustice? How do they then challenge and object against Providence, and think neither God nor man severe enough, in punishing the violators of right and truth? Whereas if there was no natural and eternal difference between just and unjust, no man could have any reason to complain of injury, any other than what laws and compacts made so; which in innumerable cases will be always to be evaded.

An answer to the objection drawn from the total ignorance of some barbarous nations in matters of morality. There is but one thing that I am sensible of, which can here with any colour be objected against what has been hitherto said concerning the necessity of the mind's giving its assent to the eternal law of righteousness; and that is, the total ignorance which some whole nations are reported to lie under of the nature and force of these moral obligations. I am not satisfied the matter of fact is true; but if it was, yet mere ignorance affords no just objection against the certainty of any truth. Were there upon earth a nation of rational and considerate persons, whose notions concerning moral obligations, and concerning the nature and force of them, were universally and directly contrary to what I have hitherto represented, this would be indeed a weighty objection; but ignorance and stupidity are no arguments against the certainty of any thing.

There are many nations and people almost totally ignorant of the plainest mathematical truths; as, of the proportion, for example, of a square to a triangle of the same base and height: And yet these truths are such, to which the mind cannot but give its assent necessarily and unavoidably, as soon as they are distinctly proposed to it. All that this objection proves, therefore, supposing the matter of it to be true, is only this; not, that the mind of man can ever dissent from the rule of right, much less that there is no necessary difference in nature between moral good and evil, any more than it proves that there are no certain and necessary proportions of numbers, lines, or figures; but this it proves only, that men have great need to be taught and instructed in some very plain and easy, as well as certain truths; and if they be important truths, that then men have need also to have them frequently inculcated, and strongly enforced upon them: Which is very true; and is (as shall hereafter be particularly made to appear,) one good argument for the reasonableness of expecting a revelation.

4. Of the principal moral obligations in particular. Thus it appears, in general, that the mind of man cannot avoid giving its assent to the eternal law of righteousness, that is, cannot but acknowledge the reasonableness and fitness of men's governing all their actions by the rule of right or equity; and also that this assent is a formal obligation upon every man, actually and constantly to conform himself to that rule. I might now from hence deduce, in particular, all the several duties of morality or natural religion; but, because this would take up too large a portion of my intended discourse, and may easily be supplied abundantly out of several-late excellent writers, I shall only mention the three great and principal branches from which all the other and smaller instances of duty do naturally flow, or may without difficulty be derived.

First, Of piety, or men's duty towards God. then; in respect of God, the rule of righteousness is, that we keep up constantly in our minds the highest possible honour, esteem, and veneration for him, which must express itself in proper and respective influences upon all our passions, and in the suitable direction of all our actions;--that we worship and adore him, and him alone, as the only supreme author, preserver, and governor of all things;--that we employ our whole being, and all our powers and faculties in his service, and for his glory, that is, in encouraging the practice of universal righteousness, and promoting the designs of his divine goodness amongst men, in such way and manner as shall at any time appear to be his will we should do it;--and, finally, that, to enable us to do this continually, we pray unto him constantly for whatever we stand in need of, and return him continual and hearty thanks for whatever good things we at any time receive. There is no congruity or proportion in the uniform disposition and correspondent order of any bodies or magnitudes, no fitness or agreement in the application of similar and equal geometrical figures one to another, or in the comparing them one with another, so visible and conspicuous as is the beauty and harmony of the exercise of God's several attributes, meeting with suitable returns of duty and honour from all his rational creatures throughout the universe;--the consideration of his eternity and infinity, his knowledge and his wisdom, necessarily commands our highest admiration;--the sense of his omnipresence forces a perpetual, awful regard towards him;--his supreme authority, as being the creator, preserver, and absolute governor of all things, obliges us to pay him all possible honour and veneration, adoration, and worship, and his unity requires that it be paid to him alone;--his power and justice demand our fear;--his mercy and placableness encourage our hope;--his goodness necessarily excites our

love;--his veracity and unchangeableness secure our trust in him;--the sense of our having received our being, and all our powers from him, makes it infinitely reasonable that we should employ our whole being and all our faculties in his service;--the consciousness of our continual dependence upon him both for our preservation and the supply of every thing we want, obliges us to constant prayer;--and every good thing we enjoy, the air we breathe, and the food we eat, the rain from heaven, and the fruitful seasons, all the blessings and comforts of the present time, and the hopes and expectations we have of what is to come, do all demand our heartiest gratitude and thanksgiving to him. [124] The suitableness and proportion, the correspondency and connexion of each of these things respectively, is as plain and conspicuous as the shining of the sun at noon-day; [125] and it is the greatest absurdity and perverseness in the world for creatures, indued with reason, to attempt to break through and transgress this necessary order and dependency of things: All inanimate and all irrational beings, by the necessity of their nature, constantly obey the laws of their creation, and tend regularly to the ends for which they were appointed; how monstrous then is it that reasonable creatures, merely because they are not necessitated, should abuse that glorious privilege of liberty by which they are exalted in dignity above the rest of God's creation, to make themselves the alone unreasonable and disorderly part of the universe!--that a tree planted in a fruitful soil, and watered continually with the dew of heaven, and cherished constantly with the kindly warmth and benign influence of the sunbeams, should yet never bring forth either leaves or fruit, is in no degree so irregular, and contrary to nature, as that a rational being, created after the image of God, and conscious of God's doing every thing for him that becomes the relation of an infinitely good and bountiful Creator to his

creatures, should yet never on his part make any return of those duties which arise necessarily from the relation of a creature to his Creator.
Secondly. Of righteousness or the duty of men one towards another. In respect of our fellow-creatures, the rule of righteousness is; that in particular we so deal with every man, as in like circumstances we could reasonably expect he should deal with us, and that in general we endeavour, by an universal benevolence, to promote the welfare and happiness of all men: The former branch of this rule is equity, the latter is love.
Of justice and equity. As to the former, viz. equity; the reason which obliges every man in practice, so to deal always with another as he would reasonably expect that others should in like circumstances deal with him, is the very same as that which forces him, in speculation, to affirm, that if one line or number be equal to another, that other is reciprocally equal to it. Iniquity is the very same in action as falsity or contradiction in theory, and the same cause which makes the one absurd makes the other unreasonable. Whatever relation or proportion one man in any case bears to another, the same that other, when put in like circumstances, bears to him. Whatever I judge reasonable or unreasonable, for another to do for me, that, by the same judgment, I declare reasonable or unreasonable that I in the like case should do for him. And to deny this either in word or action, is as if a man should contend, that though two and three are equal to five, yet five are not equal to two and three. [126] Wherefore, were not men strangely and most unnaturally corrupted by perverse and unaccountably false opinions, and monstrous evil customs and habits, prevailing against the clearest and plainest reason in the world, it would be impossible that universal equity should not be practised by all mankind, and especially among equals, where the proportion of equity is

simple and obvious, and every man's own case is already the same with all others, without any nice comparing or transposing of circumstances. It would be as impossible [127] that a man, contrary to the eternal reason of things, should desire to gain some small profit to himself, by doing violence and damage to his neighbour, as that he should be willing to be deprived of necessaries himself, to satisfy the unreasonable covetousness or ambition of another. In a word, it would be impossible for men not to be as much ashamed of doing iniquity, as they are of believing contradictions. In considering indeed the duties of superiors in various relations, the proportion of equity is somewhat more complex, but still it may always be deduced from the same rule of doing as we would be done by, if careful regard be had at the same time to the difference of relation; that is, if, in considering what is fit for you to do to another, you always take into the account, not only every circumstance of the action, but also every circumstance wherein the person differs from you, and in judging what you would desire that another, if your circumstances were transposed, should do to you, you always consider not what any unreasonable passion or private interest would prompt you, but what impartial reason would dictate to you to desire. For example, a magistrate, in order to deal equitably with a criminal, is not to consider what fear or self-love would cause him in the criminal's case to desire, but what reason and the public good would oblige him to acknowledge was fit and just for him to expect. And the same proportion is to be observed in deducing the duties of parents and children, of masters and servants, of governors and subjects, of citizens and foreigners, in what manner every person is obliged, by the rule of equity, to behave himself in each of these and all other relations. In the regular and uniform practice of all which duties among all mankind, in their several and respective relations, through

the whole earth, consists that universal justice which is the top and perfection of all virtues: which, if, as Plato says, [128] it could be represented visibly to mortal eyes, would raise in us an inexpressible love and admiration of it; which would introduce into the world such a glorious and happy state as the ancient poets have attempted to describe in their fiction of a golden age; which in itself is so truly beautiful and lovely, that, as Aristotle [129] elegantly expresses it, the motions of the heavenly bodies are not so admirably regular and harmonious, nor the brightness of the sun and stars so ornamental to the visible fabric of the world, as the universal practice of this illustrious virtue would be conducive to the glory and advantage of the rational part of this lower creation; which, lastly, is so truly noble and excellent in its own nature, that the wisest and most considering men have always declared, [130] that neither life itself, nor [131] all other possible enjoyments in the world, put together, are of any value or esteem in comparison of, or in competition with, that right temper and disposition of mind from which flows the practice of this universal justice and equity. On the contrary, injustice and iniquity, violence, fraud, and oppression, the universal confusion of right and wrong, and the general neglect and contempt of all the duties arising from men's several relations one to another, is the greatest and most unnatural corruption of God's creation that it is possible for depraved and rebellious creatures to introduce: As they themselves who practise iniquity most, and are most desirous to defend it, yet whenever it comes to be their own turn to suffer by it, are not very backward to acknowledge. To comprise this matter, therefore, in one word; what the sun's forsaking that equal course, which now, by diffusing gentle warmth and light, cherishes and invigorates every thing in a due proportion through the whole system, and on the contrary, his burning

up, by an irregular and disorderly motion, some of the orbs with insupportable heat, and leaving others to perish in extreme cold and darkness; what this, I say, would be to the natural world, that very same thing, injustice, and tyranny, iniquity, and all wickedness, is to the moral and rational part of the creation. The only difference is this; that the one is an obstinate and wilful corruption, and most perverse depravation of creatures made after the image of God, and a violating the eternal and unalterable law or reason of things, which is of the utmost importance; whereas the other would be only a revolution or change, of the arbitrary and temporary frame of nature.

Of universal mutual benevolence. The second branch of the rule of righteousness, with respect to our fellow-creatures, I said, was universal love or benevolence; that is, not only the doing barely what is just and right in our dealings with every man, but also a constant endeavouring to promote, in general, to the utmost of our power, the welfare and happiness of all men. The obligation to which duty, also, may easily be deduced from what has been already laid down. For if (as has been before proved) there be a natural and necessary difference between good and evil, and that which is good is fit and reasonable, and that which is evil is unreasonable to be done; and that which is the greatest good, is always the most fit and reasonable to be chosen: Then, as the goodness of God extends itself universally over all his works through the whole creation, by doing always what is absolutely best in the whole; so every rational creature ought, in its sphere and station, according to its respective powers and faculties, to do all the good it can to all its fellow-creatures. To which end, universal love and benevolence is as plainly the most direct, certain, and effectual means, as [132] in mathematics the flowing of a point is to produce a line, or, in arithmetic, the addition of numbers to produce a

sum; or in physics, certain kind of motions to preserve certain bodies, which other kinds of motions tend to corrupt. Of all which, the mind of man is so naturally sensible, that, except in such men whose affections are prodigiously corrupted by most unnatural and habitual vicious practices, there is no duty whatsoever, the performance whereof affords a man so ample pleasure [133] and satisfaction, and fills his mind with so comfortable a sense of his having done the greatest good he was capable to do, of his having best answered the ends of his creation, and nearliest imitated the perfections of his Creator, and consequently of his having fully complied with the highest and principal obligations of his nature; as the performance of this one duty, of universal love and benevolence, naturally affords. But further; the obligation to this great duty may also otherwise be deduced from the nature of man, in the following manner. Next to that natural self-love, or care of his own preservation, which every one necessarily has in the first place for himself, there is in all men a certain natural affection for their children and posterity, who have a dependence upon them; and for their near relations and friends, who have an intimacy with them. And because the nature of man is such, that they cannot live comfortably in independent families, without still further society and commerce with each other; therefore they naturally desire to increase their dependences, by multiplying affinities, and to enlarge their friendships by mutual good offices, and to establish societies by a communication of arts and labour, till, [134] by degrees, the affection of single persons becomes a friendship of families, and this enlarges itself to society of towns, and cities, and nations, and terminates in the agreeing community of all mankind: The foundation, preservation, and perfection of which universal friendship or society is mutual love and benevolence. And nothing hinders the world from being actually put

into so happy a state but perverse iniquity, and unreasonable want of mutual charity. Wherefore, since men are plainly so constituted by nature, that they stand in need of each other's assistance to make themselves easy in the world, and are fitted to live in communities, and society is absolutely necessary for them, and mutual love and benevolence is the only possible means to establish this society in any tolerable and durable manner; and in this respect [135] all men stand upon the same level, and have the same natural wants and desires, and are in the same need of each other's help, and are equally capable of enjoying the benefit and advantage of society, it is evident every man is bound by the law of his nature, and as he is also prompted by the [136] inclination of his uncorrupted affections, to [137] look upon himself as a part and member of that one universal body or community which is made up of all mankind, to think himself [138] born to promote the public good and welfare of all his fellow-creatures, and consequently obliged, as the necessary and only effectual means to that end, to [139] embrace them all with universal love and benevolence, so that he cannot, [140] without acting contrary to the reason of his own mind, and transgressing the plain and known law of his being, do willingly any hurt and mischief to any man, no, not even to those who have first injured him, [141] but ought, for the public benefit, to endeavour to appease with gentleness rather than exasperate with retaliations; and finally, to comprehend all in one word, (which is the top and complete perfection of this great duty,) ought to [142] love all others as himself. This is the argumentation of that great master Cicero, whose knowledge and understanding of the true state of things, and of the original obligations of human nature, was as much greater than Mr. Hobbes's as his helps and advantages to attain that knowledge were less.

Thirdly. Of sobriety, or men's duty towards themselves; and of the unlawfulness of self-murder. With respect to ourselves, the rule of righteousness is; that every man preserve his own being, as long as he is able, and take care to keep himself at all times in such temper and disposition both of body and mind, as may best fit and enable him to perform his duty in all other instances. That is; he ought to bridle his appetites, with temperance; to govern his passions, with moderation; and to apply himself to the business of his present station in the world, whatsoever it be, with attention and contentment. That every man ought to preserve his own being as long as he is able, is evident; because what he is not himself the author and giver of, he can never of himself have just power or authority to take away. He that sent us into the world, and alone knows for how long time he appointed us our station here, and when we have finished all the business he intended we should do, can alone judge when it is fit for us to be taken hence, and has alone authority to dismiss and discharge us. This reasoning has been admirably applied by Plato, Cicero, and others of the best philosophers. So that though the stoics of old, and the deists of late, have, in their ranting discourses, and some few of them in their rash practice, contradicted it, yet they have never been able, with any colour of reason, to answer or evade the force of the argument; which, indeed, to speak the truth, has been urged by the fore-mentioned philosophers with such singular beauty, as well as invincible strength, that it seems not capable of having any thing added to it. Wherefore I shall give it you, only in some of their own words. We men, (says [143] Plato, in the person of Socrates,) are all, by the appointment of God, in a certain prison or custody, which we ought not to break out of, and run away. We are as servants, or as cattle, in the hand of God. And would not any of us, saith he, if one

of our servants should, contrary to our direction, and to escape out of our service, kill himself, think that we had just reason to be very angry, and if it was in our power, punish him for it? So likewise Cicero; God, says he, [144] the supreme governor of all things, forbids us to depart hence without his order: and though, when the divine providence does itself offer us a just occasion of leaving this world, (as when a man chooses to suffer death rather than commit wickedness,) a wise man will then indeed depart joyfully, as out of a place of sorrow and darkness into light; yet he will not be in such haste as to break his prison contrary to law; but will go when God calls him, as a prisoner when dismissed by the magistrate or lawful power. Again: that short remainder of life, saith he, [145] which old men have a prospect of, they ought neither too eagerly to desire, nor yet on the contrary unreasonably and discontentedly deprive themselves of it: for, as Pythagoras teaches, it is as unlawful for a man, without the command of God, to remove himself out of the world, as for a soldier to leave his post without his general's order. And in another place: unless that God, saith he, [146] whose temple and palace this whole world is, discharges you himself out of the prison of the body, you can never be received to his favour. Wherefore you, and all pious men, ought to have patience to continue in the body, as long as God shall please, who sent us hither; and not force yourselves out of the world, before he calls for you, lest you be found deserters of the station appointed you of God. And to mention no more,--that excellent author, Arrian: wait, saith he, [147] the good pleasure of God: when he signifies it to be his will that you should be discharged from this service, then depart willingly; but, in the meantime, have patience, and tarry in the place where he has appointed you: wait, and do not hurry yourselves away wilfully and unreasonably. The objections, which the author of the

defence of self-murder, prefixed to the Oracles of Reason, has attempted to advance against this argument, are so very weak and childish that it is evident he could not, at the time he wrote them, believe in earnest that there was any force in them; as when he says, that the reason why it is not lawful for a centinel to leave his station without his commander's order, is because he entered into the service by his own consent; as if God had not a just power to lay any commands upon his creatures without their own consent: Or when he says, that there are many lawful ways to seek death in; as if, because a man may lawfully venture his life in many public services, therefore it was lawful for him directly to throw it away upon any foolish discontent. But the author of that discourse has since been so just as to confess his folly, and retract it publicly himself. Wherefore, to proceed. For the same reason that a man is obliged to preserve his own being at all, he is bound likewise to preserve himself, as far as he is able, in the right use of all his faculties: that is, to keep himself constantly in such temper, both of body and mind, by regulating his appetites and passions, as may best fit and enable him to perform his duty in all other instances, For, as it matters not whether a soldier deserts his post, or by drunkenness renders himself incapable of performing his duty in it; so for a man to disable himself, by any intemperance or passion, from performing the necessary duties of life, is, at least for that time, the same thing as depriving himself of life. And neither is this all. For great intemperance and ungoverned passions not only incapacitate a man to perform his duty, but also expose him to run headlong into the commission of the greatest enormities: there being no violence or injustice whatsoever, which a man, who has deprived himself of his reason by intemperance or passion, is not capable of being tempted to commit. So that all the additional obligations which a man

is any way under, to forbear committing the most flagrant crimes, lie equally upon him to govern his passions and restrain his appetites: without doing which, he can never secure himself effectually from being betrayed into the commission of all iniquity. This is indeed the great difficulty of life, to subdue and conquer our unreasonable appetites and passions. But it is absolutely neccessary to be done: And it is [148] moreover the bravest and most glorious conquest in the world.

Lastly: For the same reason that a man is obliged not to depart wilfully out of this life, which is the general station that God has appointed him, he is obliged likewise to attend the duties of that particular station or condition of life, whatsoever it be, wherein providence has at present placed him, with diligence, and contentment: Without being either uneasy and discontented, that others are placed by providence in different and superior stations in the world; or so extremely and unreasonably solicititous to change his state for the future, as thereby to neglect his present duty,

The law of nature eternal, universal, and absolutely unchangeable. From these three great and general branches, all the smaller and more particular instances of moral obligations may (as I said) easily be deduced.

5. And now this, (this eternal rule of equity, which I have been hitherto discribing,) is that right reason which makes the principal distinction between man and beasts. This is the law of nature, which (as Cicero excellently expresses it) is [149] of universal extent, and everlasting duration, which can neither be wholly abrogated, nor repealed in any part of it, nor have any law made contrary to it, nor be dispensed with by any authority; which [150] was in force before ever any law was writen, or the foundation of any city or commonwealth was laid; which [151] was not invented by the wit of man, nor

established by the authority of any people, but its obligation was from eternity, and the force of it reaches throughout the universe; which, being founded in the nature and resaon of things, did not then begin to be a law, when it was first writen and enacted by men, but is of the same original with the eternal reasons or proportions of things, and the perfections or attributes of God himself, so [152] that if there was no law at Rome against rapes at that time when Tarquin offered violence to Lucretia, it does not therefore follow that he was at all the more excusable, or that his sin against the eternal rule of equity was the less heinous. This is that law of nature to which the reason of all men, [153] everywhere as naturally and necessarily assents, as all animals conspire in the pulse and motion of their heart and arteries, or as all men agree in their judgment concerning the whiteness of snow or the brightness of the sun. For though in some nice cases, the bounds of right and wrong may indeed (as was before observed,) be somewhat difficult to determine; and in some few even plainer cases, the laws and customs of certain barbarous nations may be contrary one to another, (which some have been so weak as to think a just objection against there being any natural difference between good and evil at all,) yet in reality this [154] no more disproves the natural assent of all men's unprejudiced reason to the rule of right and equity than the difference of men's countenances in general, or the deformity of some few monsters in particular, proves that there is no general likeness or uniformity in the bodies of men. For, whatever difference there may be in some particular laws, it is certain, as to the main and principal branches of morality, there never was any nation upon earth but owned that to love and honour God, to be grateful to benefactors, to perform equitable compacts, to preserve the lives of innocent and harmless men, and the like, were things fitter and better to be practised than the

contrary. In fine, this is the law of nature, which, being founded in the eternal reason of things, is as absolutely unalterable, as natural good and evil, as mathematical, or arithmetical truths, [155] as light and darkness, as sweet and bitter, as pleasure and pain: The observance of which, [156] though no man should commend it, would yet be truly commendable in itself. Which to suppose depending on the opinions of men, and the customs of nations, that is to suppose that what shall be accounted the virtue of a man depends merely on imagination or customs to determine, is [157] as absurd as it would be to affirm that the fruitfulness of a tree, or the strength of a horse, depends merely on the imagination of those who judge of it. In a word, it is that law, which if it had its original from the authority of men, and could be changed by it, then [158] all the commands of the cruellest and most barbarous tyrants in the world would be as just and equitable as the wisest laws that ever were made, and [159] to murder men without distinction, to confound the rights of all families by the grossest forgeries, to rob with unrestrained violence, to break faith continually, and defraud and cheat without reluctance, might, by the decrees and ordinances of a mad assembly, be made lawful and honest: In which matters, if any man thinks that the votes and suffrages of fools have such power as to be able to change the nature of things, why do they not likewise decree (as Cicero admirably expresses himself) that poisonous things may become wholsome, and that any other thing which is now destructive of mankind may become preservative of it.

6. Eternal moral obligations antecedent in some respect even to this consideration, of their being the will and command of God himself.

Further yet: As this law of nature is infinitely superior to all authority of men, and independent upon it, so its obligation, primarily and originally, is antecedent also even to this consideration, [160] of

its being the positive will or command of God himself: For, [161] as the addition of certain numbers necessarily produces a certain sum, and certain geometrical or mechanical operations give a constant and unalterable solution of certain problems or propositions; so in moral matters there are certain necessary and unalterable respects or relations of things which have not their original from arbitrary and positive constitution, but are of eternal necessity in their own nature. For example; [162] as, in matters of sense, the reason why a thing is visible is not because it is seen, but it is therefore seen because it is visible; so in matters of natural reason and morality, that which is holy and good (as creatures depending upon and worshiping God, and practising justice and equity in their dealings with each other, and the like,) is not therefore holy and good, because it is commanded to be done, but is therefore commanded of God, because it is holy and good. The existence, indeed, of the things themselves, whose proportions and relations we consider, depends entirely on the mere arbitrary will and good pleasure of God; who can create things when he pleases, and destroy them again whenever he thinks fit. But when things are created, and so long as it pleases God to continue them in being, their proportions, which are abstractly of eternal necessity, are also in the things themselves absolutely unalterable. Hence God himself, though he has no superior from whose will to receive any law of his actions, yet disdains not to observe the rule of equity and goodness, as [163] the law of all his actions in the government of the world, and condescends to appeal even to men for Ezekiel xviii. the equity and righteousness of his judgments. To this law, the infinite perfections of his divine nature make it necessary for him (as has been before proved,) to have constant regard, and (as a learned prelate of our own has excellently shown, [164]) not barely his infinite power, but the

rules of this eternal law are the true foundation and the measure of his dominion over his creatures. (For, if infinite power was the rule and measure of right, it is evident that goodness and mercy, and all other divine perfections, would be empty words without any signification at all.) Now, for the same reason that God, who hath no superior to determine him, yet constantly directs all his own actions by the eternal rule of justice and goodness; it is evident all intelligent creatures, in their several spheres and proportions, ought to obey the same rule according to the law of their nature, even though it could be supposed separate from that additional obligation of its being the positive will and command of God; and, doubtless there have been many men in all ages, in many parts of the heathen world, who, not having philosophy enough to collect from mere nature any tolerably just and explicit apprehensions concerning the attributes of God, much less having been able to deduce from thence any clear and certain knowledge of his will, have yet had a very great sense of right and truth, and been fully persuaded in their own minds of many unalterable obligations of morality: But this speculation, though necessary to be taken notice of in the distinct order and method of discourse, is in itself too dry, and of less use to us, who are abundantly assured that all moral obligations are, moreover, the plain and declared will of God, as shall be shown particularly in its proper place.

7. The law of nature obligatory, antecedent to all consideration of particular rewards and punishments. Lastly, This law of nature has its full obligatory power, antecedent to all consideration of any particular private and personal reward or punishment, annexed, either by natural consequence or by positive appointment, to the observance or neglect of it. This also is very evident; because if good and evil, right and wrong, fitness and unfitness of being practised, be (as has

been shown) originally, eternally, and necessarily, in the nature of the things themselves, it is plain that the view of particular rewards or punishments, which is only an after-consideration, and does not at all alter the nature of things, cannot be the original cause of the obligation of the law, but is only an additional weight to enforce the practice of what men were before obliged to by right reason: There is no man, who has any just sense of the difference between good and evil, but must needs acknowledge that virtue and goodness are truly amiable, [165] and to be chosen for their own sakes and intrinsic worth, though a man had no prospect of gaining any particular advantage to himself, by the practice of them; and that, on the contrary, cruelty, violence, and oppression, fraud, injustice, and all manner of wickedness, are of themselves hateful, and by all means to be be avoided; even though a man had absolute assurance that he should bring no manner of inconvenience upon himself by the commission of any or all of these crimes. [166] This likewise is excellently and admirably expressed by Cicero: [167] Virtue, saith he, is that which, though no profit or advantage whatsoever was to be expected to a man's self from the practice of it, yet must, without all controversy, be acknowledged to be truly desirable for its own sake alone. And, accordingly, [168] all good men love right and equity, and do many things without any prospect of advantage at all, merely because they are just and right and fit to be done: On the contrary, vice is so odious in its own nature, and so fit to be avoided, even though no punishment was to ensue, that no man, [169] who has made any tolerable proficiency in moral philosophy, can in the least doubt, but, if he was sure the thing could be for ever concealed entirely both from God and men, so that there should not be the least suspicion of its being ever discovered, yet he ought not to do any thing unjustly, covetously, wilfully, passionately,

licentiously, or any way wickedly, Nay, [170] if a good man had it in his power to gain all his neighbour's wealth by the least motion of his finger, and was sure it would never be at all suspected either by God or man, unquestionably he would think he ought not to do it; and whoever wonders at this, has no notion what it is to be really a good man: [171] Not that any such thing is possible in nature, that any wickedness can be indeed concealed from God, but only, upon such a supposition, the natural and necessary difference between justice and injustice is made to more clearly and undeniably.

Thus far is clear. Yet it does not from thence at all follow, either that a good man ought to have no respect to rewards and punishments, or that rewards and punishments are not absolutely necessary to maintain the practice of virtue in this present world. But now from hence it does not at all follow, either that a good man ought to have no respect to rewards and punishments, or that rewards and punishments are not absolutely necessary to maintain the practice of virtue and righteousness in this present world. It is certain, indeed, that virtue and vice are eternally and necessarily different; and that the one truly deserves to be chosen for its own sake, and the other ought by all means to be avoided, though a man was sure, for his own particular, neither to gain nor lose any thing by the practice of either. And if this was truly the state of things in the world, certainly that man must have a very corrupt mind, indeed, who could in the least doubt, or so much as once deliberate with himself, which he would choose. But the case does not stand thus. The question now in the general practice of the world, supposing all expectation of rewards and punishments set aside, will not be, whether a man would choose virtue for its own sake, and avoid vice; but the practice of vice is accompanied with great temptations and allurements of pleasure and profit; and the practice of

virtue is often threatened with great calamities, losses, and sometimes even with death itself. And this alters the question, and destroys the practice of that which appears so reasonable in the whole speculation, and introduces a necessity of rewards and punishments. For though virtue is unquestionably worthy to be chosen for its own sake, even without any expectation of reward, yet it does not follow that it is therefore entirely self-sufficient, and able to support a man under all kinds of sufferings, and even death itself, for its sake, without any prospect of future recompense. Here, therefore, began the error of the Stoics, who taught that the bare practice of virtue was itself the chief good, and able of itself to make a man happy, under all the calamities in the world. Their defence indeed of the cause of virtue was very brave: they saw well that its excellency was intrinsic, and founded in the nature of things themselves, and could not be altered by any outward circumstances; that therefore virtue must needs be desirable for its own sake, and not merely for the advantage it might bring along with it; and if so, then consequently neither could any external disadvantage, which it might happen to be attended with, change the intrinsic worth of the thing itself, or ever make it cease to be truly desirable. Wherefore, in the case of sufferings and death, for the sake of virtue; not having any certain knowledge of a future state of reward, (though the wisest of them did indeed hope for it, and think it highly probable;) they were forced, that they might be consistent with their own principles, to suppose the practice of virtue a sufficient reward to itself in all cases, and a full compensation for all the sufferings in the world. And accordingly they very bravely indeed taught, that the practice of virtue was not only [172] infinitely to be preferred before all the sinful pleasures in the world; but also [173] that a man ought without scruple to choose, if

the case was proposed to him, rather to undergo all possible sufferings with virtue, than to obtain all possible worldly happiness by sin. And the suitable practice of some few of them, as of Regulus, for instance, who chose to die the cruelest death that could be invented, rather than break his faith with an enemy, is indeed very wonderful, and to be admired. But yet, after all this, it is plain that the general practice of virtue in the world can never be supported upon this foot. The discourse is admirable, but it seldom goes further than mere words: And the practice of those few who have acted accordingly, has not been imitated by the rest of the world. Men never will generally, and indeed it is not very reasonable to be expected they should, part with all the comforts of life, and even life itself, without expectation of any future recompense. So that, if we suppose no future state of rewards, it will follow, that God has indued men with such faculties, as put them under a necessity of approving and choosing virtue in the judgment of their own minds; and yet has not given them wherewith to support themselves in the suitable and constant practice of it. The consideration of which inexplicable difficulty ought to have led the philosophers to a firm belief and expectation of a future state of rewards and punishments, without which their whole scheme of morality cannot be supported. And because a thing of such necessity and importance to mankind was not more clearly and directly and universally made known, it might naturally have led them to some farther consequences also, which I shall have occasion particularly to deduce hereafter.

Thus have I endeavoured to deduce the original obligations of morality from the necessary and eternal reason and proportions of things. Some have chosen to found [174] all difference of good and evil, in the mere positive will and power of God: But the absurdity of this, I have shown

elsewhere. Others have contended, that all difference of good and evil, and all obligations of morality, ought to be founded originally upon considerations of public utility. And true indeed it is, in the whole, that the good of the universal creation does always coincide with the necessary truth and reason of things. But otherwise, (and separate from this consideration, that God will certainly cause truth and right to terminate in happiness,) what is for the good of the whole creation, in very many cases, none but an infinite understanding can possibly judge. Public utility is one thing to one nation, and the contrary to another: And the governors of every nation will and must be judges of the public good: And by public good they will generally mean the private good of that particular nation. But truth and right (whether public or private) founded in the eternal and necessary reason of things, is what every man can judge of, when laid before him. It is necessarily one and the same, to every man's understanding, just as light is the same to every man's eyes.

He who thinks it right and just, upon account of public utility, to break faith (suppose) with a robber, let him consider that it is much more useful to do the same by a multitude of robbers, by tyrants, by a nation of robbers: And then all faith is evidently at an end. For, mutato nomine de te, &c. What fidelity and truth are, is understood by every man; but between two nations at war, who shall be judge which of them are the robbers? Besides: To rob a man of truth and of eternal happiness, is worse than robbing him of his money and of his temporal happiness: And therefore it will be said that heretics may even more justly, and with much greater utility to the public, be deceived and destroyed by breach of truth and faith, than the most cruel robbers. Where does this terminate?

The manifold absurdities of Mr Hobbes's doctrines concerning the

original of right shown in particular. And now, from what has been said upon this head, it is easy to see the falsity and weakness of Mr Hobbes's doctrines, that there is no such thing as just and unjust, right and wrong, originally in the nature of things; that men in their natural state, antecedent to all compacts, are not obliged to universal benevolence, nor to any moral duty whatsoever; but are in a state of war, and have every one a right to do whatever he has power to do; and that, in civil societies, it depends wholly upon positive laws or the will of governors to define what shall be just or unjust. The contrary to all which having been already fully demonstrated, there is no need of being large, in further disproving and confuting, particularly, these assertions themselves. I shall therefore only mention a few observations, from which some of the greatest and most obvious absurdities of the chief principles, upon which Mr Hobbes builds his whole doctrine in this matter, may most easily appear.

1. First, then, the ground and foundation of Mr Hobbes's scheme, is this, [175] that all men being equal by nature, and naturally desiring the same things, have [176] every one a right to every thing, are every one desirous to have absolute dominion over all others; and may every one justly do whatever at any time is in his power, by violently taking from others either their possessions or lives, to gain to himself that absolute dominion. Now this is exactly the same thing as if a man should affirm that a part is equal to the whole, or that one body can be present in a thousand places at once. For to say that one man has a full right to the same individual things, which another man at the same time has a full right to, is saying that two rights may be [177] contradictory to each other; that is, that a thing may be right, at the same time that it is confessed to be wrong. For instance; if every man has a right to preserve his own life, then [178] it is manifest I can

have no right to take any man's life away from him, unless he has first forfeited his own right, by attempting to deprive me of mine. For otherwise, it might be right for me to do that which, at the same time, because it could not be done but in breach of another man's right, it could not be right for me to do; which is the greatest absurdity in the world. The true state of this case, therefore, is plainly this. In Mr Hobbes's state of nature and equality, every man having an equal right to preserve his own life, it is evident every man has a right to an equal proportion of all those things which are either necessary or useful to life. And consequently, so far is it from being true, that any one has an original right to possess all, that, on the contrary, whoever first attempts, without the consent of his fellows, and except it be for some public benefit, to take to himself more than his proportion, is the beginner of iniquity, and the author of all succeeding mischief.

2. To avoid this absurdity, therefore, Mr Hobbes is forced to assert, in the next place, that since every man has confessedly a right to preserve his own life, and consequently to do every thing that is necessary to preserve it, and since, in the state of nature, men will necessarily have [179] perpetual jealousies and suspicions of each other's encroaching, therefore just precaution gives every one a right to endeavour, [180] for his own security, to prevent, oppress, and destroy all others, either by secret artifice or open violence, as it shall happen at any time to be in his power, as being the only certain means of self-preservation. [181] But this is even a plainer absurdity, if possible, than the former. For (besides that, according to Mr Hobbes's principles, men, before positive compacts, may justly do what mischief they please, even without the pretence of self-preservation,) what can be more ridiculous that to imagine a war of all men against

all, the directest and certainest means of the preservation of all? Yes, says he, because it leads men to a necessity of entering into compact for each other's security. But then to make these compacts obligatory, he is forced (as I shall presently observe more particularly) to recur to an [182] antecedent law of nature, and this destroys all that he had before said. For the same law of nature which obliges men to fidelity, after having made a compact, will unavoidably, upon all the same accounts, be found to oblige them before all compacts, to contentment and mutual benevolence, as the readiest and certainest means to the preservation and happiness of them all. It is true, men, by entering into compacts, and making laws, agree to compel one another to do what perhaps the mere sense of duty, however really obligatory in the highest degree, would not, without such compacts, have force enough of itself to hold them to in practice; and so, compacts must be acknowledged to be in fact a great addition and strengthening of men's security. But this compulsion makes no alteration in the obligation itself, and only shows that that entirely lawless state, which Mr Hobbes calls the state of nature, is by no means truly natural, or in any sense suitable to the nature and faculties of man, but, on the contrary, is a state of extremely unnatural and intolerable corruption, as I shall presently prove more fully from some other considerations.

3. Another notorious absurdity and inconsistency in Mr. Hobbes's scheme, is this: That he all along supposes some particular branches of the law of nature (which he thinks necessary for the foundation of some parts of his own doctrine,) to be originally obligatory from the bare reason of things; at the same time that he denies and takes away innumerable others, which have plainly in the nature and reason of things the same foundation of being obligatory as the former, and

without which the obligation of the former can never be solidly made out and defended. Thus, he supposes that, in the state of nature, before any compact be made, every [183] man's own will is his only law; that [184] nothing a man can do, is unjust: and that [185] whatever mischief one man does to another is no injury nor injustice; neither has the person, to whom the mischief is done, how great soever it be, any just reason to complain of wrong; (I think it may here reasonably be presumed, that if Mr. Hobbes had lived in such a state of nature, and had happened to be himself the suffering party, he would in this case have been of another opinion:) And yet at the same time he supposes, that in the same state of nature men are by all means obliged [186] to seek peace, and [187] to enter into compacts to remedy the fore-mentioned mischiefs. Now if men are obliged, by the original reason and nature of things to seek terms of peace, and to get out of the pretended natural state of war, as soon as they can; how come they not to be obliged originally by the same reason and nature of things, to live from the beginning in universal benevolence, and avoid entering into the state of war at all? He must needs confess they would be obliged to do so, did not self-preservation necessitate them every man to war upon others: But this cannot be true of the first aggressor; whom yet Mr Hobbes, in the place [188] now cited, vindicates from being guilty of any injustice; and therefore herein he unavoidably contradicts himself. Thus, again; in most instances of morality, he supposes right and wrong, just and unjust, to have no foundation in the nature of things, but to depend entirely on positive laws; that [189] the rules or distinctions of good and evil, honest and dishonest, are mere civil constitutions; and whatever the chief magistrate commands, is to be accounted good; whatever he forbids, evil; that it is the law of the land only which makes robbery to be robbery; [190] or adultery

to be adultery; that the commandments, [191] to honour our parents, to do no murder, not to commit adultery, and all the other laws of God and nature, are no further obligatory than the civil power shall think fit to make them so; nay, that where the supreme authority commands men to worship God by an image or idol, in heathen countries, [192] (for in this instance he cautiously excepts Christian ones,) it is lawful, and their duty to do it; and (agreeably, as a natural consequence to all this,) that it is men's positive duty to obey the commands of the civil power in all things, even in things [193] clearly and directly against their conscience; (that is, that it is their positive duty to do that which at the same time they know plainly it is their duty not to do;) [194] keeping up indeed always in their own minds an inward desire to observe the laws of nature and conscience, but not being bound to observe them in their outward actions, except when it is safe so to do; (He might as well have said that human laws and constitutions have [195] power to make light be darkness, and darkness light; to make sweet be bitter, and bitter sweet: And, indeed, as one absurdity will naturally lead a man into another, he does say something very like it; namely, that the [196] civil authority is to judge of all opinions and doctrines whatsoever; to [197] determine questions philosophical, mathematical; and, because indeed the signification of words is arbitrary, even [198] arithmetical ones also; as whether a man shall presume to affirm that two and three make five or not:) And yet at the same time, some particular things, which it would either have been too flagrantly scandalous for him to have made depending upon human laws; as that [199] God is to be loved, honoured, and adored; [200] that a man ought not to murder his parents; and the like: Or else, which were of necessity to be supposed for the foundation of his own scheme; [201] as that compacts ought to be faithfully performed, and [202] obedience

to be duly paid to civil powers: The obligation of these things he is forced to deduce entirely from the internal reason and fitness of the things themselves; [203] antecedent to, independent upon, and unalterable by all human constitutions whatsoever: In which matter he is guilty of the grossest absurdity and inconsistency that can be. For if those greatest and strongest of all our obligations; to love and honour God, for instance, or, to perform compacts faithfully; depend not at all on any human constitution, but must of necessity (to avoid making obligations reciprocally depend on each other in a circle,) be confessed to arise originally from, and be founded in, the eternal reason and unalterable nature and relations of things themselves; and the nature and force of these obligations be sufficiently clear and evident; so that he who dishonours God, [204] or wilfully breaks his faith, [205] is (according to Mr Hobbes's own reasoning) guilty of as great an absurdity in practice, and of as plainly contradicting the right reason of his own mind, as he who in a dispute is reduced to a necessity of asserting something inconsistent with itself; and the original obligation to these duties can from hence only be distinctly deduced: Then, for the same reason, all the other duties likewise of natural religion; such as universal benevolence, justice, equity, and the like, (which I have before proved to receive in like manner their power of obliging from the eternal reason and relations of things,) must needs be obligatory, antecedent to any consideration of positive compact, and unalterably and independently on all human constitutions whatsoever: And consequently Mr Hobbes's whole scheme, (both of a state of nature at first wherein there was no such thing as right or wrong, just or unjust, at all; and of these things depending afterwards, by virtue of compact, wholly and absolutely on the positive and arbitrary determination of the civil power;) falls this way entirely to the

ground, by his having been forced to suppose some particular things obligatory, originally, and in their own nature. On the contrary, if the rules of right and wrong, just and unjust, have none of them any obligatory force in the state of nature, antecedent to positive compact, then, for the same reason, neither will they be of any force after the compact, so as to afford men any certain and real security; (excepting only what may arise from the compulsion of laws, and fear of punishment, which, therefore, it may well be supposed, is all that Mr Hobbes really means at the bottom.) For if there be no obligation of just and right antecedent to the compact, then whence arises the obligation of the compact itself, on which he supposes all other obligations to be founded? If, before any compact was made, it was no injustice for a man to take away the life of his neighbour, not for his own preservation, but merely to satisfy an arbitrary humour [206] or pleasure, and without any reason or provocation at all, how comes it to be an injustice, after he has made a compact, to break and neglect it? Or what is it that makes breaking one's word, to be a greater and more unnatural crime, than killing a man merely for no other reason but because no positive compact has been made to the contrary? So that [207] this way also, Mr Hobbes's whole scheme is entirely destroyed.

4. That state, which Mr Hobbes calls the state of nature, is not in any sense a natural state; but a state of the greatest, most unnatural, and most intolerable corruption that can be imagined. For reason, which is the proper nature of man, can never (as has been before shown) lead men to any thing else than universal love and benevolence; and wars, hatred, and violence, can never arise but from extreme corruption. A man may sometimes, it is true, in his own defence, be necessitated, in compliance with the laws of nature and reason, to make war upon his fellows: But the first aggressors, who, upon Mr Hobbes's principles,

(that all men [208] have a natural will to hurt each other, and that every one in the state of nature has a right [209] to do whatever he has a will to;)--the first aggressors, I say, who, upon these principles, assault and violently spoil as many as they are superior to in strength, without any regard to equity or proportion; these can never, by any colour whatsoever, be excused from having utterly [210] divested themselves of human nature, and having introduced into the world, [211] contrary to all the laws of nature and reason, the greatest calamities, and most unnatural confusion, that mankind, by the highest abuse of their natural powers and faculties, are capable of falling under. Mr Hobbes pretends, indeed, that one of the first and most natural principles of human life [212] is a desire necessarily arising in every man's mind, of having power and dominion over others; and that this naturally impels men to use force and violence to obtain it. But neither is it true, that men, following the dictates of reason and uncorrupted nature, desire disproportionate power and dominion over others; neither, if it was natural to desire such power, would it at all follow that it was agreeable to nature to use violent and hurtful means to obtain it. For since the only natural and good reason to desire power and dominion, (more than what is necessary for every man's self-preservation) is, that the possessor of such power may have a larger compass, and greater abilities, and opportunities of doing good, (as is evident from God's exercise of perfectly absolute power,) it is plain that no man obeying the uncorrupted dictates of nature and reason can desire to increase his power by such destructive and pernicious methods, the prevention of which is the only good reason that makes the power itself truly desirable: All violence, therefore, and war, are plainly the effects, not of natural desires, but of unnatural and extreme corruption; and this Mr Hobbes himself unwarily proves against

himself by those very arguments whereby he endeavours to prove that war and contention is more natural to men than to bees or ants; for his arguments on this head are all drawn from men's using themselves (as the animals he is speaking of cannot do,) to strive about honours and dignities, till the contention grows up into hatred, seditions, and wars; [213] to separate each one his private interest from the public, [214] and value himself highly above others, upon getting and engrossing to himself more than his proportion of the things of life, to find fault with each other's management, [215] and, through self-conceit, being in continual innovation and distractions, to impose one upon another by lies, [216] falsifying, and deceit, calling good evil, and evil good, to grow envious at the prosperity of others, [217] or proud and domineering when themselves are in ease and plenty, and to keep up tolerable peace and agreement among themselves, [218] merely by artificial compacts and the compulsion of laws; all which things are so far from being truly the natural effects and result of men's reason and other faculties, that, on the contrary, they are evidently some of the grossest abuses and most unnatural corruptions thereof, that any one who was arguing on the opposite side of the question could easily have chosen to have instanced in.

5. Lastly; The chief and principal argument, which is one of the main foundations of Mr Hobbes's and his followers' system, namely, that God's irresistible power is the only foundation of his dominion, [219] and the only measure of his right over his creatures; and, consequently, that every other being has just so much right as it has natural power, that is, that it is naturally right for every thing to do whatever it has power to do: [220] This argument, I say, is of all his others the most notoriously false and absurd; as may sufficiently appear, (besides what has been already said of God's other perfections

being as much the measure of his right as his power is, [221]) from this single consideration, suppose the devil, (for when men run into extreme impious assertions, they must be answered with suitable suppositions,) suppose, I say, such a being as we conceive the devil to be, of extreme malice, cruelty, and iniquity, was indued with supreme absolute power, and made use of it only to render the world as miserable as was possible, in the most cruel, arbitrary, and unequal manner that can be imagined; would it not follow undeniably, upon Mr Hobbes's scheme, since dominion is founded on power, and power is the measure of right, and consequently absolute power gives absolute right, that such a government as this would not only be as much of necessity indeed to be submitted to, but also that it would be as just and right, and with as little reason to be complained of, [222] as is the present government of the world in the hands of the ever-blessed and infinitely good God, whose love and goodness and tender mercy appear everywhere over all his works?

Here Mr Hobbes, as an unanswerable argument in defence of his assertion, urges, [223] that the only reason why men are bound to obey God is plainly nothing but weakness or want of power; because, if they themselves were all-powerful, it is manifest they could not be under any obligation to obey; and, consequently, power would give them an undoubted right to do what they pleased. That is to say; if men were not created and dependent beings, it is true they could not indeed be obliged to the proper relative duty of created and dependent beings, viz. to obey the will and command of another in things positive. But from their obligation to the practice of moral virtues, of justice, righteousness, equity, holiness, purity, goodness, beneficence, faithfulness, and truth, from which Mr Hobbes fallaciously, in this argument, and most impiously in his whole scheme, [224] endeavours to

discharge them; from this they could not be discharged by any addition of power whatsoever; because the obligation to these things is not, as the obligation to obey in things of arbitrary and positive constitution, founded only in the weakness, subjection, and dependency of the persons obliged; but also, and chiefly, in the eternal and unchangeable nature and reason of the things themselves: For these things are the law of God himself, not only to his creatures, but also to himself, as being the rule of all his own actions in the government of the world.

I have been the longer upon this head, because moral virtue is the foundation and the sum, the essence and the life, of all true religion; for the security whereof all positive institution was principally designed; for the restoration whereof all revealed religion was ultimately intended; and inconsistent wherewith, or in opposition to which, all doctrines whatsoever, supported by what pretence of reason or authority soever, are as certainly and necessarily false, as God is true.

[111] See Hobbes de Cive, c. 3. § 4.

[112] Ex his sequitur injuriam nemini fieri posse, nisi ei quocum initur pactum. De Cive, c. 3. § 4. where see more to the same purpose.

[113] Manifestum est rationem nullam esse lege prohibendi noxas tales, nisi agnoscant tales actus, etiam antecedenter ad ullam legem, mala esse.--Cumberl. de Leg. Nat. page 194.

[114] Nam stoliditas inveniri quæ inanior potest, quam mala esse nulla contendere, et tanquam malos perdere et condemnare peccantes?--Arnob. advers. Gentes, lib. 2.

[115] Qui autem civium rationem dicunt habendam, externorum negant; dirimunt hi communem generis humani societatem; qua sublata, justitia funditus tollitur.--Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.

[116] Ta de kala kai ta dikaia. peri on he politike skopeitai, tosauten echei diaphoran kai planen oste dokein nomo einai, phusei de me.--Aristot. Ethic. lib. 1. cap. 1.

[117] Kleptein nenomisto tous eleutherous paidas, ho ti tis dunaito.--Plutarch. Apophthegmata Laconica.

[118] Quis est enim, aut quis unquam fuit, aut avaritia tam ardente aut tam effrænatis cupiditatibus, ut eandem illam rem, quam adspici scelere quovis velit, non multis partibus malit ad sese, etiam omni impunitate proposita, sine facinore, quam illo modo pervenire?--Cic. de Finib. lib. 3.

[119] Placet suapte natura, adeoque gratiosa virtus est, ut insitum etiam sit malis probare meliores.--Senec. de Benef. lib. 4.

[120] Joh. vii. 46.

[121] Joh. xviii. 88.

[122] Ou gar hoson ousias aretes apesphalmenoi tunchanousin hoi polloi, tosouton kai tou krinein tous allous hoi poneroi kai achrestos theinn de ti kai eustochon esti kai toisi kakois hoste pampolloi kai ton sphodra kakon, eu tois logois kai dexais diarountai tous ameinous ton anthropon kai tous cheirous.--Plato de Leg. lib. 12.

[123] Quis Pullum Numitorem, Fregellanum Proditorem, quanquam reipublicæ nostræ profuit, non odit?--Cic. de Finib. lib 5.

[124] Quem vero astrorum ordines, quem dierum noctiumque vicissitudines, quem mensium temperatio, quemque ea quæ gignuntur nobis ad fruendum, non gratum esse cogant; hnnc hominem omnino numerare qui decet?--Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.

[125] Ei gar noun eichomen, allo ti edei hemas poiein kai koine kai idia, e umnein to theion, kai euphemein, kai epexerchesthai tas chari9tas; Ouk edei kai skaptontas kai arountas kai esthiontas adein ton humnon ton eis ton theon; Megas ho theos, hoti hemin pareschen

organa tauta di hon ten gen ergasometha; Megas ho theos, hoti cheiras dedoken, &c.--Arrian. lib. 1. cap. 16.

[126] Nihil est unum uni tam simile, tam par, quam omnes inter nosmetipsos sumus. Quod, si depravatio consuetudinum, si opinionum vanitas, non imbecillitatem animorum torqueret, et flecteret quocunque cæpisset; sui nemo ipse tam similis esset, quam omnes sunt omnium;--et coleretur jus æque ab omnibus.--Cic. de Leg. lib. 1.

[127] Hoc exigit ipsa naturæ ratio, quæ est lex divina et humana, cui parere qui velit, nunquam committet ut alienum appetat, et id, quod alteri detraxerit, sibi assumat.--Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.

[128] Deinous gar an pareichen erotas, eiti toiouton eautes enarges eidolon pareicheto, &c.--Plat. in Phæd. Quæ si oculis cerneretur, mirabiles amores, ut ait Plato, excitaret sui.--Cic. de Offic. lib. 1. Oculorum est in nobis sensus acerrimus, quibus sapientiam non cernimus; quà m illa ardentes amores excitaret sui, si videretur!--Id. de fin. l. 2.

[129] Haute men oun he dikaiosune, arete men esti teleia; kai outh' Hesperos outh' Heoos houto thaumaston.--Ethic. lib. 5. c. 3.

[130] Non enim mihi est vita mea utilior, quam animi talis affectio, neminem ut violem commodi mei gratia.--Cic. de Offic. lib. 3. Detrahere aliquid alteri, et hominem hominis incommodo suum augere commodum, magis est contra naturam, quà m mors, quà m paupertas, quà m dolor, quà m cætera quæ possunt aut corpori accidere, aut rebus externis.--Id.

[131] Kai to parapan zen, megiston men kakon, ton xumpanta chronon athanaton onta, kai kektemenon panta ta legomena agatha, plen dikaiosunes te kai aretes apases.--Plato de Leg. lib. 2.

[132] Universaliter autem verum est, quod non certius, fluxus puncti lineam producit aut additio numerorum summam, quam quod benevolentia effectum præstat bonum.--Cumberland. de Leg. Naturæ, page 10. Pari sane

ratione [ac in arithmeticis operationibus] doctrinæ moralis veritas fundatur in immutabili cohærentia inter felicitatem summam quam hominum vires assequi valent, et actus benevolentiæ universalis.--Id ibid. page 23. Eadem est mensura boni malique, quæ mensura est veri falsique in propositionibus pronuntiantibus de efficacia motum ad rerum aliarum conservationem, et corruptionem facientium.--Id. page 30.

[133] Angusta admodum est circa nostra tantummodo commoda, lætitiæ matria; sed eadem erit amplissima, si aliorum omnium felicitas cordi nobis sit. Quippe hæc ad illam eandem habebit proportionem, quam habet immensa beatitudo Dei, totiusque humani generis, ad curtam illam fictæ felicitatis supellectilem, quam uni homini, eique invido et malevolo, fortunæ bona possint suppeditare.--Id. ibid. page 214.

[134] In omni honesto, nihil est tam illustre, nec quod latius pateat, quam conjunctio inter homines hominum, et quasi quædam societas et communicatio utilitatum, et ipsa charitas generis humani; quæ nata a primo satu, quo a procreatoribus nati diliguntur,----serpit sensim foras, cognationibus primum,----deinde totius complexu gentis humanæ.--Cic. de Finib. lib. 5.

[135] Nihil est unum uni tam simile, tam par, quam omnes inter nosmetipsos sumus. Quod nisi depravatio, &c. sui nemo ipse tam similis esset, quam omnes sunt omnium.--Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

[136] Impellimur autem natura, ut prodesse velimus quamplurimis.--Cic. de Finib. lib. 3.

[137] Hominem esse quasi partem quandam civitatis et universi generis humani, eumque esse conjunctum cum hominibus humana quadam societate.--Cic. Quæst. Academ. lib. 1.

[138] Homines hominum causa sunt generati, ut ipsi inter se alii aliis prodesse possint.--Cic. de Offic. lib. 1. Ad tuendos conservandosque homines, hominem natum esse.--Cic. de Finib. lib 3.

[139] Omnes inter se naturali quadam indulgentia et benevolentia contineri.--Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

[140] Ex quo efficitur, hominem naturæ obedientem, homini nocere non posse.--Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.

[141] Oute ?ra antadikein dei, houte kakos poiein oudena anthropon, oud? an hotioun paschheupo auton.--Plato in Critone.

[142] Tum illud effici, quod quibusdam incredibile videatur, sit autem necessarium, ut nihil sese plus quam alterum diligat.--Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

[143] En tine phroura esmen hoi anthropoi, kai ou deide heauton ek tautes luein, oud' apodidraskein.----Theous heinai hemon tous epimeloumenous. kai hemas tous anthropous en tou ktematon tois theois einai.----Oukoun kai su an, tou sautou ktematon eiti auto heauto apoktinnuoi, me semenantos sou hoti boulei auto tethnanai, chalepanoi9s an auto, kai. ei tina echois timorian, timoroi o en. --Plato in Phæd.

[144] Vetat enim dominans ille in nobis Deus, injussu hinc nos suo demigrare. Cum verò causam justam Deus ipse dederit, ne ille medius fidius vir sapiens, lætus ex his tenebris in lucem illam excesserit; nec tamen illa vincula carceris ruperit; leges enim vetant; sed tanquam a magistratu, aut ab aliqua potestate legitima, sic a Deo evocatus, atque emissus, exirit.--Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.

[145] Illud breve vitæ reliquum nec avide appetendum sensibus, nec sine causa deserendum est; vetatque Pythagoras injussu imperatoris, id est, Dei, de præsidio et statione vitæ decedere.--Cic. de Senect.

[146] Nisi enim Deus is, cujus hoc templum est omne quod conspicis, istis te corporis custodiis liberaverit; hue tibi aditus patere non potest.----Quare et tibi et piis omnibus retinendus est animus in custodia corporis; nec injussu ejus, a quo ille est nobis datus, ex hominum vita migrandum est; munus humanum assignatum a Deo defugisse

videamini.--Cic. Somn. Scipion.

[147] Ekdexasthe ton theon; hotan ekei nos semene kai upoluse umas tautes tes uperesias tot' hupoluesthe pros auton; epi de tou parintos anaschesthe enoikountes tauten ten choran, eis hen ekeinos umas etaxen. Meinate, me alogistos apelthete.--Arrian, lib. 1.

[148] Hoi men ara nikes heneka pales kai dromon kai ton toiouton, etolmesan apechesthai.----Hoi de hemeteroi paides, adunatesousi karterein, polu kallionos ena_a nikes.--Plato de Legib. lib. 8.

[149] Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna, quæ vocet ad officium jubendo; vetando, a fraude deterreat.----Huic legi nec abrogari fas est, neque derogari ex hac aliquid licet, neque tota abrogari potest. Nec vero aut per senatum aut per populum solvi hac lege possumus.--Cic. de Repub. lib. 3. fragment.

----agrapta kasphale theon Nomima;----
Ou gar ti nunge kachthes, all' aei pote
Ze tauta, ko?dei; oiden ex hotou' phane.
Touton ego ouk hemellon, andros oudenos
Phronema deisas', en theoi si ten diken
Dusein.--
Sophocl. Antigon. 464.

[150] Lex quæ seculis omnibus ante nata est, quam scripta lex ulla, aut quam omnino civitas constituta.--Cic. de Leg. lib. 1.

[151] Legem neque hominum ingeniis excogitatam, neque scitum aliquod esse populorum, sed æternum quiddami, quod universum mundum regat.--Cic. de Leg. lib. 2.

[152] Nec si, regnante Tarquinio, nulla erat Romæ scripta lex de stupris, idcirco non contra illam legem sempiternam Sextus Tarquinius vim Lucretiæ attulit. Erat enim ratio profecta a rerum natura, et ad

recte faciendum impellens, et a delicto avocans; quæ non tum denique incipit lex esse, cum scripta est, sed tum cum orta esset; orta autem simul est cum mente divina.--Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.

[153] In judicio de bonitate harum rerum, æque omnes ubique convenirunt, ac omnia animalia in motu cordis et arteriarum pulsu, aut omnes homines in opinione de nivis candore et splendore solis.--Cumberland. de Leg. Natura, page 167.

[154] Hoc tamen non magis tollit consensum hominum de generali natura boni, ejusque partibus vel speciebus præcipuis, quam levis vultuum diversitas tollit convenientiam inter homines in communi hominum definitione, aut similitudinem inter eos in partium principalium conformatione et usu. Nulla gens est quæ non sentiat actus Deum diligendi, &c.--nulla gens quæ non sentit gratitudinem erga parentes et benefactores, toti humano generi salutarem esse. Nulla temperamentorum diversitas facit ut quisquam non bonum esse sentiat universis, ut singulorum innocentium vitæ, membra, et libertas conserventur.--Cumberland de Legib. Naturæ, page 166. Neque enim an honorifice de Deo sentiendum sit, neque an sit amandus, timendus, colendus, dubitari potest. Sunt enim hæc religionum, per omnes gentes communia.----Deum eo ipso, quod homines fecerit rationales, hoc illis præcepisse, et cordibus omnium insculpsisse, ne quisquam cuiquam faceret, quod alium sibi facere iniquum duceret.--Hobbes, de Homine, cap. 14. [Inconsistently enough with his own principles.]

[155] Nam ut vera et falsa, ut consequentia et contraria, sua sponte, non aliena, judicantur: sic constans et perpetua ratio vitæ, quæ est virtus; itemque inconstantia, quod est vitium; sua natura probatur.--Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

[156] Quod verè dicimus, etiamsi a nullo laudetur, laudabile esse natura.--Cic. de Offic. lib. 1.

[157] Hæc autem in opinione existimare, non in natura ponere, dementis est. Nam nec arboris nec equi virtus, quæ dicitur, in opinione sita est, sed in natura.--Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

[158] Jam vero stultissimum illud; existimare omnia justa esse, quæ scita sint in populorum institutis aut legibus. Etiamne si quæ sunt tyrannorum leges, si triginta illi Athenis leges imponere voluissent, aut si omnes Athenienses delectarentur tyrannicis legibus, num idcirco hæ leges justæ haberentur?--Cic. de Leg. lib. 1.

[159] Quod si populorum jussis, si principum decretis, si sententiis judicum, jura constituerentur; jus esset latrocinari, jus adulterare, jus testamenta falsa supponere, si hæc suffragiis aut scitis multitudinis probarentur. Quæ si tanta potentia est stultorum sententiis atque jussis, ut eorum suffragiis rerum natura vertatur; cur non sanciunt ut quæ mala perniciosaque sunt, habeantur pro bonis ac salutaribus, aut cur, cum jus ex injuriâ lex facere possit, bonum eadem facere; non possit ex malo?--Id. ibid.

[160] Virtutis et vitiorum, sine ulla divina ratione, grave ipsius conscientiæ pondus est.--Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib 3.

[161] Denique nequis obligationem legum naturalium arbitrariam et mutabilem a nobis fingi suspicetur, hoc adjiciendum censui; virtutum exercitium, habere rationem medii necessarii ad finem, (seposita consideratione imperii divini,) manente rerum natura tali qualis nunc est. Hoc autem ita intelligo, uti agnoscunt plerique omnes, additionem duarum unitatum duabus prius positis, necessario constituere numerum quaternarium; aut, uti praxes geometricæ et mechanicæ, problemata proposita solvunt immutabiliter; adeo ut nec sapientia nec voluntas divina cogitari possit quicquam in contrarium constituere posse.--Cumberland de Legib. Naturæ, page 231.

[162] To horomenon, hou dioti horomenon ge esti, dia toupo horatai;

alla tounantion, dioti horatai, apo touto huromenon. [Note,--These words are by Ficinus ridiculously translated videtur and visum est.] Oukoun kai to hosion, dioti hosion esti, phileitai hupo ton theon; all' ouk hoti phileitas, dia touto hosion esti.--Plato in Euthyphr.

[163] Kath' hemas gar he aute arete esti ton makarion panton; hoste kai he aute arete anthropou kai Theou--Origen. Advers. Celsum. lib. 4.

[164] Dictamina divini intellectus sanciuntur in leges apud ipsum valituras, per immutabilitatem harum perfectionum.--Cumberland de Leg. Naturæ, page 343. Solebam ipse quidem, cum aliis plurimis antequam dominii jurisque omnis originem universaliter et distincte considerassem; dominium Dei, in creationem velut integram ejus originem, resolvere. Verum quoniam, &c.----in hanc tandem concessi sententiam, dominium Dei esse jus vel potestatem ei a sua sapientia et bonitate, velut a lege, datam ad regimen eorum omnium quæ ab ipso unquam creata fuerint vel creabuntur.----Nec poterit quisquam merito conqueri, dominium Dei intra nimis angustos limites hac explicatione coerceri; qua hoc unum dicitur, illius nullam partem consistere in potestate quicquam faciendi contra finem optimum, bonum commune.--Idem, page 345, 346. Contrà autem, Hobbiana resolutio dominii divini in potentiam ejus irresistibilem adeo apertè ducit ad, &c.--ut mihi dubium non sit, illud ab eo fictum fuisse, Deoque attributum, in eum tantum finem, ut juri suo omnium in omnia patrocinaretur.--Id. page 344. Nos e contrario, fontem indicavimus, e quo demonstrari potest, justitiam universalem, omnemque adeo virtutem moralem, quæ in rectore requiritur, in Deo præ cæteris refulgere, eadem planè methodo, qua homines ad eas excolendas obligari ostendemus.--Id. page347.

[165] Dignæ itaque sunt, quæ propter intrinsecam sibi perfectionem appetantur, etiam si nulla esset naturæ lex, quæ illas imperaret.--Cumberland de Leg. Nat. page 281.

[166]

Aner dikaios estin, ouch ho me adikon,

All' hostis adikein hounamenos me bouletai.

Oud' hos ta aikra lambanein apescheto,

All' hos ta megala karterei me lambanon,

Hechein dunamenos, kai kratein azemios.

Oud' hos ge tauta p8anta diaterei monon,

All' hostis adolon gnesian t' echon phusin,

Einai dikaios, k' ou dokein heinai thelei.

Philemonis Fragmenta.

[167] Honestum intelligimus, quod tale est, ut, detractâ omni utilitate, sine ullis præmiis fructibusque, per seipsum possit jure laudari.--Cic de Finib. lib. 2. Atque hæc omnia propter se solum, ut nihil adjungatur emolumenti, petenda sunt.--Id. de Inventione, lib. 2. Nihil est de quo minus dubitare possit, quam et honesta expetenda per se, et, eodem modo, turpia per se esse fugienda.--Id. de Finib. lib. 3.

[168] Jus et omne honestum, sua sponte est expetendum. Etenim omnes viri boni, ipsam æquitatem et jus ipsum amant.--Id. de Legib. lib. 1. Optimi quique permulta ob eam unam causam faciunt, quia decet quia rectum, quia honestum est etsi nullum consecuturum emolumentum vident.--Id. de Finib. lib. 2.

[169] Satis enim nobis, (si modo aliquid in philosophia profecimus,) persuasum esse debet, si omnes Deos hominesque celare possimus, nihil tamen avare, nihil injuste, nihil libidinose, nihil incontinenter esse faciendum.--Id. de Offic. lib. 3. Si nemo sciturus, nemo ne suspicaturus quidem sit, quum aliquid divitiarum, potentiæ, dominationis, libidinis causa feceris; si id Diis hominibusque futurum sit semper ignotum, sisne facturus?--Id. ibid.

[170] Itaque si vir bonus habeat hanc vim, ut, si digitis concrepuerit,

possit in locupletum testamenta nomen ejus irrepere, hac vi non utatur, ne si exploratum quidem habeat id omnino neminem unquam suspicaturum.----Hoc qui admiratur, is se, quis sit vir bonus, nescire fatetur.--Idem. de Offic. lib. 3.

[171] Kan ei me dunaton eie tauta lanthanein kai theous kai anthropous, homos doteon heinai, tou loeou heneka hina aute dikaiosune pros adikian auten kritheie.--Plato de Republ. lib. 10.

[172] Est autem unus dies bene et ex preceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati anteponendus.--Cic. Tusc. Quæst. l. 5.

[173] Quæro si duo sint, quorum alter optimus vir, æquissimus, summa justitia, singulari fide, alter insigni scelere et audacia; et si in eo sit errore civitas, ut bonum illum virum, sceleratum, facinorosum, nefarium putet; contra autem qui sit improbissimus, existimet esse summa probitate ac fide; proque hac opinione omnium civium, bonus ille vir vexetur, rapiatur, manus ei denique auferantur, effodiantur oculi, damnetur, vinciatur, uratur, exterminetur, egeat; postremò jure etiam optimo omnibus miserrimus esse videatur: Contra autem, ille improbus laudetur, colatur, ab omnibus diligatur, omnes ad eum honores, omnia imperia, omnes opes, omnes denique copiæ conferantur, vir denique optimus omnium æstimatione, et dignissimus omni fortuna judicetur; Quis tandem erit tam demens qui dubitet utrum se esse malit?--Idem. de Republ. lib. 3, fragment.

[174] Cù m omnis ratio veri et boni ab ejus Omnipotentiâ dependeat.--Cartes. Epist. 6, partis secundæ.

[175] Ab æqualitate naturæ oritur unicuique ea, quæ cupit, acquirendi spes.--Leviath. c. 13.

[176] Natura dedit unicuique jus in omnia. Hoc est; in statu merè naturali, sive antequam homines ullis pactis sese invicem obstrinxissent, unicuique licebat facere quæcunque et in quoscunque

libebat; et possidere, uti, frui omnibus, quæ volebat et poterat.--De Cive, c. 1. § 10.

[177] Si impossibile sit singulis, omnes et omnia sibimet subjicere; ratio quæ hunc finem proponit singulis, qui uni tantum contingere potest, sæpius quam millies proponeret impossibile, et semel tantum possible.--Cumberl. de Leg. Nat. page 217.

[178] Nec potest cujus quam jus seu libertas ab ulla lege relicta eo extendere, ut liceat oppugnare ea, quæ aliis eadem lege imperantur facienda.--Id. p. 219.

[179] Omnium adversus omnes, perpetuæ suspiciones,----Bellum omnium in omnes.--De Cive, c. 1. § 12.

[180] Spes unicuique securitatis conservationisque suæ in eo sita est, ut viribus artibusque propriis proximum suum, vel palam vel ex insidiis, præoccupare possit.--Ibid. c. 5. § 1.

[181] Securitatis viam meliorem habet nemo anticipatione.--Leviath.c. 13.

[182] See de Cive, c. 3. sec. 1.

[183] Unicuique licebat facere quæcunque libebat.--De Cive, c. 1. § 10.

[184] Consequens est, ut nihil dicendum sit injustum. Nomina justi et injusti, locum in hac conditione non habent.--Leviath. c. 13.

[185] Ex his sequitur, injuriam nemini fieri posse, nisi ei quocum initur pactum.----Siquis alicui noceat, quocum nihil pactus est, damnum ei infert, non injuriam.----Etenim si is qui damnum recipit, injuriam expostularet; is qui fecit sic diceret, quid tu mihi? quare facerem ego tuo potius, quam meo libitu? &c. In qua ratione, ubi nulla intercesserunt pacta, non video quid sit quod possit reprehendi.--De Cive, c. 3, § 4.

[186] Prima et fundamentalis lex nuturæ est, quærendam esse pacem, ubi haberi potest, &c.--De Cive, c. 2. § 2.

[187] See De Cive. c. 2 and 3.

[188] Ex his sequitur, injuriam nemini fieri posse, &c.

[189] Regulas boni et mali, justi et injusti, honesti et inhonesti, esse leges civiles; ideoque quod legislator præceperit, id pro bono, quod vetuerit, id pro malo habendum esse.--De Cive, c. 12. § 1. Quod actio justa vel injusta sit, a jure imperantis provenit. Reges legitimi quæ imperant, justa faciunt imperando; quæ vetant, vetando faciunt injusta.--De Cive, c. 12. § 1. [In which section it is worth observing, how he ridiculously interprets those words of Solomon, "Dabis servo tuo cor docile ut possit discernere inter bonum et malum," to signify not his understanding or discerning, but his decreeing what shall be good, and what evil.]

[190] Si tamen lex civilis jubeat invadere aliquid, non est illud furtum, adulterium, &c.--De Cive, c. 14. sec. 10.

[191] Sequitur ergo, legibus illis, non occides, non mæchabere, non furabere, parentes honorabis; nihil aliud præcepisse Christum, quam ut cives et subditi suis principibus et summis imperatoribus in quæstionibus omnibus circa meum, tuum, suum, alienum, absolute obedirent.--De Cive, c. 17. § 10.

[192] Si quæratur an obediendum civitati sit, si imperetur Deum colere sub imagine, coram iis quid id fieri honorificum esse putant, certè faciendum est.--De Cive, cap. 15. § 18.

[193] Universaliter et in omnibus obedire obligamur.--De Cive, c. 14. § 10. Doctrina alia, quæ obedientiæ civili repugnat, est, quicquid faciat civis quicunque contra conscientiam suam, peccatum esse.--Leviath. c. 29. Opinio eorum qui docent, peccare subditos, quoties mandata principum suorum, quæ sibi injusta videntur esse, exsequuntur; et erronea est, et inter eas numeranda, quæ obedientiæ civili adversantur.--De Cive, c. 12, sec. 2.

[194] Concludendum est, legem naturæ semper et ubique obligare in foro interno, sive conscientia, non semper in foro externo, sed tum solummodo, cum secure id fieri possit.--De Cive, c. 3.

[195] Quæ si tanta potentia est stultorum sententiis atque jussis, ut eorum suffragiis rerum natura vertatur cur non sanciunt, ut quæ mala perniciosaque sunt, habeantur pro bonis ac salutaribus?--Cicero de Legib. lib. 1.

[196] De Cive, c. 6. sec. 11.

[197] Ibid. c. 17. sec. 12.

[198] Ibid. c. 18. sec. 4.

[199] Neque enim an honorificè de Deo sentiendum sit neque an sit amandus, timendus, colendus, dubitari potest. Sunt enim hæc religionum per omnes gentes communia.--De Homine, cap. 14.

[200] Si is qui summum habet imperium, seipsum, imperantem dico, interficere alicui imperet, non tenetur. Neque parentem, &c. cù m filius mori quam vivere infamis atque exosus malit. Et alii casus sunt, cum mandata facta inhonesta sunt, &c.--De Cive, c. 6. sec. 13.

[201] Lex naturalis est pactis standum esse, sive fidem observandam esse.--De Cive, c. 3. sec. 1.

[202] Lex naturalis omnes leges civiles jubet observari.--Ibid. c.14. sec. 10.

[203] Legem civilem, quæ non sit lata in contumeliam Dei (cujus respectu ipsæ civitates non sunt sui juris, nec dicuntur leges ferre, &c.)--De Cive, c. 14. sec. 10. Pacti violatio, &c.--See de Cive, c. 3. sec 3.

[204] See de Cive, c. 14. sec. 10.

[205] Est similitudo quædam inter id, quod in vita communi vocatur injuria, et id quod in scholis solet appellari absurdum. Quemadmodum enim is, qui argumentis cogitur ad negationem assertionis quam prius

asseruerat, dicitur redigi ad absurdum; eodem modo is, qui præ animi impotentia facit vel omittit id quod se non facturum vel non omissurum pacto suo ante promiserat, injuriam facit; neque minus in contradictionem incidit, quam qui in scholis reducitur ad absurdum.--Est itaque injuria, absurditas, quædam in conversatione, sicut absurditas, injuria quædam est in disputatione.--De Cive, c. 3. sec. 3.

[206] Ex his sequitur, injuriam nemini fieri posse, nisi ei quocum initur pactum.--De Cive, c. 3. sec. 4. [Which whole section highly deserves to be read and well considered, as containing the secret of Mr Hobbes's whole scheme.]

[207] Itaque patet quod, si Hobbiana ratiocinatio esset valida, omnis simul legum civilium obligatio collaberetur; nec aliter fieri potest quin earum vis labefactetur ab omnibus principiis, quæ legum naturalium vim tollunt aut minuunt; quoniam his fundatur et regiminis civilis auctoritas ac securitas, et legum a civitatibus latarum vigor.--Cumberland de Leg. Nat. page 303. Etiam extra regimen civile, a malis omnigenis simul consideratis tutior erit, qui actibus externis leges naturæ constantissime observabet; quam qui, juxta doctrinam Hobbianam, vi aut insidiis alios omnes conando præoccupare, securitatem sibi quæsiverit.--Id. p. 304.

[208] Voluntas lædendi omnibus inest in statu naturæ.--De Cive, c. 1. sec. 4.

[209] In statu naturali, unicuique licebat facere quæcunque et in quoscunque libebat.--Ibid. sec. 10.

[210] Si nihil existimat contra naturam fieri, hominibus violandis; quid cum eo disseras, qui omnino hominem ex homine tollat?--Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.

[211] Tade de dikaia oud' heinai top9arapan phusei;----gignomena techee

kai toi` nomois, all' ou de tine phusei.----Phaskonton heinai to dikaiotaton, ho, ti tis an nika biazomenos. aben aseb ai te kai staseis; hosen loben anbropon neain domosia polesi te kai idiois oikois.--Plato de Leg. lib. 10.

[212] Homines libertatis et dominii per naturam amatores.--Leviath. c. 17. Nemini dubium esse debet, quin avidius ferrentur homines natura, sua si metus abesset, ad dominationem quà m ad societatem.--De Cive, c. 1. sec. 2.

[213] Homines inter se de honoribus et dignitatibus perpetuo contendunt, sed animalia illa [apes et formicæ] non item. Itaque inter homines invidia, odium, bellum, &c.--Leviath. c. 17.

[214] Inter animalia illa bonum publicum et privatum idem est.--Homini autem in bonis propriis nihil tam jucundum est, quam quod alienis sunt majora.--Ibid.

[215] Animantia quæ rationem non habent, nullum defectum vident vel videre se putant, in adminstratione suarum rerum publicarum. Sed in multitudine hominum, plurimi sunt qui præ cæteris sapere existimantes, conantur res novare; Et diversi novatores innovant diversis modis; id quod est distractio et bellum civile.--De Cive, c. 5. sec. 5.

[216] Animantia illa verborum arte illa carent, qua homines alii aliis videri faciunt bonum malum, et malum bonum; magnum parvum; et parvum magnum.--Leviath. c. 17.

[217] Animalia bruta, quamdiu bene sibi est, cæteris non invident: Homo autem tum maxime molestus est, quando otio opibusque maximè abundat.--Ibid.

[218] Consensio creaturarum illarum brutarum, naturalis est; hominum pactitia tantum, id est, artificiosa.--De Cive, c. 5. § 5.

[219] Regni divini naturalis jus derivatur ab eo, quod divinæ potentiæ resistere impossibile est.--Leviath. c. 31. In regno naturali, regnandi

et puniendi eos qui leges suas violant, jus Deo est a sola potentia irresistibili.--De Cive, c. 15. sec. 5. Iis quorum potentiæ resisti non potest, et per consequens Deo omnipotenti, jus dominandi ab ipsa potentia derivatur.--Ibid.

[220] Nam quoniam Deus jus ad omnia habet, et jus Dei nihil aliud est quam ipsa Dei potentia, hinc sequitur, unamquamque rem naturalem tantum juris ex natura habere, quantum potentiæ habet.--Spinoz. de Monarch. cap. 2. [See also Tractat. Theolog. politic. cap. 16.]

[221] See Cumberland de Leg. Naturæ, locis supra citatis.

[222] See Hobbes, de Cive, c. 3. § 4.

[223] Quod si jus regnandi habeat Deus ab omnipotentia sua, manifestum est obligationem ad præstandum ipsi obedientiam, incumbere hominibus propter imbecillitatem. [To explain which, he adds in his note,]--Si cui durum hoc videbitur, illum rogo ut tacita cogitatione considerate velit, si essent duo omnipotentes, uter utri obedire obligaretur. Confitebitur, credo, neutrum neutri obligari. Hoc si verum est, verum quoque est quod posui, homines ideo Deo subjectos esse, quia omnipotentes non sunt.--De Cive, c. 15. sec. 7.

[224] Ut enim omittam vim et naturam Deorum, ne homines quidem censetis, nisi imbecilli essent, futuros beneficos et benignos fuisse.--Cic de Nat. Deor. lib. 1.

Proposition II.

II. Proposition II. Though these eternal moral obligations are indeed of themselves incumbent on all rational beings, even antecedent to the consideration of their being the positive will and command of God, yet that which most strongly confirms, and in practice most effectually and indispensably enforces them upon us, is this; that both from the perfections of God, and the nature of things, and from several other collateral considerations, it appears, that as God is himself necessarily just and good in the exercise of his infinite power in the government of the whole world, so he cannot but likewise positively require that all his rational creatures should in their proportion be so too, in the exercise of each of their powers in their several and respective spheres: That is; as these eternal moral obligations are really in perpetual force, merely from their own nature, and the abstract reason of things; so also they are moreover the express and unalterable will, command, and law of God to his creatures, which he cannot but expect should, in obedience to his supreme authority, as well as in compliance with the natural reason of things, be regularly and constantly observed through the whole creation.

This proposition is very evident, and has little need of being particularly proved.

For 1st. That moral duties are the positive will and command of God, proved from the consideration of the divine attributes. The same reasons which prove to us that God must of necessity be himself infinitely holy, and just, and good, manifestly prove, that it must also be his will, that all his creatures should be so likewise, according to the proportions and capacities of their several natures.

That there are eternal and necessary differences of things, agreements and disagreements, proportions and disproportions, fitnesses and unfitnesses of things, absolutely in their own nature, has been before largely demonstrated. That, with regard to these fixed and certain proportions and fitnesses of things, the will of God, which can neither be influenced by any external power, nor imposed upon by any error or deceit, constantly and necessarily determines itself to choose always what in the whole is best and fittest to be done, according to the unalterable rules of justice, equity, goodness, and truth; has likewise been already proved. That the same considerations ought also regularly to determine the wills of all subordinate rational beings, to act in constant conformity to the same eternal rules, has in like manner been shown before. It remains therefore only to prove, that these very same moral rules, which are thus of themselves really obligatory, as being the necessary result of the unalterable reason and nature of things, are moreover the positive will and command of God to all rational creatures; and, consequently, that the wilful transgression or neglect of them, is as truly an insolent contempt of the authority of God, as it is an absurd confounding of the natural reasons and proportions of things. Now this also plainly follows from what has been already laid down: For, the same absolute perfection of the divine nature, which (as has been before shown) makes us certain that God must himself be of necessity infinitely holy, just, and good; makes it equally certain, that he cannot possibly approve iniquity in others. And the same beauty, the same excellency, the same weight and importance of the rules of everlasting righteousness, with regard to which God is always pleased to make those rules the measure of all his own actions, prove it impossible but he must likewise will and desire that all rational creatures should proportionably make them the measure of theirs. Even

among men, there is no earthly father, but in those things which he esteems his own excellencies, desires and expects to be imitated by his children. How much more is it necessary that God, who is infinitely far from being subject to such passions and variableness as frail men are; and who has an infinitely tenderer and heartier concern for the happiness of his creatures, than mortal men can have for the welfare of their posterity; must desire to be imitated by his creatures in those perfections which are the foundation of his own unchangeable happiness? In the exercise of his supreme power, we cannot imitate him; in the extent of his unerring knowledge, we cannot attain to any similitude with himJob xl. 9. . We cannot at all thunder with a voice like him; nor are we able to search out and comprehend the least part of the depth of his unfathomable wisdom. But his holiness and goodness, his justice, righteousness, and truth; these things we can understand; in these things we can imitate him; nay, we cannot approve ourselves to him as obedient children, if we do not imitate him therein. If God be himself essentially of infinite holiness and purity; (as, from the light of nature, it is of all things most manifest that he is,) Hab. i. 13. it follows, that it is impossible but he must likewise be of purer eyes than to behold with approbation any manner of impurity in his creatures; and consequently it must needs be his will, that they should all (according to the measure of their frail and finite nature) be holy as he is holy. If God is himself a being of infinite justice, righteousness, and truth, it must needs be his will, that all rational creatures, whom he has created after his own image, to whom he has communicated some resemblance of his divine perfections, and whom he has indued with excellent powers and faculties to enable them to distinguish between good and evil, should imitate him in the exercise of those glorious attributes, by conforming all their actions to the

eternal and unalterable law of righteousness. If God is himself a being of infinite Mat. v. 45. goodness, making the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sending rain on the just and on the unjust; Acts xiv. 17. having never left himself wholly without witness, but always doing good, given men rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, and filling their hearts with food and gladness; it cannot but be his will that all reasonable creatures should, by mutual love and benevolence, permit and assist each other to enjoy in particular the several effects and blessings of the divine universal goodness. Lastly, if God is himself a being of infinite mercy and compassion, as it is plain he bears long with men before he punishes them for their wickedness, and often freely forgives them his ten thousand talents; it must needs be hisMat. xviii. 24. 28. will, that they should forgive one another their hundred pence; being merciful one to another, as he isLu. vi. 36. merciful to them all; and having compassion eachMat. xi. 23. on his fellow-servants, as God has pity on them. Thus from the attributes of God, natural reason leads men to the knowledge of his will: All the same reasons and arguments, which discover to men the natural fitnesses or unfitnesses of things, and the necessary perfections or attributes of God, proving equally at the same time, that [225] that which is truly the law of nature, or the reason of things, is in like manner the will of God. And from hence the soberest and most intelligent persons among the heathens in all ages, very rightly and wisely concluded that the best and certainest part of natural religion, which was of the greatest importance, and wherein was the least danger of their being mistaken, was [226] to imitate the moral attributes of God, by a life of holiness, righteousness, and charity: Whereas in the external part of their worship, there was nothing but uncertainty and doubtfulness; it being absolutely impossible, without express revelation, to discover

what in that particular they might be secure would be truly acceptable to God.

This method of deducing the will of God from his attributes, is of all others the best and clearest, the certainest and most universal, that the light of nature affords: Yet there are also (as I said) some other collateral considerations, which help to prove and confirm the same thing; namely, that all moral obligations, arising from the nature and reason of things, are likewise the positive will and command of God: As

2. And from the consideration of the nature of God's creation. This appears in some measure from the consideration of God's creation. For God, by creating things, manifests it to be his will that things should be what they are. And as providence wonderfully preserves things in their present state; and all necessary agents, by constantly and regularly obeying the laws of their nature, necessarily employ all their natural powers in promoting the same end; so it is evident it cannot but be the will of God, [227] that all rational creatures, whom he has indued with those singular powers and faculties of understanding, liberty, and free-choice, whereby they are exalted in dignity above the rest of the world; should likewise employ those their extraordinary faculties in preserving the order and harmony of the creation, and not in introducing disorder and confusion therein. The nature indeed and relations, the proportions and disproportions, the fitnesses and unfitnesses of things, are eternal and in themselves absolutely unalterable; but this is only upon supposition that the things exist, and that they exist in such manner as they at present do. Now that things exist in such manner as they do, or that they exist at all, depends entirely on the arbitrary will and good pleasure of God.

At the same time, therefore, and by the same means, that God manifests it to be his will that things should exist, and that they should exist

in such manner as they do; (as by creating them he at first did, and by preserving them he still continually does, declare it to be his will they should;) he at the same time evidently declares, that all such moral obligations as are the result of the necessary proportions and relations of things, are likewise his positive will and command. And consequently, whoever acts contrary to the forementioned reasons and proportion of things, by dishonouring God, by introducing unjust and unequal dealings among equals, by destroying his own being, or by any way corrupting, abusing, and misapplying the faculties wherewith God has indued him, (as has been above more largely explained,) is unavoidably guilty of transgressing at the same time the positive will and command of God, which in this manner also is sufficiently discovered and made known to him.

3. And from the tendency of the practice of morality to the good and happiness of the whole world.The same thing may likewise further appear from the following consideration:--Whatever tends directly and certainly to promote the good and happiness of the whole, and (as far as is consistent with that chief end,) to promote also the good and welfare of every particular part of the creation, must needs be agreeable to the will of God; [228] who, being infinitely self-sufficient to his own happiness, could have no other motive to create things at all, but only that he might communicate to them his goodness and happiness; and who consequently cannot but expect and require, that all his creatures should, according to their several powers and faculties, endeavour to promote the same end. Now that the exact observance of all those moral obligations, which have before been proved to arise necessarily from the nature and relations of things; (that is to say, living agreeably to the unalterable rules of justice, righteousness, equity, and truth,) is the certainest and directest

means to promote the welfare and happiness, as well of every man in particular, both in body and mind, as of all men in general, considered with respect to society, is so very manifest, that even the greatest enemies of all religion, who suppose it to be nothing more than a worldly or state-policy, do yet by that very supposition confess thus much concerning it; and, indeed, this it is not possible for any one to deny: For the practice of moral virtues does [229] as plainly and undeniably tend to the natural good of the world, as any physical effect or mathematical truth is naturally consequent to the principles on which it depends, and from which it is regularly derived. And without such practice, in some degree, the world can never be happy in any tolerable measure; as is sufficiently evident from Mr Hobbes's own description of the extreme miserable condition that men would be in through the total defect of the practice of all moral virtue, if they were to live in that state which he styles (falsely and contrary to all reason, as has been before fully proved,) the state of nature; but which really is a state of the grossest abuse and most unnatural corruption and misapplication of men's natural faculties that can be imagined. For, since God has plainly so constituted the nature of men, that they stand continually in need of each other's help and assistance, and can never live comfortably without society and mutual friendship, and are indued with the faculties of reason and speech, and with other natural powers, evidently fitted to enable them to assist each other in all matters of life, and mutually to promote universal love and happiness; it is manifestly agreeable to nature, and to the will of God, who gave them these faculties, that they should employ them wholly to this regular and good end; and, consequently, it is on the contrary evident likewise, that all abuse and misapplication of these faculties, to hurt and destroy, to cheat and defraud, to oppress,

insult, and domineer over each other, is directly contrary both to the dictates of nature and to the will of God, who, necessarily doing always what is best, and fittest, and most for the benefit of the whole creation, it is manifest cannot will the corruption and destruction of any of his creatures, any otherwise than as his preserving their natural faculties, (which in themselves are good and excellent, but cannot but be capable of being abused and misapplied,) necessarily implies a consequential permission of such corruption.

And this now is the great aggravation of the sin and folly of all immorality; that it is an obstinate setting up the self-will of frail, finite, and fallible creatures; as in opposition to the eternal reason of things, the unprejudiced judgment of their own minds, and the general good and welfare both of themselves and their fellow-creatures; so also in opposition to the will of the supreme author and creator of all things, who gave them their beings and all the powers and faculties they are indued with: In opposition to the will of the all-wise preserver and governor of the universe, on whose gracious protection they depend every moment for the preservation and continuance of their beings: And in opposition to the will of their greatest benefactor, to whose bounty they wholly owe whatever they enjoy at present, and all the hopes of what they expect hereafter, this is the highest of all aggravations. The utmost ureasonableness, joined with obstinate disobedience, and with the greatest ingratitude.

[225] Ita principem legem illam et ultimam, mentem esse omnia ratione aut cogentis aut vetantis Dei.--Cic. de Leg. lib. 2. Quæ vis non modo senior est quam ætas populorum et civitatum, sed æqualis illius coelum atque terras tuentis et regentis Dei. Neque enim esse mens divina sine ratione potest, nec ratio divina non hanc vim in rectis pravisque sanciendis habere.--Ibid.

[226] Vis Deos propitiare? Bonus esto. Satis illos coluit, qui imitatus est.--Senee. Epist. 96. Kai gar an ein, ei pros ta dora kai tas thusias apoblepousin hemon hoi theoi, alla me pros ten psuchen, an tis hosios kai dikaios on tunchane. Pollo ge mallon, oimai, e pros tas poluteleis tautas pompas te kai thusias.--Plato in Alcibiade, 2. Collitur autem, non taurornm opimis corporibus contrucidatis, nec auro argentove suspenso, nec in thesauros stipe infusa; sed pia et recta voluntate.--Senec. Epist. 116.

[227] Mens humana non potest non judicare, esse longè credibilius, quod eadem constantissima voluntas, à qua hominibus datum est esse, pariter mallet ipsos porro esse et valere, hoc est, conservari et felicitate frui, quam illo deturbari de statu, in quo ipsos collocavit----Sic scilicet e voluntate creandi, cognoscitur voluntas conservandi tuendique homines. Ex hac autem innotescit obligatio, qui tenemur ad inserviendum eidem voluntati notæ.--Cumberl. de Leg. Nat. page 227.

[228] Dubitari non potest, quin Deus, qui ita naturalem rerum omnium ordinem constituit, ut talia sint actionum humanarum consequentia erga ipsos auctores, fecitque ut ordinaria hæc consequentia ab ipsis præsciri possint, aut summa cum probabilitate expectari, voluerit hæc ab iis considerari, antequam ad agendum se accingerent; atque eos his provisis velut argumentis in legum sanctione contentis determinari.--Cumberl. de Leg. Nat. page 228. Rector seu causa prima rationalis, cujus voluntate res ita disponuntur, ut hommibus satis evidenter indicetur, actus quosdam illorum esse media necessaria ad finem ipsis necessarium; vult homines ad hos actus obligari, vel hos actus imperat.--Id. page 285.

[229] Pari sane ratione (ac in arithmeticis operationibus) doctrinæ moralis veritas fundatur in immutabili cohærentia inter felicitatem summam quam hominum vires assequi valent, et actus benevolentiæ

universalis.--Id. page 23.

Proposition III.

III. Proposition III. Though the fore-mentioned eternal moral obligations are incumbent indeed on all rational creatures, antecedent to any respect of particular reward or punishment, yet they must certainly and necessarily be attended with rewards and punishments: Because the same reasons, which prove God himself to be necessarily just and good, and the rules of justice, equity, and goodness, to be his unalterable will, law, and command, to all created beings; prove also that he cannot but be pleased with and approve such creatures as imitate and obey him by observing those rules, and be displeased with such as act contrary thereto; and consequently, that he cannot but some way or other, make a suitable difference in his dealings with them; and manifest his supreme power and absolute authority, in finally supporting, maintaining, and vindicating effectually the honour of these his divine laws, as becomes the just and righteous governor and disposer of all things.

This proposition also is in a manner self-evident.

For 1st, That the practice of virtue or vice must be attended with rewards and punishments, proved from the attributes of God. If God is himself necessarily a being (as has been before shown) of infinite goodness, justice, and holiness; and if the same reasons which prove the necessity of these attributes in God himself, prove moreover (as has likewise been shown already,) that the same moral obligations must needs be his positive will, law, and command, to all rational creatures; it follows also necessarily, by the very same argument, that he cannot but be pleased with and approve such creatures as imitate and obey him by observing those rules, and be displeased with such as act

contrary thereto. And if so; then in the nature of the thing itself it is evident, that having absolute power and uncontrollable authority, as being supreme governor and disposer of all things, he cannot but signify, by some means or other, his approbation of the one, and his displeasure against the other. And this can no way be done to any effectual purpose but by the annexing of respective rewards and punishments. Wherefore, if virtue goes finally unrewarded, and wickedness unpunished, then God never signifies his approbation of the one, nor his displeasure against the other; and if so, then there remains no sufficient proof that he is really at all pleased or displeased with either, and the consequence of that will be, that there is no reason to think the one to be his will and command, or that the other is forbidden by him; which being once supposed, there will no longer remain any certain evidence of his own moral attributes contrary to what has been already demonstrated.

2. And from the necessity there is, that there should be some vindication of the honour of God's laws and government. The certainty of rewards and punishments in general may also somewhat otherwise be deduced from their being necessary to support the honour of God and of his laws and government, in the following manner. It is evident we are obliged, in the highest ties of duty and gratitude, to pay all possible honour to God, from whom we receive our being, and all our powers and faculties, and whatever else we enjoy. Now it is plain likewise, that we have no other way to honour God, (whose happiness is capable of no addition from any thing that any of his creatures are capable of doing,) than by honouring, that is, by obeying, his laws. The honour therefore that is thus done to his laws, God is pleased to accept as done immediately to himself. And though we were indeed absolutely obliged, in duty, to honour him in this manner, notwithstanding that

there had been no reward to be expected thereupon, yet it is necessary, in the government of the world, and well-becoming an infinitely wise and good governor, that those who honour him he should honour; 1 Sam. ii. 30. that is, should distinguish them with suitable marks of his favour. On the contrary; though nothing that weak and finite creatures are able to do, can in the least diminish from the absolute glory and happiness of God, yet, as to us, the dishonouring, that is, the disobeying his laws, is a dishonouring of himself: that is, it is, as much as in us lies, a despising his supreme authority, and bringing his government into contempt:--Now the same reason that there is, why honour should be paid to the laws of God at all; the same reason there is, that that honour should be vindicated, after it has been diminished and infringed by sin: For no lawgiver who has authority to require obedience to his laws, can or ought to see his laws despised and dishonoured, without taking some measures to vindicate the honour of them, for the support and dignity of his own authority and government. And the only way, by which the honour of a law, or of its author, can be vindicated after it has been infringed by wilful sin, is either by the repentance and reformation of the transgressor, or by his punishment and destruction. So that God is necessarily obliged, in vindication of the honour of his laws and government, to punish those who presumptuously and impenitently disobey his commandments. Wherefore if there be no distinction made by suitable rewards and punishments, between those who obey the laws of God and those who obey them not, then God suffers the authority of his laws to be finally trampled upon and despised, without ever making any vindication of it: Which being impossible, it will follow that these things are not really the laws of God, and that he has no such regard to them as we imagine. And the consequence of this must needs be the denial of his moral attributes,

contrary, as before, to what has been already proved: And consequently the certainty of rewards and punishments, in general, is necessarily established.

Proposition IV.

IV. Proposition IV. Though in order to establish this suitable difference between the fruits or effects of virtue and vice, so reasonable in itself, and so absolutely necessary for the vindication of the honour of God, the nature of things, and the constitution and order of God's creation, was originally such, that the observance of the eternal rules of justice, equity, and goodness, does indeed of itself tend by direct and natural consequence to make all creatures happy, and the contrary practice to make them miserable; yet since, through some great and general corruption and depravation, (whencesoever that may have arisen,) the condition of men in this present state is such, that the natural order of things in this world is an event manifestly perverted, and virtue and goodness are visibly prevented in great measure from obtaining their proper and due effects in establishing men's happiness, proportionable to their behaviour and practice; therefore, it is absolutely impossible that the whole view and intention, the original and the final design, of God's creating such rational beings as men are, and placing them on this globe of earth, as the chief and principal, or indeed (to speak more properly) the only inhabitants, for whose sake alone this part at least of the creation is manifestly fitted up and accommodated; it is absolutely impossible (I say) that the whole of God's design in all this should be nothing more than to keep up eternally a succession of such short-lived generations of men as we at present are, and those in such a corrupt, confused, and disorderly state of things, as we see the world is now in; without any due observation of the eternal rules of good and evil; without any clear and remarkable effect of the great and most necessary

difference of things; and without any final vindication of the honour and laws of God, in the proportionable reward of the best, or punishment of the worst of men. And, consequently, it is certain and necessary (even as certain as the moral attributes of God before demonstrated,) that instead of continuing an eternal succession of new generations in the present form and state of things, there must at some time or other be such a revolution and renovation of things, such a future state of existence of the same persons, as that, by an exact distribution of rewards and punishments therein, all the present disorders and inequalities may be set right, and that the whole scheme of providence, which, to us who judge of it by only one small portion of it, seems now so inexplicable and confused, may appear, at its consummation, to be a design worthy of infinite wisdom, justice, and goodness.

1. That, according to the original constitution of things, virtue and vice are attended with natural rewards and punishments. In order to establish a just and suitable difference between the respective fruits or effects of virtue and vice, the nature of things, and the constitution and order of God's creation, was originally such that the observance of the eternal rules of piety, justice, equity, goodness, and temperance, does of itself plainly tend, by direct and natural consequence, to make all creatures happy, and the contrary practice to make them miserable. This is evident in general; because the practice of universal virtue is (in imitation of the divine goodness) the practice of that which is best in the whole; and that which tends to the benefit of the whole, must, of necessary consequence, originally, and in its own nature, tend also to the benefit of every individual part of the creation. More particularly; a frequent and habitual contemplating the infinitely excellent perfections of the almighty

creator and all-wise governor of the world, and our most bountiful benefactor; so as to excite in our minds a suitable adoration, love, and imitation of those perfections; a regular employing all our powers and faculties, in such designs and to such purposes only, as they were originally fitted and intended for by nature; and a due subjecting all our appetites and passions to the government of sober and modest reason; are evidently the directest means to obtain such settled peace and solid satisfaction of mind, as the first foundation, and the principal and most necessary ingredient of all true happiness. The temperate and moderate enjoyment of all the good things of this present world, and of the pleasures of life, according to the measures of right reason and simple nature, is plainly and confessedly the certainest and most direct method to preserve the health and strength of the body. And the practice of universal justice, equity, and benevolence, is manifestly (as has been before observed) as direct and adequate a means to promote the general welfare and happiness of men in society, as any physical motion, or geometrical operation, is to produce its natural effect. So that if all men were truly virtuous, and practised these rules in such manner that the miseries and calamities arising usually from the numberless follies and vices of men were prevented, undoubtedly this great truth would evidence itself visibly in fact, and appear experimentally in the happy state and condition of the world. On the contrary; neglect of God, and insensibleness of our relation and duty towards him; abuse and unnatural misapplication of the powers and faculties of our minds; inordinate appetites, and unbridled and furious passions,--necessarily fill the mind with confusion, trouble, and vexation. And intemperance naturally brings weakness, pains, and sicknesses into the body. And mutual injustice and iniquity; fraud, violence, and oppression; wars, and desolation; murders, rapine, and

all kinds of cruelty,--are sufficiently plain causes of the miseries and calamities of men in society. So that the original constitution, order, and tendency of things, is evidently enough fitted and designed to establish naturally a just and suitable difference in general between virtue and vice, by their respective fruits or effects.

2. But that now in this present world, the natural order of things is so perverted that vice often flourishes in great prosperity, and virtue falls under the greatest calamities of life. But though originally the constitution and order of God's creation was indeed such, that virtue and vice are, by the regular tendency of things, followed with natural rewards and punishments; yet, in event, through some great and general corruption and depravation, (whencesoever that may have arisen, of which more hereafter;) the condition of men in the present state is plainly such, that this natural order of things in the world is manifestly perverted. Virtue and goodness are visibly prevented in great measure from obtaining their proper and due effect, in establishing men's happiness proportionable to their behaviour and practice; and wickedness and vice very frequently escape the punishment which the general nature and disposition of things tends to annex unto it. Wicked men, by stupidity, inconsiderateness, and sensual pleasure, often make shift to silence the reproaches of conscience, and feel very little of that confusion and remorse of mind which ought naturally to be consequent upon their vicious practices. By accidental strength and robustness of constitution, they frequently escape the natural ill consequences of intemperance and debauchery; and enjoy the same proportion of health and vigour as those who live up to the rules of strict and unblameable sobriety. And injustice and iniquity, fraud, violence, and cruelty, though they are always attended indeed with sufficiently calamitous consequences in the general; yet the most of

those ill consequences fall not always upon such persons in particular as have the greatest share in the guilt of the crimes, but very commonly on those that have the least. On the contrary; virtue and piety, temperance and sobriety, faithfulness, honesty and charity; though they have indeed both in themselves the true springs of happiness, and also the greatest probabilities of outward causes to concur in promoting their temporal prosperity; though they cannot indeed be prevented from affording a man the highest peace and satisfaction of spirit, and many other advantages both of body and mind in respect of his own particular person; yet in respect of those advantages which the mutual practice of social virtues ought to produce in common, it is in experience found true, that the vices of a great part of mankind do so far prevail against nature and reason, as frequently to oppress the virtue of the best; and not only hinder them from enjoying those public benefits, which would naturally and regularly be the consequences of their virtue; but oft-times bring upon them the greatest temporal calamities, even for the sake of that very virtue. For it is but too well known that good men are very often afflicted and impoverished, and made a prey to the covetousness and ambition of the wicked; and sometimes most cruelly and maliciously persecuted, even upon account of their goodness itself. In all which affairs the providence of God seems not very evidently to interpose for the protection of the righteous. And not only so, but even in judgments also, which seem more immediately to be inflicted by the hand of heaven, it frequently suffers the righteous to be involved in the same calamities with the wicked, as they are mixed together in business and the affairs of the world.

3. That therefore there must needs be a future state of rewards and punishments.Which things being so; (viz. that there is plainly in event

no sufficient distinction made between virtue and vice; no proportionable and certain reward annexed to the one, nor punshment to the other, in this present world:) And yet it being no less undeniably certain in the general, as has been before shown, that if there be a God, (and that God be himself a being of infinite justice and goodness; and it be his will, that all rational creatures should imitate his moral perfections; and he [230] cannot but see and take notice how every creature behaves itself; and cannot but be accordingly pleased with such as obey his will and imitate his nature, and be displeased with such as act contrary thereto;) it being certain, I say, that if these things be so, God must needs, in vindication of the honour of his laws and government, signify at some time or other this his approbation or displeasure, by making finally a suitable difference between those who obey him, and those who obey him not; it follows unavoidably, either that all these notions which we frame concerning God, are false; and that there is no providence, and God sees not, or at least has no regard to what is done by his creatures, and consequently the ground of all his own moral attributes is taken away, and even his being itself; or else that there must necessarily be a future state of rewards and punishments after this life, wherein all the present difficulties of providence shall be cleared up, by an exact and impartial administration of justice. But now, that these notions are true, that there is a God, and a providence, and that God is himself a being induced with all moral perfections, and expects and commands that all his rational creatures should govern all their actions by the same rules, has been particularly and distinctly proved already. It is therefore directly demonstrated, that there must be a future state of rewards and punishments. Let not thine heart envy sinners, but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long, for surely there is a reward,

and thine expectation shall not be cut off.--Prov.xxiii. 17 and 18.

4. Of the Stoical opinion concerning the self-sufficiency of virtue to its own happiness. This argument is indeed a common one, but it is nevertheless strongly conclusive and unanswerable; so that, whoever denies a future state of rewards and punishments, must, of necessity, by a chain of unavoidable consequences, be forced to recur to down-right atheism. The only middle opinion that can be invented, is that assertion of the Stoics that virtue is self-sufficient to its own happiness, and a full reward to itself in all cases, even under the greatest sufferings that can befal a man for its sake. Men who were not certain of a future state, (though most of them did indeed believe it highly probable,) and yet would not give up the cause of virtue, had no other way left to defend it than by asserting that it was in all cases, and under all circumstances, absolutely self-sufficient to its own happiness; whereas, on the contrary, because it is manifestly not self-sufficient, and yet undoubtedly the cause of virtue is not to be given up; therefore, they ought from thence to have concluded the certainty of a future state: That virtue is truly worthy to be chosen, even merely for its own sake, without any respect to any recompense or reward, must indeed necessarily be acknowledged; but it does not from hence follow, that he who dies for the sake of virtue is really any more happy than he that dies for any fond opinion, or any unreasonable humour or obstinacy whatsoever; if he has no other happiness than the bare satisfaction arising from the sense of his resoluteness in persisting to preserve his virtue, and in adhering immoveably to what he judges to be right, and there be no future state wherein he may reap any benefit of that his resolute perseverance. On the contrary, it will only follow, that God has made virtue necessarily amiable, and such as men's judgment and conscience can never but choose, and yet that he has

not annexed to it any sufficient encouragement to support men effectually in that choice. Brave indeed, and admirable, were the things which some of the philosophers have said upon this subject, and which some very few extraordinary men (of which Regulus is a remarkable instance,) seem to have made good in their practice, even beyond the common abilities of human nature; but it is very plain, as I before intimated, that the general practice of virtue in the world can never be supported upon this foot; it being, indeed, neither possible nor truly reasonable that men, by adhering to virtue, should part with their lives, [231] if thereby they eternally deprived themselves of all possibility of receiving any advantage from that adherence. Virtue, it is true, in its proper seat, and with all its full effects and consequences unhindered, must be confessed to be the chief good, as being truly the enjoyment, as well as the imitation of God; but, [232] as the practice of it is circumstantiated in this present world, and in the present state of things, it is plain it is not itself the chief good, but only the means to it, as running in a race is not in itself the prize, but the way to obtain it.

5. From whence the certainty of a future state is again concluded. It is therefore absolutely impossible, that the whole view and intention, the original and the final design of God's creating such rational beings as men are, indued with such noble faculties, and so necessarily conscious of the eternal and unchangeable differences of good and evil; it is absolutely impossible (I say) that the whole design of an infinitely wise, and just, and good God, in all this, should be nothing more than to keep up eternally a succession of new generations of men, and those in such a corrupt, confused, and disorderly state of things as we see the present world is in, without any due and regular observation of the eternal rules of good and evil, without any clear

and remarkable effect of the great and most necessary differences of things, without any sufficient discrimination of virtue and vice, by their proper and respective fruits, and without any final vindication of the honour and laws of God, in the proportionable reward of the best, or punishment of the worst of men: And consequently it is certain and necessary, (even as certain as the moral attributes of God before demonstrated,) that instead of continuing an eternal succession of new generations in the present form and state of things, there must at some time or other be such a revolution and renovation of things, such a future state of existence of the same persons, as that, by an exact distribution of rewards and punishments therein, all the present disorders and inequalities may be set right; and that the whole scheme of Providence, which to us who judge of it by only one small portion of it, seems now so inexplicable and much confused, may appear at its consummation to be a design worthy of infinite wisdom, justice, and goodness. Without this [233] all comes to nothing. If this scheme be once broken, there is no justice, no goodness, no order, no reason, nor any thing upon which any argument in moral matters can be founded, left in the world. Nay, even though we should set aside all consideration of the moral attributes of God, and consider only his natural perfections, his infinite knowledge and wisdom, as framer and builder of the world; it would even in that view only appear infinitely improbable that God should have created such beings as men are, and indued them with such excellent faculties, and placed them on this globe of earth, as the only inhabitants for whose sake this part at least of the creation is manifestly fitted up and accommodated; and all this without any further design [234] than only for the maintaining a perpetual succession of such short-lived generations of mortals as we at present are; to live in the utmost confusion and disorder for a very few years, and then

perish eternally into nothing. [235] What can be imagined more vain and empty? What more absurd? What more void of all marks of wisdom, than the fabric of the world, and the creation of mankind, upon this supposition? But then, take in also the consideration of the moral attributes of God, and it amounts (as I have said) to a complete demonstration that there must be a future state.

6. Why the wisdom of God is not so clearly and plainly seen in his government of the moral, as in the fabric of the natural world. It may here at first sight seem to be a very strange thing, that through the whole system of nature in the material, in the inanimate, in the irrational part of the creation, every single thing should have in itself so many and so obvious, so evident and undeniable marks of the infinitely accurate skill and wisdom of their Almighty Creator, that, from the brightest star in the firmament of heaven to the meanest pebble upon the face of the earth, there is no one piece of matter which does not afford such instances of admirable artifice and exact proportion and contrivance, as exceeds all the wit of man (I do not say to imitate, but even) ever to be able fully to search out and comprehend; and yet, that in the management of the rational and moral world, for the sake of which all the rest was created, and is preserved only to be subservient to it, there should not in many ages be plain evidences enough, either of the wisdom, or of the justice and goodness of God, or of so much as the interposition of his divine providence at all, to convince mankind clearly and generally of the world's being under his immediate care, inspection, and government. This, I say, may indeed at first sight seem very wonderful. But if we consider the matter more closely and attentively, it will appear not to be so strange and astonishing as we are apt to imagine: For as, in a great machine, contriv ed by the skill of a consummate artificer, fitted up

and adjusted with all conceivable accuracy for some very difficult and deep-projected design, and polished and fine wrought in every part of it with admirable niceness and dexterity, any man who saw and examined one or two wheels thereof could not fail to observe, in those single parts of it, the admirable art and exact skill of the workman; and yet the excellency of the end or use for which the whole was contrived he would not at all be able, even though he was himself a skilful artificer, to discover and comprehend, without seeing the whole fitted up and put together: So though in every part of the natural world, considered even single and unconnected, the wisdom of the great creator sufficiently appears, yet his wisdom, and justice, and goodness in the disposition and government of the moral world, which necessarily depends on the connexion and issue of the whole scheme, cannot perhaps be distinctly and fully comprehended by any finite and created beings, much less by frail and weak and short-lived mortals, before the period and accomplishment of certain great revolutions. But it is exceedingly reasonable to believe, that as the great discoveries, which by the diligence and sagacity of later ages have been made in astronomy and natural philosophy, have opened surprising scenes of the power and wisdom of the creator, beyond what men could possibly have conceived or imagined in former times; so at the unfolding of the whole scheme of providence in the conclusion of this present state, men will be surprised with the amazing manifestations of justice and goodness which will then appear to have run through the whole series of God's government of the moral world.

This is the chief and greatest argument on which the natural proof of a future state of rewards and punishments must principally be founded. Yet there are also several other collateral evidences which jointly conspire to render the same thing extremely credible to mere natural

reason: As,

1st. Of the immortality of the soul and the natural proofs we have of it. There is very great reason, even from the bare nature of the thing itself, to believe the soul to be immortal, separate from all moral arguments drawn from the attributes of God, and without any consideration of the general system of the world, or of the universal order and constitution, connexion, and dependencies of things: The immortality of the soul has been commonly believed in all ages and in all places, [236] by the unlearned part of all civilized people, and by the almost general consent of all the most barbarous nations under heaven, from a tradition so ancient and so universal, as cannot be conceived to owe its original either to chance or to vain imagination, or to any other cause than to the author of nature himself: And the most learned and thinking part of mankind, at all times and in all countries, where the study of philosophy has been in any measure cultivated, have almost generally agreed, that it is capable of a just proof from the abstract consideration of the nature and operations of the soul itself: That none of the known qualities of matter can in any possible variation, division, or composition, produce sense, and thought, and reason, is abundantly evident, as has been demonstrated in the former discourse: [237] That matter consists of innumerable, divisible, separable, and for the most part actually disjoined parts, is acknowledged by all philosophers: That, since the powers and faculties of the soul are the most remote and distant from all the known properties of matter that can be imagined, it is at least a putting great violence upon our reason to imagine them superadded by omnipotence to one and the same substance, cannot easily be denied: That it is highly unreasonable and absurd to suppose the soul made up of innumerable consciousnesses, as matter is necessarily made up of

innumerable parts; and, on the contrary, that it is highly reasonable to believe the seat of thought to be a simple substance, such as cannot naturally be divided and crumbled into pieces, as all matter is manifestly subject to be, must of necessity be confessed: Consequently the soul will not be liable to be dissolved at the dissolution of the body, and therefore it will naturally be immortal. All this seems to follow, at least with the highest degree of probability, from the single consideration of the soul's being indued with sense, thought, or consciousness. I cannot imagine, saith Cyrus, [238] (in that speech which Xenophon relates he made to his children a little before his death,) that the soul, while it is in this mortal body, lives, and that when it is separated from it, then it should die: I cannot persuade myself that the soul, by being separated from this body, which is devoid of sense, should thereupon become itself likewise devoid of sense: On the contrary, it seems to me more reasonable to believe that, when the mind is separated from the body, it should then become most of all sensible and intelligent; thus he: But then further; if we take also into the consideration all the higher and nobler faculties, capacities, and improvements of the soul, the argument will still become much stronger. I am persuaded, saith Cicero, [239] when I consider with what swiftness of thought the soul is indued, with what a wonderful memory of things past, and forecast of things to come; how many arts, how many sciences, how many wonderful inventions it has found out, that that nature, which is possessor of such faculties, cannot be mortal: Again; the memory, saith he, [240] which the soul has of things that have been, and its foresight of things that will be, and its large comprehension of things that at present are, are plainly divine powers; nor can the wit of man ever invent any way by which these faculties could possibly come to be in men, but by immediate

communication from God: Again; though we see not, saith he, [241] the soul of man, as indeed neither are we able to see God; yet, as from the works of God we are certain of his being, so, from the faculties of the soul, its memory, its invention, its swiftness of thought, its noble exercise of all virtue, we cannot but be convinced of its divine original and nature: And, speaking of the strength and beauty of that argument, which, from the wonderful faculties and capacities of the soul, concludes it to be of an immaterial and immortal nature; though all the vulgar and little philosophers in the world, saith he, [242] (for so I cannot but call all such as dissent from Plato and Socrates, and those superior geniuses,) should put their heads together; they will not only never, while they live, be able to explain any thing so neatly and elegantly; but even this argument itself they will never have understanding enough fully to perceive and comprehend how neat, and beautiful, and strong it is. The chief prejudice against the belief of the soul's existing thus, and living after the death of the body, and the sum of all the objections brought against this doctrine by the Epicurean philosophers of old, who denied the immortality of the soul, and by certain atheistical persons of late, who differ very little from them in their manner of reasoning, is this: That they cannot apprehend how the soul can have any sense of perception, [243] without the body wherein evidently are all the organs of sense; But neither can they any better apprehend or explain how the soul in the body, [244] (that is, the body itself, according to their opinion,) is capable of sense or perception, by means of the organs of sense: And besides, this argument, that the soul can have no perception, when all the ways of perception that we have at present ideas of, are removed, is exactly the very same argument, and no other, than what a man born blind might make use of, with the very same force, to prove that none of us can

possibly have in our present bodies any perception of light or colours, as I have explained more particularly in the former discourse. [245] This consideration, The natural credibility of the soul's being immortal of great use to the wiser heathens. of the soul's appearing in all reason to be naturally immortal, afforded great pleasure and satisfaction to the wisest and soberest men in the heathen world; was a great support under calamities and sufferings, especially under such as men brought upon themselves by being virtuous; filled them with great hopes and comfortable expectations of what was to come hereafter, and was a mighty encouragement to the practice of all moral virtue, and particularly to take pains in subduing the body and keeping it in subjection to the reason of the mind. First, it afforded great pleasure and satisfaction to the wisest and soberest men in the heathen world, from the bare contemplation of the thing itself. Nobody, saith Cicero, [246] shall ever drive me from the hope of immortality; and, [247] if this my opinion concerning the immortality of the soul should at last prove an error, yet it is a very delightful error, and I will never suffer myself to be undeceived in so pleasing an opinion as long as I live. Secondly, it was a great support to them under calamities and sufferings, especially under such as men brought upon themselves by being virtuous: These and the like contemplations, saith Cicero, [248] had such an effect upon Socrates, that when he was tried for his life, he neither desired any advocate to plead his cause, nor made any supplication to his judges for mercy; and on the very last day of his life made many excellent discourses upon this subject, and a few days before, when he had an opportunity offered him to have escaped out of prison, he would not lay hold of it: For thus he believed, and thus he taught; that when the souls of men depart out of their bodies, they go two different ways; the virtuous to a place of happiness, the wicked

and the sensual to misery. Thirdly, it filled them with great hopes and comfortable expectations of what was to come hereafter: O happy day, saith the good old man in Cicero, [249] when I shall go to that blessed assembly of spirits, and depart out of this wicked and miserably confused world! Lastly, it was a mighty encouragement to the practice of all moral virtue, and particularly to take pains in subduing the body and keeping it in subjection to the reason of the mind: We ought to spare no pains, saith Plato, [250] to obtain the habit of virtue and wisdom in this life; for the prize is noble, and the hope is very great. Again; having reckoned up the temporal advantages of virtue in the present world, he adds: [251] But we have not yet mentioned the greatest and chiefest rewards which are proposed to virtue; for what can be truly great in so small a portion of time?--The whole age of the longest liver in this our present world, being inconsiderable, and nothing in comparison of eternity. And again; these things, saith he, [252] are nothing, either in number or greatness, in comparison with those rewards of virtue, and punishments of vice, which attend men after death. And to mention no more places, they, saith he, [253] who in the games hope to obtain a victory in such poor matters as wrestling, running, and the like, think not much to prepare themselves for the contest by great temperance and abstinence; and shall our scholars, in the study of virtue, not have courage and resolution enough to persevere, with patience, for a far nobler prize? Words very like those of St. Paul, 1 Cor. ix. 24. Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all; and every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things? Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.

2. The argument for a future state drawn from men's natural desire of immortality. Another argument which may be used in proof of a future

state, so far as to amount to a very great probability, is, that necessary desire of immortality, which seems to be naturally implanted in all men, with an unavoidable concern for what is to come hereafter. If there be no existence after this life, it will seem that the irrational creatures who always enjoy the present good, without any care or solicitude for what may happen afterwards, are better provided for by nature than man, whose reason and foresight, and all other those very faculties, by which they are made more excellent than beasts, serve them, upon this supposition, scarcely for any other purpose, than to render them uneasy and uncertain, and fearful and solicitous about things which are not. And it is not at all probable that God should have given men appetites which were never to be satisfied; desires which had no objects to answer them; and unavoidable apprehensions of what was never really to come to pass.

3. Another drawn from men's conscience or judgment of-their own actions. Rom. ii. 14, 15. Another argument, which may be brought to prove a future state, is that conscience which all men have of their own actions, or that inward judgment which they necessarily pass upon them in their own minds; whereby they that have not any law, are a law unto themselves, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts accusing or else excusing one another. There is no man, who at any time does good, and brave, and generous things, but the reason of his own mind applauds him for so doing; and no man at any time does things base and vile, dishonourable and wicked, but at the same time he condemns himself in what he does. The one is necessarily accompanied with good hope, and expectation of reward; the other with continual torment and fear of punishment. And hence, as before, it is not probable that God should have so framed and constituted the mind of man as necessarily to pass upon itself a judgment which shall never be verified, and stand

perpetually and unavoidably convicted by a sentence which shall never be confirmed.

4. Another drawn from man's being by nature an accountable creature. Lastly, another argument, which may be drawn from right reason, in proof of a future state, is this; that man is plainly in his nature an accountable creature, and capable of being judged. Those creatures, indeed, whose actions are all determined by something without themselves, or by what we call mere instinct, as they are not capable of having a rule given them, so it is evident that neither can they be accountable for their actions. But man, who has entirely within himself a free principle or power of determining his own actions upon moral motives, and has a rule given him to act by, which is right reason, can be, nay, cannot but be, accountable for all his actions, how far they have been agreeable or disagreeable to that rule. Every man, because of the natural liberty of his will, can and ought to govern all his actions by some certain rule, and give a reason for every thing he does. Every moral action he performs, being free and without any compulsion or natural necessity, proceeds either from some good motive or some evil one; is either conformable to right reason, or contrary to it; is worthy either of praise or dispraise, and capable either of excuse or aggravation: Consequently, it is highly reasonable to be supposed, that since there is a Superior Being, from whom we received all our faculties and powers, and since in the right use or in the abuse of those faculties, in the governing them by the rule of right reason, or in the neglecting that rule, consists all the moral difference of our actions; there will at some time or other be an examination or inquiry made, into the grounds, and motives, and circumstances of our several actions, how agreeable or disagreeable they have been to the rule that was given us; and a suitable judgment

be passed upon them. Upon these considerations the wisest of the ancient heathens believed and taught that the actions of every particular person should all be strictly tried and examined after his death, and he have accordingly a just and impartial sentence passed upon him: Which doctrine though the poets indeed wrapped up in fables and obscure riddles, yet the wisest of the philosophers had a better notion of it, and more agreeable to reason. From this judgment, saith Plato, [254] let no man hope to be able to escape: For though you could descend into the very depth of the earth, or fly on high to the extremities of the heavens; yet should you never escape the just judgment of the gods, either before or after death: An expression very agreeable to that of the Psalmist; Psal. cxxxix. 8, 9.

These, I say, are very good and strong arguments for the great probability of a future state: But that drawn as above, from the consideration of the moral attributes of God, seems to amount even to a demonstration.

[230] Ei de me lanthaneton tous theous, ho men d?kaios theophiles an eee, ho de adikos theomises----To de theophilei, hosa ge hupo theon gignetai, panta gignetai hos oionte, arista.----Houtos hara hupolepteon peri tou dikaiou andros, ean t' en penia gignetai, ean t' en nosois, e tini allo ton dokounton kakon, hos touto tauta eis agathon ti teleutesei zonti e kai apothanonti. Ou gar de hupo ge theon pote ameleitai, hos an pro thumeisthai ethele dikaios gignesthai, kai epitedeuon areten eis hoson dunaton anthropo homoiousthai theo.--Plato de Republ. lib. 10.

[231] Ouk oida hopos m9akarious hupolabo tous methen apolausantas tes aretes agathon, di auten de tauten apollumenous.--Dionys. Halicarn.

[232] Porro ipsa virtus, cum sibi bonorum culmen vendicet humanorum, quid hie agit nisi perpetua bella cum vitiis; nec exterioribus, sed

interioribus; nec alienis, sed plane nostris et propriis?----Absit ergo, ut quamdiu in hoc bello intestino sumus, jam nos beatitudinem, ad quam vincendo volumus pervenire, adeptos esse credamus.--Augustin de Civitate Dei, lib. 19. c. 4. Non enim virtus ipsa est summum bonum, sed effectrix et mater est summi boni, quoniam perveniri ad illud sine virtute non potest.--Lactant. lib. 3.

[233] Ita sit, ut si ab illa rerum summa, quam superiù s comprehendimus, aberraveris; omnis ratio intereat, et ad nihilum omnia revertantur.--Lactant. lib. 7.

[234] Non enim temerè , nec fortuito sati et creati sumns; sed profecto fuit quædam vis, quæ generi consuleret humano; nec id gigneret aut aleret, quod cum exantlavisset omnes labores, tum incideret in mortis malum sempiternum.--Cic. Tusc. Quoest. lib. 1.

[235] Si sine causa gignimur, si in hominibus procreandis providentia nulla versatur, si casu nobismetipsis ac voluptatis nostræ gratia nascimur; si nihil post mortem sumus; quid potest esse tam supervacuum, tam inane, tam vanum, quam humana res est, quam mundus ipse?--Lactant. lib. 7.

[236] Et primum quidem omni antiquitate, &c.--Cic. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.

[237] Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God. See also a letter to Mr Dodwell, with the several answers and replies.

[238] Ou toi egoge, ho paides, oude touto popote epeisthen, hos he psuche heos an en th9neto somati he z?; hotan de toutou apallage, tethnek9en. Oude ge hopos , aphron estai e psuche epeiden tou Haphronos somatos dicha genetai, oude touto pepeismai. All' hotan akratos kai katharos ho nous ekkrithe, tote k9ai phronimotaton eikos auton einai.--Cyrus apud Xen.

[239] Quid multa? Sic mihi persuasi, sec sentio; quum tanta celeritas animorum sit, tanta memoria præteritorum, futurorum providentia, tot

artes, tantæ scientiæ, tot inventa; non posse eam naturam, quæ res eas contineat, esse mortalem.--Cic. de Senectute.

[240] Quod et præterita teneat, et futura provideat, et complecti possit præsentia; hæc divina sunt. Nec invenietur unquam, unde ad hominem venire possint, nisi a Deo.--Idem. Tusc. Quoest. lib. 1.

[241] Mentem hominis, quamvis eam non videas, ut Deum non vides, tamen, ut Deum agnoscis ex operibus ejus, sic ex memoria rerum, et inventione, et celeritate motus, omnique pulchritudine virtutis, vim divinam mentis agnoscito.--Id. ibid.

[242] Licet concurrant plebeii omnes philosophi, (sic enim ii qui à Platone et Socrate et ab illa familia dissident, appellandi videntur;) non modo nihil unquam tam eleganter explicabunt, sed ne hoc quidem ipsum quam subtiliter conclusum sit intelligent.--Id. Ibid.

[243]

--Si immortalis natura animi est,
Et sentire potest secreta a corpore nostro;
Quinque (ut opinor) eam faciundum est sensibus auctam:
--At neque seorsum oculi, &c. Lucret. lib. 3.

Quod autem corpus animæ per se? quæ materia? ubi cogitatio illi? quomodo visus? auditus? aut qui tangit? qui usus ejus? aut quod sine his bonum?--Plin. lib. 7. Neque aliud est quidquam cur incredibilis his animorum videatur æternitas, nisi quod nequeunt qualis sit animus vacans corpore intelligere, et cogitatione comprehendere.--Cic. Tusc. Quoest. lib. 1.

[244] Quasi vero intelligant qualis sit in ipso corpore.--Mihi quidem naturam animi intuenti, multo difficilior occurrit cogitatio, multoque obscurior, qualis animus in corpore sit, quam qualis cum exierit.--Id. Ibid.

[245] Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, page 71.

[246] Sed me nemo de immortalitate depellet.--Cic. Tusc. Quoest. lib. 1.

[247] Quod si in hoc error, quod animos hominum immortales esse credam, libenter erro; nec mihi hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo.--Idem de Senectute.

[248] His et talibus adductus Socrates, nec patronum quæsivit ad judicium capitis, nec judicibus supplex fuit, et supremo vitæ die, de hoc ipso multa disseruit; et paucis ante diebus, cum facile posset educi e custodia, noluit.----Ita enim censebat, itaque disseruit, duas esse vias, duplicesque cursus animorum, e corpore excedentium, &c.--Id. Tusc. Quoest. lib. 1. See also the passage of Sophocles, cited above.

[249] O præclarum diem, quum in illud animorum concilium cætumque proficiscar, et quum ex hac turba et colluvione discedam!--Idem de Senect.

[250] Chre panta poieinhoste aretes kai phroneseos en to bio metaschein kalon gar to athlon, kai he elpis megale.--Plato in Phædone.

[251] Kai men ta ge megista epicheira aretes kai prokeimena athla ou dieleluthamen.----Ti d' an en ge oligo chrono mega genoito; pas gar outos geho en paidos mechri presbutou chronos pros panta oligos pou tis an eie.--Plato de Republ. lib. 10.

[252] Tauta t9oinun ouden esti plethei oude megethei pros ekeina ha tileutesanta hekateron perimenei.--Idem, ibid.

[253] Hoi men ara nikes heneka pales kai dromon kai ton toiouton, etolmesan apechesthai.----Hoi de hemeteroi paides adunatesousi karterein, polu kallionos heneka nikes.--Plato de Legib. lib. 8.

[254] Tautes tes dikes oute su mepote, oute ei allos atuches genomen9os epeuxetai p9eregenesthai theon.----Ou gar amelethese pot' up' autes ouch houto smikros on, duse kata to tes ges bathos; oudeu upselos genomenos, eis ton ouranon anaptese; tiseis de auton ten proesekousan

timorian, ei t' enthade menon, heite kai en ade diaporentheis, eithe kai touton eis agiotrron eti diakomistheis titon.--Plato de Legib. lib. 10.

Proposition V.

V. Proposition V. Though the necessity and indispensableness of all the great and moral obligations of natural religion, and also the certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments, be thus in general deducible, even demonstrably, by a chain of clear and undeniable reasoning; yet (in the present state of the world, by what means soever it came originally to be so corrupted, the particular circumstances whereof could not now be certainly known but by revelation,) such is the carelessness, inconsiderateness, and want of attention of the greater part of mankind; so many the prejudices and false notions taken up by evil education; so strong and violent the unreasonable lusts, appetites, and desires of sense; and so great the blindness introduced by superstitious opinions, vicious customs, and debauched practices through the world; that very few are able, in reality and effect, to discover these things clearly and plainly for themselves: But men have great need of particular teaching, and much instruction, to convince them of the truth, and certainty, and importance of these things; to give them a due sense, and clear and just apprehensions concerning them, and to bring them effectually to the practice of the plainest and most necessary duties.

1. Men hindered from discovering and understanding religious truths, by carelessness and want of attention. There is naturally in the greater part of mankind such a prodigious carelessness, inconsiderateness and want of attention, as not only hinders them from making use of their reason, in such manner as to discover these things clearly and effectually for themselves, but is the cause of the grossest and most stupid ignorance imaginable. Some seem to have little or hardly any

notion of God at all; and more take little or no care to frame just and worthy apprehensions concerning him, concerning the divine attributes and perfections of his nature; and still many more are entirely negligent and heedless to consider and discover what may be his will. Few make a due use of their natural faculties, to distinguish rightly the essential and unchangeable difference between good and evil; fewer yet so attend to the natural notices which God has given them, as by their own understanding to collect that what is good is the express will and command of God, and what is evil is forbidden by him; and still fewer consider with themselves the weight and importance of these things, the natural rewards or punishments that are frequently annexed in this life to the practice of virtue or vice, and the much greater and certainer difference that shall be made between them in a life to come. Hence it is that (as travellers assure us) even some whole nations seem to have very little notion of God, or at least very poor and unworthy apprehensions concerning him; and a very small sense of the obligations of morality; and very mean and obscure expectations of a future state. Not that God has anywhere left himself wholly without witness; or that the difference of good and evil is to any rational being undiscernible; or that men at any time or in any nation, could ever be firmly and generally persuaded in their own minds that they perished absolutely at death: But through supine negligence and want of attention, they let their reason (as it were) sleep, [255] and are deaf to the dictates of common understanding; and, like brute beasts, minding only the things that are before their eyes, never consider any thing that is abstract from sense, or beyond their present private temporal interest. And it were well if even in civilized nations this was not very nearly the case of too many men, when left entirely to themselves, and void of particular instruction.

2. And by early prejudices and false notions. The greater part of mankind are not only inattentive, and barely ignorant, but commonly they have also, through a careless and evil education, taken up early prejudices, and many vain and foolish notions, which pervert their natural understanding, and hinder them from using their reason in moral matters to any effectual purpose. This cannot be better described than in the words of Cicero: If we had come into the world, saith he, [256] in such circumstances as that we could clearly and distinctly have discerned nature herself, and have been able in the course of our lives to follow her true and uncorrupted directions, this alone might have been sufficient, and there would have been little need of teaching and instruction. But now nature has given us only some small sparks of right reason, which we so quickly extinguish with corrupt opinions and evil practices, that the true light of nature nowhere appears: As soon as we are brought into the world, immediately we dwell in the midst of all wickedness, and are surrounded with a number of most perverse and foolish opinions, so that we seem to suck in error even with our nurse's milk: Afterwards, when we return to our parents, and are committed to tutors, then we are further stocked with such variety of errors, that truth becomes perfectly overwhelmed with falsehood, and the most natural sentiments of our minds are entirely stifled with confirmed follies; but when, after all this, we enter upon business in the world, and make the multitude, conspiring everywhere in wickedness, our great guide and example, then our very nature itself is wholly transformed, as it were, into corrupt opinions. A livelier description of the present corrupt estate of human nature is not easily to be met with.

3. And by sensual appetites, passions, and worldly business. In the generality of men the appetites and desires of sense are so violent and

importunate, the business and the pleasures of the world take up so much of their time, and their passions are so very strong and unreasonable, that of themselves they are very backward and unapt to employ their reason, and fix their attention upon moral matters, and still more backward to apply themselves to the practice of them. The love of pleasure is (as Aristotle elegantly expresses it, [257]) so nourished up with us from our very childhood, and so incorporated (as it were) into the whole course of our lives, that it is very difficult for men to withdraw their thoughts from sensual objects, and fasten them upon things remote from sense; and if perhaps they do attend a little, and begin to see the reasonableness of governing themselves by a higher principle than mere sense and appetite, yet with such variety of temptations are they perpetually encompassed and continually solicited, [258] and the strength of passions and appetites, make so great opposition to the motions of reason, that commonly they yield and submit to practise those things which at the same time the reason of their own mind condemns, [259] and what they allow not that they do; which observation is so true of too great a part of mankind, that Plato upon this ground declares all arts and sciences to have, in his opinion, [260] less of difficulty in them than that of making men good; insomuch that it is well, saith he, [261] if men can come to attain a right sense, and just and true notions of things, even by that time they arrive at old age.

4. And above all, by vicious habits and practices. But that which, above all other things, most depraves men's natural understanding, and hinders them from discerning and judging rightly of moral truths, is this; that as stupid and careless ignorance leads them into fond and superstitious opinions, and the appetites of sense overcome and tempt them into practices contrary to their conscience and judgment; so, on

the reverse, the multitude of superstitious opinions, vicious habits, and debauched practices, which prevail in all ages through the greater part of the world, do reciprocally increase men's gross ignorance, carelessness, and stupidity. False and unworthy notions of God, or superstitious apprehensions concerning him, which men carelessly and inconsiderately happen to take up at first; do (as it were) blind the eyes of their reason for the future, and hinder them from discerning what of itself originally was easy enough to be discovered. That which may be known Rom. i. 19, &c. of God has been manifest enough unto men in all ages, for God hath showed it unto them: For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead: So that they who are ignorant of him cannot but be without excuse. But notwithstanding all the heathen world had so certain means of knowing God, yet generally they glorified him not as God; neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; and they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into images of the meanest and most contemptible creatures; and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever: The natural consequence of which absurd idolatry, and also the just judgment of God upon them for it was, that they were given up to a reprobate mind, to uncleanness, and to all vile affection to such a degree, that not only their common practices, but even their most sacred rites and religious performances became themselves the extremest abominations. And when men's morals are thus corrupted, and they run with greediness into all excess of riot and debauchery; then, on the other hand, by the same natural consequence, and by the same just judgment of God, both their vicious customs and actions, as well as superstitious opinions, reciprocally increase the blindness of their

hearts,Eph. iv. 18. 19. darken the judgment of their understandings, stupify and sear their consciences so as to become past feeling, [262] and by degrees extinguish wholly that light of nature in their own minds, which was given them originally to enable them to discern between good and evil.

Wherefore men have great need to be taught and instructed in matters of religion. By these means it comes to pass, that though the great obligations and the principal motives of morality, are indeed certainly discoverable and demonstrable by right reason; and all considerate men, when those motives and obligations are fairly proposed to them, must of necessity (as has been fully proved in the foregoing heads) yield their assent to them as certain and undeniable truths; yet under the disadvantages now mentioned, (as it is the case of most men to fall under some or other of them,) very few are of themselves able, in reality and effect, discover those truths clearly and plainly for themselves: But most men have great need of particular teaching and much instruction, not without some weight of authority, as well as reason and persuasion;

1st. To raise and stir up their attention,--to move them to shake off their habitual carelessness, stupidity, and inconsiderateness,--to persuade them to make use of their natural reason and understanding, and to apply their minds to apprehend and study the truth and certainty of these things: For, as men, notwithstanding all the rational faculties they are by nature indued with, may yet, through mere neglect and incogitancy, be grossly and totally ignorant of the plainest and most obvious mathematical truths; so men may also, for want of consideration, be very ignorant of some of the plainest moral obligations, which, as soon as distinctly proposed to them, they cannot possibly avoid giving their assent unto.

2. To give them a due sense, and right and just apprehensions concerning these things,--to convince them of the great concern and vast importance of them,--to correct the false notions, vain prejudices, and foolish opinions, which deprave their judgment,--and to remove that levity and heedlessness of spirit which makes men frequently to be in their practice very little influenced by what in abstract opinion they may seem firmly to believe: For there are many men who will think themselves highly injured if any one should make any doubt of their believing the indispensable obligations of morality, and the certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments, who yet in their lives and actions seem to have upon their minds but a very small sense of the weight and infinite importance of these great truths.

3. To inculcate these things frequently upon them, and press them effectually to the practice of the plainest and most necessary duties,--to persuade them to moderate those passions,--to subdue those lusts,--to conquer those appetites,--to despise those pleasures of sense,--and (which is the greatest difficulty of all) to reform and correct those vicious customs and evil habits which tempt and hurry them too often into the commission of such things, as they are convinced at the same time, in the reason of their own minds, ought not to be practised: For it is very possible men may both clearly understand their duty and also be fully convinced of the reasonableness of practising it, and yet at the same time find a law in their membersRom. vii. 23. warring and prevailing against the law of their mind, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin and death. Men may be pleased with the beauty and excellency of virtue, [263] and have some faint inclinations and even resolutions to practise it, and yet, at the return of their temptations, constantly fall back into their accustomed vices, if the great motives of their duty be not very

frequently and very strongly inculcated upon them, so as to make very deep and lasting impressions upon their minds, and they have not some greater and higher assistance afforded them than the bare conviction of their own speculative reason.

For these reasons (I say) it is very fit, that, notwithstanding the natural demonstrableness both of the obligations and motives of morality, yet considering the manifest corruptness of the present estate which human nature is in, the generality of men should not by any means be left wholly to the workings of their own minds, to the use of their natural faculties, and to the bare convictions of their own reason, but should be particularly taught and instructed in their duty, should have the motives of it frequently and strongly pressed and inculcated upon them with great weight and authority, and should have many extraordinary assistances afforded them, to keep them effectually in the practice of the great and plainest duties of religion.

The great use and necessity of an order of preachers. And hence we may, by the way, justly observe the exceeding great use and necessity there is, of establishing an order or succession of men, whose peculiar office and continual employment it may be, to teach and instruct people in their duty, to press and exhort them perpetually to the practice of it, and to give them all possible assistances for that purpose. To which excellent institution, the right and worthy notion of God and his divine perfections, the just sense and understanding of the great duties of religion, and the universal belief and due apprehension of a future state of rewards and punishments; with the generality even of the meaner and more ignorant sort of people among us, are now possessed of; is manifestly and undeniably almost wholly owing: As I shall have occasion hereafter more particularly to observe.

[255] Multis signis natura declarat quid velit;--obsurdescimus tamen,

nescio quomodo, nec audimus.--Cic. de Amicit.

[256] Si tales nos natura genuisset, ut eam ipsam intueri et perspicere, eâ que optimâ duce cursum vitæ conficere possemus; haud esset sanè quod quisquam rationem et doctrinam requireret. Nunc vero, &c.--Cic. Tusc. Quoest. lib. 3. Nunc parvulos nobis dedit igniculos, quos celeriter malis moribus opinionibusque depravatis sic restinguimus, ut nusquam naturæ lumen appareat.----Simul atque editi in lucem et suscepti sumus, in omni continuo pravitate, et in summa opinionum perversitate, versamur; ut pene cum lacte nutricis, errorem suxisse videamur. Cum vero parentibus redditi, deinde magistris traditi sumus; tum ita variis imbuimur erroribus, ut vanitati veritas, et opinioni confirmatæ natura ipsa cedat.----Cum vero accedit eodem, quasi maximus quidem magister, populus, atque omnis undique ad vitia consentiens multitudo, tum plane inficimur opinionum pravitate, a naturaque ipsa desciscimus.--Ibid.

[257] heti de ek nepiou pasin hemin suntethraptai [hedone] dio kai chalepon apotripsasthai touto to pathos, enkechrosmenon to bio.--Arislot. Ethic. lib. 2. c. 2.

[258] Vitia de mercede sollicitant; avaritia pecuniam promittit: luxuria multas ac varias voluptates; ambitio purpuram et plausum; et ex hoc potentiam, et quicquid potentia ponit.--Senec. Epist. 59. Tode de ismen, hoti tauta ta pathe en hemin hoion neura e merinthoi tines enousai, sposi t9e hemas kai allelai; anthelkousin, enantiai oosai ep' enanti_s praxeis.--Plato de Legib. lib. 1.

[259] ----Video meliora proboque, deteriora sequor.

[260] hedoxe de, kai nun eti dokei, ta men alla epitedeumata panta, ou sphodra chalepa heinai; to de tina tropon chre gignesthai chrestous anthropous, panchalepon.--Plato in Epinomide.

[261] Phronesin de kai aletheis doxas bebaioun, eutuches hoto kai pros

to geras parngineto.--Id. de Legib. lib. 1.

[262] Justos natura esse factos;----tantam autem esse corruptelam malæ consuetudinis, ut ab ea tanquam igniculi extinguantur a natura dati, exorianturque et confirmentur vitia contraria.--Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

[263] Quidam ad magnificas voces excitantur, et transeunt in affectum dicentium, alacres vultu et animo. Rapit illos instigatque rerum pulchritudo.----Juvat protinus quæ audias, facere. Afficiuntur illi, et sunt quales jubentur, si illa animo forma permaneat, si non impetum insignem protinus populus honesti dissuasor excipiat. Pauci illam quam conceperant mentem, domum perferre potuerunt.--Senec. Epist. 109.

Proposition VI.

VI. Proposition VI. Though in almost every age there have indeed been in the heathen world some wise and brave and good men, who have made it their business to study and practise the duties of natural religion themselves, and to teach and exhort others to do the like, who seem therefore to have been raised up by Providence, as instruments to reprove in some measure, and put some kind of check to the extreme superstition and wickedness of the nations wherein they lived; yet none of these have ever been able to reform the world with any considerable great and universal success, because they have been but very few that have in earnest set themselves about this excellent work; and they that have indeed sincerely done it have themselves been entirely ignorant of some doctrines, and very doubtful and uncertain of others, absolutely necessary for the bringing about that great end; and those things which they have been certain of, and in good measure understood, they have not been able to prove and explain clearly enough; and those that they have been able both to prove and explain by sufficiently clear reasoning, they have not yet had authority enough to enforce and inculcate upon men's minds with so strong an impression as to influence and govern the general practice of the world.

1. There have, indeed, in almost every age been, in the heathen world, some wise, and brave, and good men, who have made it their business to study and practise the duties of natural religion themselves, and to teach and exhort others to do the like: An eminent instance whereof, in the eastern nations, the Scripture itself affords us in the history of Job; concerning whom it does not certainly appear that he knew any positive revealed institution of religion, or that, before his

sufferings, any immediate revelation was made to him, as there was to Abraham and the rest of the patriarchs. Among the Greeks Socrates seems to be an extraordinary example of this kind, concerning whom Plato tells us, in his apology, [264] that he did nothing else but go continually about, persuading both old and young, not to be so much solicitous to gratify the appetites of the body, or to heap up wealth, or to raise themselves to honour, or gain any outward advantage whatsoever: as to improve the mind, by the continual exercise of all virtue and goodness: Teaching them, that a man's true value did not arise from his riches, or from any outward circumstances of life; but that true riches, and every real good, whether public or private, proceeded wholly from virtue. After him, Plato and Aristotle and others followed his example, in teaching morality. And among the Romans, Cicero, and in later times, Epictetus and Antoninus, and several others, gave the world admirable systems of ethics, and noble moral instructions and exhortations, of excellent use and benefit to the generations wherein they live, and deservedly of great value and esteem even unto this day.

2. Who seem to have been designed by Providence to bear witness against the wickedness of the nations wherein they lived. So that I think, it may very justly be supposed, that these men were raised up and designed by Providence, (the abundant goodness of God having never left itself wholly without witness, notwithstanding the greatest corruptions and provocations of mankind,) as instruments to reprove in some measure, and put some kind of check to the extreme superstition and wickedness of the nations wherein they lived; or at least to bear witness against, and condemn it. Concerning Job, the case is evident and confessed. And for the same reason, some of the ancientest writers of the church have not scrupled to call even Socrates also, [265] and some others of the

best of the heathen moralists, by the name of Christians; and to affirm, that, [266] as the law was as it were a schoolmaster to bring the Jews unto Christ, so true moral philosophy was to the gentiles a preparative to receive the gospel. This perhaps was carrying the matter somewhat to far: But, to be sure, thus much we may safely assert, that [267] whatever any of these men were at any time enabled to deliver wisely and profitably, and agreeably to divine truth, was as a light shining in a dark place, derived to them by a ray of that infinite overflowing goodness, which does good to all even both just and unjust; from God the sole fountain of all truth and wisdom: And this, for some advantage and benefit to the rest of the world, even in its blindest and most corrupt estate.

3. But yet none of these men were ever able to reform the world with any considerable success. But then, notwithstanding the most that can be made of this supposition, it is certain the effect of all the teaching and instruction even of the best of the philosophers in the heathen world, was in comparison very small and inconsiderable. They never were able to reform the world with any great and universal success, nor to keep together any considerable number of men in the knowledge and practice of true virtue. With respect to the worship of God, idolatry prevailed universally in all nations; and, notwithstanding men did indeed know God, so as to be without excuse, yet "they did not like to retain him in their knowledge, but became vain in theirRom. i, 21-28. imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, and they changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into images" of the vilest creatures; and no philosophers ever turned any great number of men from this absurd idolatry, to the acknowledgment and worship of the only true God. In respect of men's dealings one with another, honour and interest, and friendship, and laws, and the

necessity of society, did indeed cause justice to be practised in many heathen nations to a great degree; but very few men among them were just and equitable upon right and true principles, a due sense of virtue, and a constant fear and love of God. With respect to themselves, intemperance and luxury, and unnatural uncleanness, was commonly practised, even in the most civilized countries; and this not so much in opposition to the doctrine of the philosophers, as by the consent indeed and encouragement of too great a part of them. I shall not enlarge upon this ungrateful and melancholy subject: There are accounts enough extant of the universal corruption and debauchery of the heathen world. St. Paul's description of it, in the whole first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, is alone sufficient; and the complaints of their own writers abundantly confirm it. [268] The disciples of the best moralists, at least the practisers of their doctrine were, in their own lifetime, [269] very few, as too plainly appears from the evil treatment which that great man Socrates met withal at Athens: And at their deaths their doctrine in great measure died with them, not having any sufficient evidence or authority to support it; and their followers quickly fell back into the common idolatry, superstition, uncleanness, and debauchery, of which the character the Roman writers give of those that called themselves the disciples of Socrates is a particular and remarkable instance. These considerations (so very early did they appear to be true,) affected in such a manner that great admirer of Socrates, Plato, that he sometimes seems to give over all hopes of working any reformation in men by philosophy; and says that a good man, [270] when he considers these things, would even choose to sit quiet, and shift for himself, like a man that in a violent hurricane creeps under a wall for his defence; and seeing the whole world round about him filled with all manner of

wickedness, be content if, preserving his single self from iniquity and every evil work, he can pass away the present life in peace, and at last die with tranquillity and good hope. And, indeed, for many reasons, it was altogether impossible that the teaching of the philosophers should ever be able to reform mankind, and recover them out of their very degenerate and corrupt estate, with any considerably great and universal success.

1. Because they have been but very few that have in earnest set themselves about that excellent work. In the first place, because the number of those who have in earnest set themselves about this excellent work have been exceeding few: Philosophers, indeed, that called themselves so, there were enough in every place, and in every age: But those who truly made it their business to improve their reason to the height, to free themselves from the superstition which overwhelmed the whole world, to search out the obligations of morality, and the will of God their creator, to obey it sincerely themselves, as far as they could discover it by the light of nature, and to encourage and exhort others to do the like; were but a very few names. The doctrine of far the greatest part of the philosophers consisted plainly in nothing but words, and subtilty, and strife, and empty contention; as did not at all amend even their own manners, much less was fitted to reform the world. Their scholars, [271] as Aristotle excellently describes them, thought themselves greatly improved in philosophy, and that they were become gallant men if they did but hear and understand and learn to dispute about morality, though it had no effect at all nor influence upon their manners; just as if a sick man should expect to be healed by hearing a physician discourse, though he never followed any of his directions. Undoubtedly, saith he, the mind of the one was exactly as much improved by such philosophy, as the health of the other's body by

such physic: And no wonder the generality of the common hearers judged of their own improvement in philosophy by such false measures, when the enormous viciousness of the lives of the philosophers themselves [272] made it plainly appear that their art was not so much intended and fitted for the reformation of men's manners, as to be an exercise of wit and subtilty, and an instrument of vainglory: Excepting, perhaps, Socrates and Plato, and some others of that rank, this account is too plainly true of the greatest part of the philosophers. The argument is too unpleasant to instance in particulars. Whoever pleases, may, in Diogenes Laertius, and other writers, find accounts enough of the lewdness and unnatural vices of most of the philosophers. It is a shame for us, so much as to speak of those things, which were done of them, not only in secret, but even in the most public manner. I shall here only add the judgment of Cicero, a man as able to pass a right judgment in this matter as ever lived. Do you think, [273] says he, that these things (meaning the precepts of morality,) had any influence upon those men, (excepting only a very few of them,) who taught, and wrote, and disputed about them? No; who is there of all the philosophers, whose mind, and life, and manners were conformable to right reason? Whoever made his philosophy to be the law and rule of his life, and not a mere boast and show of his wit and parts? who observed his own instructions, and lived in obedience to his own precepts? On the contrary; many of them were slaves to filthy lusts, many to pride, many to covetousness, &c.

2. And those few of the philosophers, who did indeed sincerely endeavour to reform mankind, were yet themselves entirely ignorant of some doctrines absolutely necessary to the bringing about that great end. Those few extraordinary men of the philosophers, who did indeed in good measure sincerely obey the laws of natural religion themselves,

and make it their chief business to instruct and exhort others to do the same, were yet themselves entirely ignorant of some doctrines absolutely necessary to the bringing about this great end, of the reformation and recovery of mankind.

In general: Having no knowledge of the whole scheme, order, and state of things, the method of God's governing the world, his design in creating mankind, the original dignity of human nature, the ground and circumstances of men's present corrupt condition, the manner of the divine interposition necessary to their recovery, and the glorious end to which God intended finally to conduct them: Having no knowledge (I say) of all this, their whole attempt to discover the truth of things, and to instruct others therein, was like wandering in the wide sea, [274] without knowing whither they were to go, or which way they were to take, or having any guide to conduct them: And accordingly the wisest of them were never backward to confess their own ignorance and great blindness; [275] that truth was hid from them [276] as it were in an unfathomable depth; that they were much in the dark, [277] and very dull and stupid, not only as to the profounder things of wisdom, but as to such things also which seemed very capable of being in great part discovered: Nay, that even those things which in themselves were of all others the most manifest, [278] (that is, which, whenever made known, would appear most obvious and evident,) their natural understanding was of itself as unqualified to find out and apprehend as the eyes of bats to behold the light of the sun; that the very first and most necessary thing of all, [279] the nature and attributes of God himself, were, notwithstanding all the general helps of reason, very difficult to them to find out in particular, and still more difficult to explain; it being much more easy to say what God was not than what he was: [280] And finally, that the method of instructing men effectually, and making

them truly wise and good, was a thing very obscure and dark, and difficult to be found out: [281] In a word, Socrates himself always openly professed, that he pretended to be wiser than other men only in this one thing, that he was duly sensible of his own ignorance, and believed that it was merely for that very reason that the oracle pronounced him the wisest of men. [282]

Particularly they were very ignorant in what manner God might be acceptably worshipped. More particularly; the manner in which God might be acceptably worshipped these men were entirely and unavoidably ignorant of. That God ought to be worshipped is, in the general, as evident and plain from the light of nature as any thing can be; but in what particular manner, and with what kind of service he will be worshipped, cannot be certainly discovered by bare reason. Obedience to the obligations of nature, and imitation of the moral attributes of God, the wisest philosophers easily knew was undoubtedly the most acceptable service to God: But some external adoration seemed also to be necessary, and how this was to be performed they could not with any certainty discover. Accordingly even the very best of them complied therefore generally with the outward religion of their country, and advised others to do the same; and so, notwithstanding all their wise discourses, they fell lamentably into the practice of the most foolish idolatry. Plato, [283] after having delivered very noble, and almost divine truths concerning the nature and attributes of the Supreme God, weakly advises men to worship likewise inferior gods, [284] demons, and spirits, and dared not to condemn the worshipping even of statues also and images, dedicated according to the laws of their country; as if the honour they paid to lifeless idols could procure the favour and good-will of superior intelligences; [285] And so he corrupted and spoiled the best philosophy in the world by adding idolatry to that

worship which he had wisely and bravely before proved to be due to the creator of all things. [286] After him, Cicero, the greatest and best philosopher that Rome or perhaps any other nation ever produced, allowed men to continue the idolatry of their ancestors; [287] advised them to conform themselves to the superstitious religion of their country, [288] in offering such sacrifices to different gods as were by law established; and disapproves and finds fault with the Persian Magi, [289] for burning the temples of the Grecian gods, and asserting that the whole universe was God's temple: In [290] all which he fondly contradicts himself, by inexcusably complying with the practices of those men, whom in many of his writings he largely and excellently proves to be extremely foolish upon account of those very practices: And to mention no more, (for indeed those of a lower rank, the minuter philosophers, as Tully calls them, are not worth mentioning,) that admirable moralist Epictetus, who, for a true sense of virtue, seems to have had no superior in the heathen world; even he also advises men to offer libations and sacrifices to the gods, [291] every one according to the religion and custom of his country:

And in what method God would be reconciled to returning sinners. But still more particularly: That which of all other things, these best and wisest of the philosophers were most absolutely and unavoidably ignorant of, and yet which, of all other things, was of the greatest importance for sinful men to know, was the method by which such as have erred from the right way, and have offended God, may yet again restore themselves to the favour of God, and to the hopes of happiness. From the consideration of the goodness and mercifulness of God, the philosophers did indeed very reasonably hope, that God would show himself placable to sinners, and might be some way reconciled; but when we come to inquire more particularly what propitiation he will accept,

and in what manner this reconciliation must be made, here nature stops, and expects with impatience the aid of some particular revelation. That God will receive returning sinners, and accept of repentance instead of perfect obedience, they cannot certainly know to whom he has not declared that he will do so; for though this be the most probable and only means of reconciliation that nature suggests, yet whether this will be alone sufficient, or whether God will not require something further for the vindication of his justice, and of the honour and dignity of his laws and government, and for the expressing more effectually his indignation against sin, before he will restore men to the privileges they have forfeited, they cannot be satisfactorily assured; for it cannot positively be proved, from any of God's attributes, that he is absolutely obliged to pardon all creatures all their sins, at all times, barely and immediately upon their repenting. There arises, therefore, from nature, no sufficient comfort to sinners, but anxious and endless solicitude about the means of appeasing the Deity. Hence those divers ways of sacrificing, and numberless superstitions, which overspread the face of the heathen world, but were so little satisfactory to the wiser part of mankind, even in those times of darkness, that the more considering philosophers could not forbear frequently declaring that [292] they thought those rites could avail little or nothing towards appeasing the wrath of a provoked God, or making their prayers acceptable in his sight; but that something still seemed to them to be wanting, though they knew not what.

3. And other doctrines absolutely necessary in order to reform mankind, the best philosophers were very doubtful and uncertain about. Some other doctrines absolutely necessary, likewise, to the bringing about this great end of the reformation of mankind, though there was indeed so much proof and evidence of the truth of them to be drawn from

reason, as that the best philosophers could not by any means be entirely ignorant of them; yet so much doubtfulness, uncertainty, and unsteadiness, was there in the thoughts and assertions of these philosophers concerning them, as could not but [293] very much diminish their proper effect and influence upon the hearts and lives of men. I instance, in the immortality of the soul, the certainty of a future state, and the rewards and punishments to be distributed in a life to come. The arguments, which may be drawn from reason and from the nature of things, for the proof of these great truths, seem really (as I have before shown) to come very little short of strict demonstration: And accordingly the wisest philosophers (as has likewise been shown before) did indeed sometimes seem to have reasoned themselves into a firm belief of them, and to have been fully convinced of their certainty and reality; even so far as to apply them to excellent purposes and uses of life. But then, on the other hand, a man cannot without some pity and concern of mind observe, how strangely, at other times, the weight of the same arguments seems to have slipped (as it were) out of their minds; and with what wonderful diffidence, wavering, and unsteadiness, they discourse about the same things. I do not here think it of any very great moment, that there were indeed some whole sects of philosophers, who absolutely denied the immortality of the soul, and peremptorily rejected all kind of expectation of a life to come; (though, to be sure, this could not but in some measure shock the common people, and make them entertain some suspicion about the strength of the arguments used on the other side of the question by wiser men:) Yet, I say,) it cannot be thought of any very great moment, that some whole sects of philosophers did indeed absolutely deny the immortality of the soul; because these men were weak reasoners in other matters also, and plainly low and contemptible philosophers, in

comparison of those greater geniuses we are now speaking of. But that which I now observe, and which I say cannot be observed without some pity and concern of mind, is this; that even those great philosophers themselves, the very best and wisest and most considerate of them that ever lived, notwithstanding the undeniable strength of the arguments which sometimes convinced them of the certainty of a future state, did yet at other times express themselves with so much hesitancy and unsteadiness concerning it, as, without doubt, could not but extremely hinder the proper effect and influence which that most important consideration ought to have upon the hearts and lives of men. I am now, said Socrates [294] a little before his death, about to leave this world; and ye are still to continue in it: Which of us have the better part allotted to us, God only knows: [295] Seeming to express some doubtfulness, whether he should have any existence after death, or not. And again, at the end of his most admirable discourse concerning the immortality of the soul; I would have you to know, [296] said he to his friends who came to pay him their last visit, that I have great hopes I am now going into the company of good men: Yet I would not be too peremptory and confident concerning it. But [297] if death be only as it were a transmigration from hence unto another place; and those things, which are told us, be indeed true; that those who are dead to us, do all live there: Then, &c. So likewise Cicero, speaking of the same subject: I will endeavour, saith he, [298] to explain what you desire; yet I would not have you depend upon what I shall say, as certain and infallible; but I may guess, as other men do, at what shall seem most probable: And further than this, I cannot pretend to go. Again: Which of those two opinions, [299] saith he, [that the soul is mortal, or that it is immortal,] be true, God only knows; which of them is most probable, is a very great question. And again in the same

discourse, having brought all those excellent arguments before mentioned in proof of the immortality of the soul; yet we ought not, saith he, [300] to be overconfident of it: For it often happens that we are strongly affected at first with an acute argument; and yet, a little while after, stagger in our judgment, and alter our opinion, even in clearer matters than these: For these things must be confessed to have some obscurity in them. And again: I know not how, saith he, [301] when I read the arguments in proof of the soul's immortality, methinks I am fully convinced; and yet after I have laid aside the book, and come to think and consider of the matter alone by myself, presently I find myself slipt again insensibly into my old doubts. From all which it appears, that notwithstanding all the bright arguments and acute conclusions, and brave sayings of the best philosophers, yet life and immortality were not fully and satisfactorily brought to light by bare natural reason; [302] but men still plainly stood in need of some farther and more complete discovery.

4. And those things which they were indeed certain of, yet they were not able to prove and explain clearly and distinctly enough. Those things which the philosophers were indeed the most fully certain of, and did in good measure understand; such as the obligations of virtue, and the will of God in matters of morality; yet they were never able to prove and explain clearly and distinctly enough, to persons of capacities, in order to their complete conviction and reformation. First, because most of their discourses upon these subjects have been rather speculative and learned, nice and subtile disputes, than practical and universally useful instructions. They proved, by strict and nice argumentation, that the practice of virtue is wise and reasonable, and fit to be chosen, rather than that it is of plain, necessary, and indispensable obligation; and were able to deduce the

will of God only by such abstract and subtile reasonings as the generality of men had by no means either abilities or opportunities to understand or to be duly affected by. Their very profession and manner of life led them to make their philosophy rather an entertainment of leisure time, [303] a trial of wit and parts, an exercise of eloquence, and of the art and skill of good speaking, than an endeavour to reform the manners of men, by showing them their plain and necessary duty: And accordingly the study of it, was, as Cicero [304] himself observes, unavoidably confined to a few, and by no means fitted for the bulk and common sort of mankind, who, as they cannot judge of the true strength of nice and abstract arguments, so they will always be suspicious of some fallacy in them. None but men of parts and learning, of study and liberal education, have been able to profit by the sublime doctrine of Plato, or by the subtile disputations of other philosophers; whereas the doctrine of morality, which is the rule of life and manners, ought to be plain, easy, and familiar, and suited fully to the capacities of all men. [305] Secondly, another reason why the philosophers were never able to prove and explain clearly and distinctly enough, even those things of which they were the most certain, to persons of all capacities, in order to their complete conviction and reformation, was because they never were able to frame to themselves any complete, regular, and consistent system or scheme of things; but the truths which they taught [306] were single and scattered, accidental as it were, and hit upon by chance, rather than by any knowledge of the whole true state of things; and consequently less universally convictive. Nothing could be more certain, (as they all well knew,) than that virtue was unquestionably to be chosen, and the practice of it to be recommended necessarily above all things; and yet they could never clearly and satisfactorily make out upon what principles originally,

and for what end ultimately, this choice was to be made; and upon what grounds it was universally to be supported. Hence they perpetually disagreed, [307] opposed, and contradicted one another in all their disputations, to such a degree that St. Austin, somewhere out of Varro, reckons up no less than 280 opinions concerning that one question, What was the chief good or final happiness of man? The effect of all which differences could not, without doubt, but be a mighty hindrance to that conviction and general influence which that great truth, in the certainty whereof they all clearly agreed, (namely, that the practice of virtue was necessary and indispensable,) ought to have had upon the minds and lives of men. This whole matter is excellently set forth by Lactantius: The philosophers, saith he, [308] take them altogether, did indeed discover all the particular doctrines of true religion; but because each one endeavoured to confute what the others asserted, and no one's single scheme was in all its parts consistent, and agreeable to reason and truth, and none of them were able to collect into one whole and entire scheme the several truths dispersed among them all, therefore they were not able to maintain and defend what they had discovered. And again, having set down a brief summary of the whole doctrine and design of true religion, from the original to the consummation of all things; this entire scheme, says he, [309] because the philosophers were ignorant of, therefore they were not able to comprehend the truth, notwithstanding that they saw and discovered singly almost all the particulars of which the whole scheme consists: But this was done by different men, and at different times, and in different manners, (with various mixtures of different errors, in what every one discovered of truth singly;) and without finding the connexion of the causes, and consequences, and reasons of things, from the mutual dependencies of which the completeness and perfection of the

whole scheme arises; whereas, had there been any man who could have collected and put together in order all the several truths which were taught singly and scatteredly by philosophers of all the different sects, and have made up out of them one entire consistent scheme, truly he would not have differed much from us Christians: But this it was not possible for any man to do, without having the true system of things first revealed to him.

5. And those things which they were able to prove and explain clearly and distinctly enough, yet they had not sufficient authority to enforce in practice. Lastly: Even those things which the philosophers were not only themselves certain of, but which they have also been able to prove and explain to others, with sufficient clearness and plainness,--such as are the most obvious and necessary duties of life,--they have not yet had authority enough to enforce and inculcate upon men's minds with so strong an impression as to influence and govern the general practice of the world. The truths which they proved by speculative reason wanted still some more sensible authority to back them, [310] and make them of more force and efficacy in practice; and the precepts which they laid down, however evidently reasonable and fit to be obeyed, [311] seemed still to want weight, and to be but the precepts of men. Hence none of the philosophers, even of those who taught the clearest and certainest truths, and offered the best and wisest instructions, and enforced them with the strongest motives that could be, [312] were yet ever able to work any remarkable change in the minds and lives of any considerable part of mankind, as the preaching of Christ and his apostles undeniably did. Nor does it appear in history [313] that any number of Socrates's or Plato's followers were convinced of the excellency of true virtue, or the certainty of its final reward, in such a manner as to be willing to lay down their lives for its sake, as innumerable of the disciples

of Christ are known to have done. In speculation, indeed, it may, perhaps, seem possible, that notwithstanding it must be confessed philosophy cannot discover any complete and satisfactory remedy for past miscarriages, yet the precepts and motives offered by the best philosophers might at least be sufficient to amend and reform men's manners for the future: But in experience and practice it hath, on the contrary, appeared to be altogether impossible for philosophy and bare reason to reform mankind effectually, without the assistance of some higher principle: For though the bare natural possibility of the thing cannot indeed easily be denied, yet in this case (as Cicero excellently expresses it [314] ,) in like manner as in physic it matters nothing whether a disease be such as that no man does, or no man can recover from it; so neither does it make any difference whether by philosophy no man is, or no man can be made wise and good: So that, without some greater help and assistance, mankind is plainly left in a very bad state. Indeed, in the original uncorrupted state of human nature, before the mind of man was depraved with prejudicate opinions, corrupt affections, and vicious inclinations, customs, and habits, right reason may justly be supposed to have been a sufficient guide, and a principle powerful enough to preserve men in the constant practice of their duty. But, in the present circumstances and condition of mankind, the wisest and most sensible of the philosophers themselves have not been backward to complain, that they found the understandings of men so dark and cloudy, their wills so biassed and inclined to evil, their passions so outrageous and rebelling against reason, that they looked upon the rules and laws of right reason as very hardly practicable, and which they had very little hopes of ever being able to persuade the world to submit to. In a word they confessed that human nature was strangely corrupted; and they acknowledged this corruption to be a disease

whereof they knew not the true cause, and could not find out a sufficient remedy. So that the great duties of religion were laid down by them as matters of speculation and dispute, rather than as the rules of action; and not so much urged upon the hearts and lives of men, as proposed to the admiration of those who thought them hardly possible to be effectually practised by the generality of men. To remedy all these disorders, and conquer all these corruptions, there was plainly wanting some extraordinary and supernatural assistance, which was above the reach of bare reason and philosophy to procure, and yet without which the philosophers themselves were sensible there could never be any truly great men. [315]

[264] Ouden gar allo pratton ego perierchomai, e peithon humon kai neoterous kai p9resbuterous, mete somaton epimeleisthai, mete chrematon proteron, mete allou tinos, houto sphodra, hos tes psuches, hopos hos ariste estai; legon. hoti ouk ek chrematon he arete ginetai, all' ex aretes chremata kai talla tagatha tois anthropois hapan9ta, kai edia kai demosia.--Plato in Apol. Socrat.

[265] Kai hoi meta logou biosantes, Christianoi eisi, kan atheoi enomisthesan; hoion en Hellesi men Sokrates kai Herakleitos, kai hoi homoioi autois en barbarois de Abraam,&c.--Justin, Apolog. 2.

[266] Tacha de kai proegoumenos tois Hellensin ednthe he philosophia tote. prin e ton kurion kalesai kai tous Hellenas; epaidagogei gar kai aute to Hellenkon. hos ho nomos tous Hebraious eis Christon; proparaskeuazei toinun he philosophia. proodopoiousa ton hupo Christou teleioumenon.--Clem. Alexand. Strom.1.

[267] Ho theos gar autois tauta, kai hosa kalos lelektai, ephanerose.--Orig. advers. Cels. lib. 6.

[268] Egregium sanctumque virum si cerno, bimembri
Hoc monstrum puero, vel miranti sub aratro

Piscibus inventis, et foetæ comparo mulæ. Juvenal, Sat. 13. See also the places cited a little below.

[269] Sint licet perhonesti;--sed audire deposcimus quot sint aut fuerint numero.----Unus, duo, tres.----At genus humanum non ex bonis pauculis, sed ex cæteris omnibus æstimari convenit.--Arnob. advers. Gentes, lib. 2. Da mihi virum qui sit iracundus, maledicus, efficinatus, paucissimis Dei verbis tam placidum, quam ovem, reddam. Da libidinosum, &c.----Numquis hæc philosophorum aut unquam præstitit, aut præstare, si velit, potest?--Lactant. lib. 3. Para men tois Helletin heis tis Phaidon kai ouk oida ei deuteros, &c.--Origen advers. Cels. lib. 1.

[270] Tauta logismo labon, hesuchian echon. kai ta autou pratton, hoion en cheimoni koniortou kai zales hupo pneumatos pheromenou, hupo toichion hupostas horon tous allous katapimplamenous, anomias, agapa ei pe autos katharos adikias te kai anosioin ergon. tonte enthade bion biosetai, kai ten apallagen, autou meta kales elpidos ideos kai heumenes apallaxetai.--Plato de Republ. lib. 6.

[271] All' hoi polloi tauta men ou prattousin; epi de ton logon katapheugontes oiontai ailosophein, kai houtos esesthai stoudaioi; homoion te piiountes tois kamnousin, hoi ton iatron akouousi men epimelos; pioousi d' outhen ton prostassomenon, hosper oun oud' ekeinoi eu hexousi to soma, houto therapeuomenoi; oud' houtoi ten psuchen, houton philosophountes.--Arisyot. Ethic. lib. 2. cap. 3.

[272] Inclusos [philosophos] in angulis, facienda præcipere, quæ ne ipsi quidem faciunt qui loquuntur, linguæ et quoniam se a veris actibus removerunt, apparet eos exercendæ causa, vel advocandi gratia, artem ipsam philosophiæ reperisse.--Lactant. lib. 3.

[273] Sed hæc eadem num censes apud eos ipsos valere, nisi admodum paucos, a quibus inventa, disputata, conscripta sunt? Quotus enim

quisque philosophorum invenitur, qui sit ita moratus, ita animo ac vita constitutus, ut ratio postulat; qui disciplinam suam non ostentationem scientiæ, sed legem vitæ putet, qui obtemperet ipse sibi, et decretis suis pareat? videre licet multos, libidinum servos, &c.--Cic. Tusculan. Quoest. lib. 2.

[274] Errant ergo velut in mari magno, nec quo ferantur intelligunt; quia nec viam cernunt nec ducem sequuntur.--Lactant. lib. 6.

[275] Ex cæteris philosophis, nonne optimus et gravissimus quisque confitetur, multa se ignorare; et multa sibi etiam atque etiam esse discenda?--Cic. Tusc. Quest. 3.

[276] En butho aletheia.

[277] Tui ergo te, Cicero, libri arguunt, quam nihil a philosophia disci possit ad vitam. Hæc tua verba sunt, mihi autem non modo ad sapientiam cæci videmur, sed ad ea ipsa, quæ aliqua ex parte cerni videantur, hebetes et obtusi.--Lactant. lib. 3.

[278] Hosper gar kai ta ton nukteridon ommata pros to phengos echei to meth' hemeran, houto kai tes hemeteras psuches ho nous pros ta te phusei phanerotata panton.--Aristot. Metaphys. lib. 2. c. 1.

[279] Ton men ou poieten kai patera toude tou pantos eurein te ergon, ka8i euronta legein eis pantas adunaton.--Plato in Timæo. Profecto eos ipsos, qui se aliquid certi habere arbitrantur, addubitare coget doctissimorum hominum de maxima re tanta dissensio.--Cic. de Natura Deor. lib. 1.

[280] Utinam tam facilè vera invenire possem, quam falsa convincere.--Id. ibid.

[281] Hepou euxamenos met' emou----Kai moi dusbatos ge tis topos phainetai kai episkios; estin oun skoteinos kai dusdiereunetos.--Plato de Republ. lib. 4.

[282] See Plato in Apologia Socratis.

[283] Lactantius observes that Socrates himself, at the conclusion of one of the bravest discourses that ever was made by any philosopher, superstitiously ordered a sacrifice to be offered for him to Æ sculapius. But herein Lactantius was certainly mistaken; for Socrates undoubtedly spake this in mockery of Æ sculapius, looking upon death as his truest deliverance. Eipen, ho de teleutaion ephthenxato; O Kriton, to Asklepio opheilomcn alektruona; alla apodote, kai me amelesese.--Plato in Phoedone. Illud vero nonne summæ vanitatis, quod ante mortem familiares suos rogavit, ut Æ sculapio gallum, quem voverat, pro se sacrarent?--Lactant. lib. 3.

[284] Proton men, phamen, timas tas met' olumpious te kai tous tun polin echontas theous, tois chthoniois an tis theois artia kai deutera kai aristera nemon, horthotata tou tes eusebeias skopou tunch8anoi.----Meta theou de tousde, kai tois daimosin hog' emphron orgiazoit' an.----Epakolouthei d' autois hidrumata idia patroon theon kata nomon orgiazomena..--Plato de Legib. lib. 4.

[285] Tous men gar ton theon orontes saphos, timomen; ton de eikonas hagalmata hidrusamenoi, ohus hemin agallousi, kaiper apsuchous hontas, ekeinous hegoumetha, tuus empsuchous theous pollen dia taut' eunoian kai charin echein..--Plato de Legib. lib. 11.

[286] Ta Platoni houk apithanos men eiremena, ou men kai diethento ton philosophon axios kan auto anastraphenai en te pros ton poieten ton holon eusebeia, hen echren me notheuein, mede miainein te eidololatreia.--Orig. advers. Cels. lib. 6.

[287] A patribus acceptos Deos placet coli.--Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.

[288] Item illud ex institutis pontificum et aruspicum non mutandum est, quibus hostiis immolandum cuique Deo.--Id. ibid.

[289] Nec sequor Magos Persarum, quibus auctoribus Xerxes inflammâ sse templa Græciæ dicitur, quod parietibus includerent Deos, quorum hic

mundus omnis templum esset et domus. Melius Græci atque nostri, qui, ut augerent pietatem in Deos, easdem illos, quas nos urbes incolere voluerunt.--Id ibid.

[290] Video te, Cicero, terrena et manufacta venerari. Vana esse intelligis, et tamen eadem facis quæ faciunt ipsi quos ipse stultisssimos confiteris.----Si libenter errant etiam ii, qui errare se sentiunt quanto magis vulgus indoctum?--Lactant. lib. 2.

[291] Speidein de kai thuein, kai aparchesthai kata ta patria hekasto prosekei.--Epict. cap. 38.

[292] See Plato's Alcibiades 2. throughout.

[293] Præterea nihil apud eos certi est, nihil quod à scientia veniat;----et nemo paret, quia nemo vult ad incertum laborare.--Lactant. lib. 3.

[294] Hemoi men apoganoumino, humin biosomenois; hopoteroi de hemon erchontai epi ameinon pragma, adelon panti plen e to the.--Plato in Apolog, Socr.

[295] Quod præter Deos negat scire quenquam, scit ipse, utrum melius sit, nam dixit antè . Sed suum illud, nihil ut affirmet, tenet ad extremum.--Cic. Tusc. Qu. lib. 1.

[296] Nun de eo iste hoti par' andras te elpizo aphixesthai agathous, kai touto ouk men an panu diischurisaimen.--Plato in Phæd.

[297] Ei deu au oion apodemesai estin ho thanatos enthende eis allon topon, kai alethe esti ta legomena, hos ara ekei eisi pantes hoi tethneotes, &c.--Plato in Apolog. Socrat.

[298] Ea, quæ vis, ut potero, explicabo; nec tamen quasi Pythius Apollo, certa ut sint et fixa quæ dixero, sed ut homunculus unus è multis, probabilia conjectura sequens. Ultra enim quò progrediar, quam ut verisimilia videam, non habeo.--Cic. Tusc. Qust. lib. 1.

[299] Harum sententiarum quæ vera sit, Deus aliquis viderit; quæ

verisimillima, magna quæstio est.--Id. ibid.

[300] Etsi nihil nimis oportet confidere. Movemur enim sæpe aliquo acutè concluso, labamus mutamusque sententiam clarioribus etiam in rebus; in his est enim aliqua obscuritas.--Id ibid.

[301] Nescio quomodo, dum lego, assentior, cum posui librum, et mecum ipse de immortalitate animorum cæpi cogitare, assensio omnis illa elabitur.--Id ibid.

[302] Credebam facilè opinionibus magnorum virorum, tam gratissimam [animæ immortalitatem] promittentium magis quam probantimm.--Senec. Epist. 102. Adeo omnis illa tunc sapientia Socratis, de industria venerat consultæ æquanimitatis, non de fiducia compertæ veritatis.--Tertullian de Anima.

[303] Profecto omnis istorum disputatio, quanquam uberrimos fontes virtutis et scientiæ contineat, tamen collata cum horum [qui rempublicam gubernant] actis perfectisque rebus, vereor ne non tantum videatur attulisse negotiis hominum utilitatis, quantum oblectationem quandam otii.--Cic. de Repub. Fragm.

[304] Est, inquit Cicero, philosophia paucis contenta judicibus, multitudinem consulto ipsa, fugiens.----Maximum itaque argumentum est, philosophiam quod neque ad sapientiam tendere, neque ipsam esse sapientiam, quod mysterium ejus, barba tantum celebratur et pallio.--Lactant. lib. 3.

[305] Oligous men onesen he perikalles kai upitetedeumene Platonos lexis, pl onas de he ton eutelesteron hama kai pragmatikos kai estochasmenos ton pollon didaxanton kai grapsanto9n; esti goun idein, ton men Platona en chersi ton dokounton heinai philologon monon.--Orig. Advers. Cels. lib. 6. Agroikoteron espon ho Iesous, To thelonti ton chitona sou labein aphes kai to himation, biophelesteron kekineke ton logon kai parestesen houtos enpon, e hos en to Kritone Platon, hou med'

akouein hidiotai dunantai, alla mogis hoi ta enkuklia pros tes semnes Hellenon philosophhias memathekotes--Id. lib. 7.

[306] Ouk hoti allotria esti ta Platonos didagmata tou Christou all' hoti ouk esti pante homoia, hosper oude ta ton allon.----hekastos gar tis, apo merous tou spermatikou theiou logou to sungenes oron, kalos ephthenxato. Hoi de tanantia autois en kurioterois eirekotes, ouk epistemen ten apopton kai gnosin ten aneletton phainontai eschekenai.--Justin. Apolog. 1.

[307] Nec quid defendere debeant, scientes; nec quid refutare. Incursantque passim sine delectu omnia quæ asserunt, quicunque dissentiunt.--Lactant. lib. 7.

[308] Totam igitur veritatem, et omne divinæ religionis arcanum philosophi attigerunt. Sed aliis refellentibus, defendere id, quod invenerant, nequiverunt; quia singulis ratio non quadravit; nec ea quæ vera senserant, in summam redigere potuerunt.--Lactant. lib. 7.

[309] Quam summam, quia philosophi non comprehenderunt, nec veritatem comprehendere potuerunt, quamvis ea ferè , quibus summa ipsa constat, et viderint et explicaverint. Sed diversi ac diversè illa omnia protulerunt, non annectentes nec causas rerum, nec consequentias, nec rationes; ut summam illam, quæ continet universa, et compingerent et complerent.--Lactant. lib. 7. Quod si extitisset aliquis qui veritatem sparsam per singulos, per sectasque diffusam, colligeret in unum, ac redigeret in corpus, is profecto non dissentiret à nobis. Sed hoc nemo facere, nisi veri peritus ac sciens, potest. Verù m autem non nisi ejus scire est, qui sit doctus a Deo.--Id. ibid.

[310] Platonis documenta quamvis ad rem multum conferant, tamen parum habent firmitatis ad probandam et implendam veritatem.--Lactant. lib. 7.

[311] Quid ergo? nihilne illi [philosophi] simile præcipiunt? Imo

permulta, et ad verum frequenter accedunt. Sed nihil ponderis habent illa præcepta, quia sunt humana, et auctoritate majori, id est, divina illa carent. Nemo igitur credit, quia tam se hominem putat esse qui audit, quam est ille qui præcipit.--Lactant. lib. 3.

[312] Eipoimi d' an aletheuein, tous dunethentas diatheinai tous akroatas ton legomenon houto biountas, hos touton houtos echonton. Diatithentai Ioudaioi kai Christianoi peri tou ap' ^ut8on kaloumenou mellontos aionos. ----deiknuto houn kai kelsos e ho boulomenos, tines dietethesan peri aionion kol8aseon, hupo ton tel9eton kai mustagogon.--Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 8. Para men tois Hellesin heis tis Phaidon, kai ouk oida ei deuteros, kai heis Polemoin, metabalontes apo asotou kai mochtherotatou biou ephilosophesan; para de to Iesou, ou monon tote oi dodeka, all' aiei kai pollaplasious hoitines genomenoi sophronon choros.--Idem, lib. 3. Da mihi virum qui sit iracundus, &c. Numquis hæc philosophorum, &c.--Lactant, lib. 3. See this passage cited above.

[313] Sokr?tei men gar oudeis episteuthe huper toutou tou dogmatos apothneskein. Ch9risto de to kai apo Sokratous apo merous gnosthenti ou philosophoi oude philologoi monon epeisthesan, alla kai pantelos idiotai kai doxes kai phobou kai thanatou kataphronesantes.--Justin. Apolog. I.

[314] Nam si, consensu omnium philosophorum, sapientiam nemo assequitur; in summis malis omnes sumus, quibus vos optimè consultum à Diis immortalibus dicitis. Nam ut nihil interest utrum nemo valeat, an nemo possit valere; sic non intelligo quid intersit, utrum nemo sit sapiens, an nemo esse possit.--Cic. de Natura Deor. lib. 3.

[315] Nemo unquam vir magnus sine divino afflatu fuit.--Cicero.

Proposition VII.

VII. Proposition VII. For these reasons there was plainly wanting a divine revelation, to recover mankind out of their universally degenerate estate, into a state suitable to the original excellency of their nature: Which divine revelation both the necessities of men and their natural notions of God gave them reasonable ground to expect and hope for; as appears from the acknowledgments which the best and wisest of the heathen philosophers themselves have made of their sense of the necessity and want of such a revelation; and from their expressions of the hopes they had entertained that God would some time or other vouchsafe it unto them.

1. A divine revelation absolutely necessary for the recovery of mankind. There was plainly wanting a divine revelation, to recover mankind out of their universal corruption and degeneracy; and without such a revelation it was not possible that the world should ever be effectually reformed; for if (as has been before particularly shown) the gross and stupid ignorance, the innumerable prejudices and vain opinions, the strong passions and appetites of sense, and the many vicious customs and habits which the generality of mankind continually labour under, make it undeniably too difficult a work for men of all capacities to discover every one for himself, by the bare light of nature, all the particular branches of their duty; but most men, in the present state of things, have manifestly need of much teaching and particular instruction; if those who were best able to discover the truth, and instruct others therein, namely the wisest and best of the philosophers, were themselves unavoidably altogether ignorant of some doctrines, and very doubtful and uncertain of others, absolutely

necessary to the bringing about that great end, the reformation of mankind; if those truths, which they were themselves very certain of, they were not yet able to prove and explain clearly enough to vulgar understandings; if even those things which they proved sufficiently, and explained with all clearness, they had not yet authority enough to enforce and inculcate upon men's minds with so strong an impression as to influence and govern the general practice of the world; nor pretended to afford men any supernatural assistance, which yet was very necessary to so great a work; And if, after all, in the discovery of such matters as are the great motives of religion, men are apt to be more easily worked upon, and more strongly affected, by good testimony, than by the strictest abstract arguments; so that, upon the whole, it is plain the philosophers were never by any means well qualified to reform mankind with any considerable success; then there was evidently wanting some particular revelation, which might supply all these defects. There was plainly a necessity of some particular revelation, to discover in what manner, [316] and with what kind of external service, God might acceptably be worshipped. There was a necessity of some particular revelation, to discover what expiation God would accept for sin, by which the authority, honour, and dignity of his laws might be effectually vindicated. There was a necessity of some particular revelation, to give men full assurance of the truth of those great motives of religion, the rewards and punishments of a future state, which, not withstanding the strongest arguments of reason, men could not yet forbear doubting of. [317] In fine, there was a necessity of some particular divine revelation, [318] to make the whole doctrine of religion clear and obvious to all capacities, to add weight and authority to the plainest precepts, and to furnish men with extraordinary assistances, to enable them to overcome the corruptions

of their nature: And, without the assistance of such a revelation, it is manifest it was not possible that the world could ever be effectually reformed. Ye may even give over, saith Socrates, [319] all hopes of amending men's manners for the future, unless God be pleased to send you some other person to instruct you. And Plato: Whatever, saith he, [320] is set right and as it should be, in the present evil state of the world, can be so only by the particular interposition of God.

2. That it was agreeable to the dictates of nature and right reason, to expect or hope for such a divine revelation. Since, therefore, there was plainly and confessedly wanting a divine revelation, to relieve the necessities of men in their natural state; and since no man can presume to say that it is inconsistent with any of the attributes of God, or unbecoming the wisdom of the Creator of all things, to supply that want; to reveal to his creatures more fully the way to happiness; to make more particular discoveries of his will to them; to set before them in a clearer light the rewards and punishments of a future state; to explain in what manner he will be pleased to be worshipped; and to declare what satisfaction he will accept for sin, and upon what conditions he will receive returning sinners: Nay, since, on the contrary, it seems more suitable to our natural notions of the goodness and mercy of God, to suppose that he should do all this than not; it follows undeniably, that it was most reasonable and agreeable to the dictates of nature to expect or hope for such a divine revelation. The generality of the heathen world, who were far more equal and less prejudiced judges in this matter than modern deists, were so fully persuaded that the great rules for the conduct of human life must receive their authority from heaven, that their chief lawgivers thought it not a sufficient recommendation of their laws that they were

agreeable to the light of nature, unless they pretended also that they received them from God. But I have no need, in this argument, to make use of the examples of idolatrous lawgivers. The philosophers themselves, the best and wisest, and the least superstitious of them that ever lived, were not ashamed to confess openly their sense of the want of a divine revelation, and to declare their judgment that it was most natural and truly agreeable to right and sound reason to hope for something of that nature. There is, besides the several places before cited, a most excellent passage in Plato to this purpose; one of the most remarkable passages, indeed, in his whole works, though not quoted by any that I have met with, which therefore I think highly worthy to be transcribed at large, as a just and unanswerable reproach to all those who deny that there is any want or need of a revelation. It seems best to me, saith Socrates [321] to one of his disciples, that we expect quietly; nay, it is absolutely necessary, that we wait with patience till such time as we can learn certainly how we ought to behave ourselves both towards God and towards men. When will that time come, replies the disciple, and who is it that will teach us this? For, methinks, I earnestly desire to see and know who the person is that will do it. It is one, answers Socrates, who has now a concern for you. But in like manner, as Homer relates, that Minerva took away the mist from before Diomede's eyes, that he might be able to distinguish one person from another, so it is necessary that the mist, which is now before your mind, be first taken away, that afterwards you may learn to distinguish rightly between good and evil; for, as yet, you are not able to do it. Let the person you mentioned, replies the disciple, take away this mist, or whatever else it be, as soon as he pleases; for I am willing to do any thing he shall direct, whosoever this person be, so that I may but become a good man. Nay, answers Socrates, that person

has a wonderful readiness and willingness to do all this for you. It will be best, then, replies the disciple, to forbear offering any more sacrifices till the time that this person appears. You judge very well, answers Socrates; it will be much safer so to do, than to run so great a hazard of offering sacrifices, which you know not whether they are acceptable to God or no. Well then, replies the disciple, we will then make our offerings to the Gods, when that day comes; and I hope, God willing, it may not be far off. And, in another place, the same author having given a large account of that most excellent discourse, which Socrates made a little before his death, concerning the great doctrines of religion, the immortality of the soul, and the certainty of a life to come, he introduces one of his disciples replying in the following manner: I am, [322] saith he, of the same opinion with you, O Socrates, concerning these things; that to discover the certain truth of them, in this present life, is either absolutely impossible for us, or at least exceeding difficult. Yet not to inquire, with our utmost diligence, into what can be said about them, or to give over our inquiry before we have carried our search as far as possible, is the sign of a mean and low spirit. On the contrary, we ought therefore by all means to do one of these two things, either, by hearkening to instruction, and by our own diligent study, to find out the truth, or, if that be absolutely impossible, then to fix our foot upon that which to human reason, after the utmost search, appears best and most probable; and, trusting to that, venture upon that bottom to direct the course of our lives accordingly; unless a man could have still some more sure and certain conduct to carry him through this life, such as a divine discovery of the truth would be. I shall mention but one instance more, and that is of Porphyry, who, though he lived after our Saviour's time, and had a most inveterate hatred to the Christian revelation in particular, yet

confesses in general, [323] that he was sensible there was wanting some universal method of delivering men's souls, which no sect of philosophy had yet found out.

3. The unreasonableness of modern deists, in denying the want and use of a revelation. This sense of the ancient and wisest philosophers is much departed from by modern deists, who contend that there was no want, no need of a revelation; that philosophy and right reason was of itself sufficiently able to instruct and preserve men in the practice of their duty; and that nothing was to be expected from revelation. But besides what has been already intimated concerning the extreme barbarity of the present heathen world, and what the philosophers, both Greeks and Latins, have confessed concerning the state of the more civilized nations wherein they lived; I think we may safely appeal even to our adversaries themselves, whether the testimony of Christ, (without considering at present what truth and evidence it has,) concerning the immortality of the soul, and the rewards and punishments of a future state, have not had (notwithstanding all the corruptions of Christians) visibly in experience and effect a greater and more powerful influence upon the lives and actions of men than the reasonings of all the philosophers that ever were in the world: [324] Whether credible testimony, and the belief and authority of revelation, be not in itself as it were a light held to the consciences of stupid and careless men; and the most natural and proper means that can be imagined to awaken and rouse up many of those who would be little affected with all the strict arguments and abstract reasonings in the world. And, to bring this matter to a short issue; whether in Christian countries, (at least where Christianity is professed in any tolerable degree of purity,) the generality even [325] of the meaner and most vulgar and ignorant people have not truer and worthier notions of God,

more just and right apprehensions concerning his attributes and perfections, a deeper sense of the difference of good and evil, a greater regard to moral obligations and to the plain and most necessary duties of life, and a more firm and universal expectation of a future state of rewards and punishments; than in any heathen country any considerable number of men were ever found to have had.

It may The great necessity and use of divine revelation. here perhaps be pretended, by modern deists, that the great ignorance and undeniable corruptness of the whole heathen world has always been owing, not to any absolute insufficiency of the light of nature itself, but merely to the fault of the several particular persons, in not sufficiently improving that light; and that deists now, in places where learning and right reason are cultivated, are well able to discover and explain all the obligations and motives of morality, without believing any thing of revelation. But this, even though it were true, (as, in the sense they intend, it by no means is; because, as has been before shown, there are several very necessary truths not possible to be discovered with any certainty by the bare light of nature; but) supposing it, I say, to be true, that all the obligations and motives of morality could possibly be discovered and explained clearly, by the mere light of nature alone, yet even this would not at all prove that there is no need of revelation: For, whatever the bare natural possibility was, it is certain in fact the wisest philosophers of old [326] never were able to do it to any effectual purpose, but always willingly acknowledged that they still wanted some higher assistance. And as to the great pretences of modern deists, it is to be observed, that the clearness of moral reasonings was much improved, and the regard to a future state very much increased, even in heathen writers, after the coming of Christ. And almost all the things that are said wisely and truly by modern

deists, are plainly borrowed from that revelation which they refuse to embrace, and without which they could never have been able to have said the same things. Now, indeed, when our whole duty, with its true motives, is clearly revealed to us, its precepts appear plainly agreeable to reason; and conscience readily approves what is good, as it condemns what is evil: Nay, after our duty is thus made known to us, it is easy not only to see its agreement with reason, but also to begin and deduce its obligation from reason. But had we been utterly destitute of all revealed light, then, to have discovered our duty in all points, with the true motives of it, merely by the help of natural reason, would have been a work of nicety, pains and labour; like groping for an unknown way, in the obscure twilight. What ground have any modern deists to imagine, that if they themselves had lived without the light of the gospel, they should have been wiser than Socrates, and Plato, and Cicero? How are they certain they should have made such a right use of their reason as to have discovered the truth exactly, without being any way led aside by prejudice or neglect? If their lot had been among the vulgar, how are they sure they should have been so happy, or so considerate, as not to have been involved in that idolatry and superstition which overspread the whole world? If they had joined themselves to the philosophers, which sect would they have chosen to have followed? And what book would they have resolved upon to be the adequate rule of their lives and conversations? Or, if they should have set up for themselves, how are they certain they should have been skilful and unprejudiced enough to have deduced the several branches of their duty, and applied them to the several cases of life, by argumentation and dint of reason? It is one thing to see that those rules of life, which are beforehand plainly and particularly laid before us, are perfectly agreeable to reason; and another thing to find

out those rules merely by the light of reason, without their having first been any otherwise made known. We see that even many of those, who profess to govern their lives by the plain written rule of an instituted and revealed religion, are yet most miserably ignorant of their duty; and how can any man be sure he should have made so good improvement of his reason, as to have understood it perfectly in all its parts, without any such help? We see that many of those who profess to believe firmly that great and everlasting happiness which Christ has promised to obedience, and that great and eternal misery which Christ has threatened to disobedience, are yet hurried away, by their lusts and passions, to transgress the conditions of that covenant to which these promises and these threatenings are annexed: And how can any man be sure he should be able to overcome those great temptations, if these mighty motives were less distinctly known, or less powerfully enforced? But suppose he could, and that by strength of reason he could demonstrate to himself these things with all clearness and distinctness, yet could all men do so? Assuredly all men are not equally capable of being philosophers, though all men are equally obliged to be religious. At least thus much is certain, that the rewards and punishments of another world, the great motives of religion, cannot be so powerfully enforced, to the influencing the lives and practice of all sorts of men, by one who shall undertake to demonstrate the reality of them by abstract reason and arguments, as by one who, showing sufficient credentials of his having been himself in that other state, shall assure them of the truth and certainty of these things. But, after all, the question does not really lie here. The truth, at the bottom, is plainly this: All the great things that modern deists affect to say of right reason, as to its sufficiency in discovering the obligations and motives of morality, is only a pretence

to be made use of when they are opposing Christianity. At other times, and in reality, they have no hearty regard for morality, nor for the natural evidences of the certainty of a future state: They are willing enough to believe that men perish absolutely at death; and so they have no concern to support effectually the cause of virtue, nor care to make out any consistent scheme of things, but unavoidably recur, in truth, to downright atheism; at least, in the manners of most of them it is too plain and apparent that absolute libertinism is the thing they really aim at; and, however their creed may pretend to be the creed of deists, yet almost always their practice is the practice of very atheists.

4. Yet God was not absolutely obliged to afford men the help of such a revelation. To return therefore to the argument: From what has been said upon this head, it appears plainly that it is agreeable to the natural hopes and expectations of men, that is, of right reason duly improved, to suppose God making some particular revelation of his will to mankind, which may supply the undeniable defects of the light of nature: And, at the same time, it is evident that such a thing is by no means unworthy of the divine wisdom, or inconsistent with any of the attributes of God, but rather, on the contrary, most suitable to them. Consequently, considering the manifold wants and necessities of men, and the abundant goodness and mercy of God, there is great ground, from right reason and the light of nature, to believe that God would not always leave men wholly destitute of so needful an assistance, but would at some time or other actually afford it them: Yet it does not from hence at all follow, (as some have imagined,) that God is obliged to make such a revelation; for then it must needs have been given in all ages, and to all nations; and might have been claimed and demanded as of justice, rather than wished for and desired as of mercy and

condescending goodness. But the fore-mentioned considerations are such as might afford men reasonable ground to hope for some favour of this kind, to be conferred at such time, and in such manner, and upon such persons, as should seem best to supreme infinite wisdom; at least they might well dispose and prepare men before-hand, whenever any doctrine should come accompanied with just and good evidence of its being such a revelation to believe and embrace it with all readiness.

Want of universality, no sufficient objection against the truth of a revelation. It has been made use of by a modern author, [327] as his principal and strongest argument against the reasonableness of believing any revelation at all, that it is confessed there has been no revelation universally owned and embraced as such, either in all ages, or by all nations in any age. He pretends to acknowledge, that if the doctrine of Christianity was universally entertained, he would not doubt of its being truly a revelation of the will of God to mankind.

But since, in fact, there is no instituted religion universally received as a divine revelation, and there are several nations to whom the Christian doctrine in particular was never so much as preached, nor ever came to their knowledge at all, he concludes, that what is not universal and equally made known to all men, cannot be needful for any; and consequently, that there never was any real want of a revelation at all, nor any ground to think any further assistance necessary to enable men to answer all the ends of their creation than the bare light of nature. This is the sum and strength of this author's reasoning; and herein all the deniers of revelation agree with him. Now, (not to take notice here that it is by no means impossible but all men may be capable of receiving some benefit from a revelation, which yet a great part of them may have never heard of,) if these men's reasoning was true, it would follow, by the same argument, that neither was natural

religion necessary to enable men to answer the ends of their creation: For, though all the truths of natural religion are indeed certainly discoverable by the due use of right reason alone, yet it is evident all men are not indued with the same faculties and capacities, nor have they all equally afforded to them the same means of making that discovery; as these gentlemen themselves upon some occasions are willing enough to own, when they are describing the barbarous ignorance of some poor Indian nations. And, consequently, the knowledge of natural religion being, in fact, by no means universal, it will follow that there is no great necessity even of that, but that men may do very well without it, in performing the functions of the animal life, and directing themselves wholly by the inclinations of sense: And thus these gentlemen must at last be forced to let go all moral obligations, and so recur unavoidably to absolute atheism. The truth is: As God was not obliged to make all his creatures equal, to make men angels, or to indue all men with the same faculties and capacities as any, so neither is he bound to make all men capable of the same degree or the same kind of happiness, or to afford all men the very same means and opportunities of obtaining it.--There is ground enough, from the consideration of the manifest corruption of human nature, to be so far sensible of the want of a divine revelation, as that right reason and the light of nature itself will lead a wise and considerate man to think it very probable that the infinitely merciful and good God may actually vouchsafe to afford men some such supernatural assistance; and consequently such a person will be very willing, ready, and prepared to entertain a doctrine which shall at any time come attended with just and good evidence of its being truly a revelation of the will of God. But it does not at all from hence follow, either that God is absolutely bound to make such a revelation, or that, if he makes it, it must

equally be made to all men; or that, since in fact it is not made to all, therefore there is no reason to believe that there is any need or any probability of its being made to any.

[316] Nomothetes hostis noun kektetai, outote me tolmese kainotomon epi theosebeian, hetiis me saphes echei ti, trepsai polin eautou.----meden toparapan eidos, hosper oud' hon dunaton eidenai te thnete phusei ton toiouton peri.--Plato in Epinomide. Ta gar de toiauta [theon therapeias] out' epistametha hemeis, oikizontes te polin oudeni allo peisometha ean noun echomen, oude chr9esometha exegete, all' e to patrio Theo.--Plato de Republ. 4.

[317] To men alethes, o xene, dischurizesthai tauta houtos echein, pollon amphisbetounton, Theou esti.--Plato de Legib. lib. 1.

[318] Touto de oun to meros phamen phusei kuriotaton, kai dunaton hos hoion te malista kai arista mathein, ei didaskoi tis; all' oud' an didaxeien, ei me Theos uphegoito.--Plato in Epinomide.

[319] Heita ton loipon chronon katheudontes diateleite an, ei me tina allon humin ho Theos epipempseie, kedomenos humon.--Plato in Apolog. Socratis.

[320] Eu gar chre eidenai, ho, ti per an sothe te kai genetai hoion dei, en toiaute katastasei politeion, Theou moiran auto sosai.--Plato de Republ. lib. 6.

[321] SOK: Emo`n me`n oun dokei kra'tiston einai, esuchi'an e'chein.----anankaion oun esti peri`me'nein, e'os a'n tis ma'the os dei pro`s Theou`s kai` pou`s anthro'pous diakeisthai. ALK. Po'te oun pare'stai o chro'nos houtos, o So'krates; kai` ti's o paideu'son; e'dista ga`r a'n moi doko idein touton to`n a'nthropon ti's estin. SOK: Houto's estin, ho me'lei peri` sou; Alla` dokei moi, o'sper to Diome'dei phesi` te`n Athenan Homeros apo` ton ophthalmon aphelein te`n achlu'n, o'phr' eu gigno'skoi eme`n Theo`n ede` kai` a'ndra, ou'to kai`

sou dein apo` tes psuches proton aphelo'nta te`n achlu`n, e` nun parousa tuncha'nei, totenikaut' e'de prosphe'rein di' hon me'lleis gno'sesthai eme`n kako`n ede` kai` esthlo'n; nun me`n ga`r ouk a'n moi dokes dunethenai. ALK: Aphairei'to, ei'te bou'letai te`n achlu`n, ei'te a'llo ti; os ego` pareskeu'asmai methe`n a`n phu'gein ton up' ekei'nou prostassome'non, o'stis pot' esti`n ho a'nthropos, ei'ge me'lloimi belti'on gene'sthai. SOK: Alla` me`n kakeinos thaumaste`n o'sen peri` se prothumi'an e'chei. ALK: Eis to'te toinun kai` te`n thusi'an anaba'llesthai kra'tiston einai' moi dokei. SOK: Kai` orthos ge soi` dokei; asphalesteron ga'r estin e` parakinduneu'ein tosouton ki'ndunon. ALK: Tois theois de kai` stepha'nous kai` ta'lla pa'nta ta` nomizo'mena to'te do'somen, o'tan ekei'nen te`n eme'ran elthousan ido; e'xei d' ou dia` makrou tou'ton thelo'nton.--Plato in Alcibiade,2. [If it be supposed that Socrates in this passage means himself, (which is very difficult,) yet it nevertheless very lively represents the great sense which the most considerate heathens had of their want of some extraordinary instruction.]

[322] Emoi gar dokeis o Sokrates, peri ton toiouton isos hasper kai soi; to men saphes eidenai en to nun bio e adunaton einai, e pa9nchalepon te to mentoi auta [leg: ta] legomena peri auton me ouchi panti tropo elenchein, kai proaphistasthai prin an pantache skopon skopon apeipe tis, panu malthakou einai andros. [Note that Ficinus, in his translation of this passage, as if the word ouchi was to be repeated apo tou koinou with proaphostasthai, writes absurdly non desistere, instead of desistere.] Dein gar peri auta hen ge ti touton diapraxasthai; e mathein hope echei, e, ei tauta adunaton ton goun beltiston ton Anthropinon Logon labonta kai duselenktotaton, epi touto achoumenon, hoster epi schedias, kinduneuonta diapleusai ton bion; ei me tis dunait asphalesteron kai akindunoteron, epi bebaioterou

ochematos, e Logou Theiou tinos, diaporeuthenai.--Plato in Phædron.

[323] Quum autem dicit Porphyrius, in primo de Regressu Animæ libro, nondum receptum in unam quandam sectam quæ universalem viam animæ contineat liberandæ, nondumque in suam notitiam eandem viam historiali cognitione perlatum, procul dubio confitetur, esse aliquam, sed nondum in suam venisse notitiam. Ita ei non sufficebat quicquid de anima liberanda studiosissime didicerat, sibique, vel potius aliis, nosse ac tenere videbatur. Sentiebat enim adhuc sibi deesse aliquam præstantissimam auctoritatem, quam de re tanta sequi oporteret.--Augustin. de Civitate Dei, lib. 10. c. 32.

[324] Ouk oligous, Hellenas kai Barbarous, sophous kai anoetous, mechri thanatou agonizesthai huper Christianismou, hin' autou me exomosontai; hoper oudeis huper allou dogmatos istoretai poiein.--Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 1.

[325] Hoste meketi kata to palaion bracheis tinas kai harithmo leptous, orthas peri Theou pherein doxas; halla muria plethe barbaron.--Euseb. Demonstrat. Evangel. lib. 3. c. 3. Ai de tou Theou Christo matheteuthei sai ekklesiai, sunexetazomenai tais hon paroikousi demon ekklesiais; os phosteres eisin en kosmo, Tis gar ouk an homologesai, kai tous cheirous ton apo tes ekklesias kai sunkrisei ton beltionon elattous, pollo kreittous tonchanein ton en tois demois ekklesion. [Note, this passage is both corruptly printed pollon instead of pollo, and also the sense of it hurt by an imperfect translation.--Orig. advers. Cels. lib. 3. Edit. Cant. p. 128.]

[326] See an excellent passage of Cicero to this purpose cited above.

[327] Oracles of Reason, page 197, &c.

Proposition VIII.

VIII. Proposition VIII. There is no other religion now in the world but the Christian that has any just pretence or tolerable appearance of reason, to be esteemed such a divine revelation; and, therefore, if Christianity be not true, there is no revelation of the will of God at all made to mankind.

This proposition will easily be granted by all modern unbelievers; and therefore I need not be particular in the proof of it.

Of the Mahometan religion. The Mahometan religion was founded by a vicious person, proposes ridiculous and trifling doctrines to be believed, was propagated merely by violence and force of arms, was confirmed by no public and incontestable miracles, promises vain and sensual rewards to its professors, and is every way encompassed with numberless such absurdities and inconsistencies (as those who have given us accounts of the life of Mahomet, and the nature of his religion, have abundantly made out; and is sufficiently evident even from the Alcoran itself;) that there is no great danger of its imposing upon rational and considerate men.

Of the Jewish religion. The Jewish religion was founded wholly upon the expectation of a Messiah to come: And the time of his appearance was limited by such plain and determinate prophecies that what difficulties soever there may be in computing the very nice and exact time of their completion, or what different periods soever may be fixed from whence to begin several computations; yet the time of their being fulfilled is now, in all possible ways of computing, so very far elapsed, that if the Christian doctrine be false, there is no supposition left, upon which the Jewish religion can, with any colour of reason, be believed

to be true.

It being evident, therefore, that either the Christian revelation is true, or else (how great want soever there may be of it) there is no such thing as revelation at all;--it remains that I proceed to consider what positive and direct evidence there is to prove the actual truth of this divine revelation.

Proposition IX.

IX. Proposition IX. The Christian religion, considered in its primitive simplicity, and as taught in the Holy Scriptures, has all the marks and proofs of being actually and truly a divine revelation, that any divine revelation, supposing it was true, could reasonably be imagined or desired to have.

The marks of a religion coming from God. The necessary marks and proofs of a religion coming from God, are these. First, that the duties it enjoins be all such as are agreeable to our natural notions of God, and perfective of the nature and conducive to the happiness and well-being of men. And that the doctrines it teaches be all such, as, though not indeed discoverable by the bare light of nature, yet, when discovered by revelation, may be consistent with and agreeable to sound and unprejudiced reason; for otherwise no evidence whatsoever can be of so great force to prove that any doctrine is true; as its being either contradictory in itself, or wicked in its tendency, is to prove that it must necessarily be false. Secondly, for the same reason, the motives likewise, by which it is recommended to men's belief and practice, and all the peculiar circumstances with which it is attended, must be such as are suitable to the excellent wisdom of God, and fitted to amend the manners and perfect the minds of men. Lastly, it must moreover be positively and directly proved to come from God, by such certain signs and matters of fact as may be undeniable evidences of its author's having actually a divine commission: For otherwise, as no evidence can prove a doctrine to come from God, if it be either impossible or wicked in itself, so, on the other hand, neither can any degree of goodness or excellency in the doctrine itself make it demonstrably certain, but

only highly probable, to have come from God; unless it has moreover some positive and direct evidence of its being actually revealed.

The entire proof therefore of this proposition must be made by an induction of particulars, as follows.

Proposition X.

X. Proposition X. First, the practical duties which the Christian religion enjoins, are all such as are most agreeable to our natural notions of God, and most perfective of the nature, and conducive to the happiness and well-being of men. That is, Christianity even in this single respect, as containing alone, and in one consistent system, all the wise and good precepts (and those improved, augmented, and exalted to the highest degree of perfection,) that ever were taught singly and scatteredly, and many times but very corruptly by the several schools of the philosophers; and this without any mixture of the fond, absurd, and superstitious practices of any of these philosophers; ought to be embraced and practised by all rational and considering deists, who will act consistently, and steadily pursue the consequences of their own principles; as at least the best scheme and sect of philosophy that ever was set up in the world; and highly probable, even though it had no external evidence to be of divine original.

The proposition proved in the several instances of duty. This proposition is so very evident, that the greatest adversaries of the Christian institution have never been able to deny it any otherwise than by confounding the inventions of men, the superstitious practices of particular persons, or the corrupt additions of certain particular churches or societies of Christians, with the pure and simple precepts of the gospel of Christ. In all those instances of duty which pure and uncorrupt Christianity enjoins, the proposition is manifest, and altogether undeniable; the duties of love, fear, and adoration, which the Christian religion obliges us to render unto God, are so plainly incumbent upon us from the consideration of the excellent attributes of

the divine nature, and our relation to him as our creator and preserver, that no man who considers can think himself free from the obligations which our religion lays upon him to practise these duties, without denying the very being of God, and acting contrary to the reason and all the natural notions of his own mind. It is placing the true and acceptable worship of God, not so much in any positive and ritual observances, as in approaching him with pure hearts and undefiled bodies, with unfeigned repentance for all past miscarriages, and sincere resolutions of constant obedience for the future, in praying to him for whatever we want, and returning him our most hearty thanks for whatever good things we receive, with such dependence and humility, such submission, trust, and reliance, as are the proper affections of dutiful children: All this is plainly most agreeable to our natural notions and apprehensions of God; and that the prayers of sinful and depraved creatures, sincerely repenting, should be offered up to God, and become prevalent with him, through and by the intercession of a mediator, is very consonant to right and unprejudiced reason, as I shall have occasion to show more particularly hereafter, when I come to consider the articles of our belief. Again: The duties of justice, equity, charity, and truth, which the Christian religion obliges us to exercise towards men, are so apparently reasonable in themselves, and so directly conducive to the happiness of mankind, that their unalterable obligations are not only in great measure deducible from the bare light of nature and right reason, but even those men also, who have broken through all the bonds of natural religion itself, and the original obligations of virtue, have yet thought it necessary, for the preservation of society and the well-being of mankind, that the observation of these duties, to some degree, should be enforced by the penalties of human laws; and the additional improvements Mat. v. 16,

&c. which our Saviour has made to these duties, by commanding his disciples to be, as it were, lights in the world, and examples of good works to all men; to be so far from injuring others, that, on the contrary, they should not indulge themselves in any degree of anger or passion; to seek reconciliation immediately upon any difference or offence that may arise; to bear injuries patiently, rather than return evil for evil; to be always willing to forgive one another their trespasses, as they all expect forgiveness at the hands of God; to be kind and charitable to all men; to assist readily, and be willing to do all good offices, not only to their friends, but even to their bitterest enemies also; in a word, to raise their virtue and goodness far above the common practice of men, extending their charity universally in imitation of the goodness of God himself, who maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust; these precepts, I say, are such as no unprejudiced philosopher would have been unwilling to confess were the utmost improvements of morality, and to the highest degree perfective of human nature. In like manner, the duties of sobriety, temperance, patience, and contentment, which our religion enjoins us to practise in ourselves, are so undeniably agreeable to the inward constitution of human nature, and so perfective of it, that the principal design of all true philosophy has ever been to recommend and set off these duties to the best advantage, though, as the philosophers themselves have always confessed, no philosophy was ever able to govern men's practice effectually in these respects: But the additional precepts, and the new weight and authority, which our Saviour has added to his instructions of this kind, teaching his disciples to governMatt. v. 28.
Matt. vi. 19, 24, &c. their very thoughts, desires, and inclinations, to contemn and get above all the desires of this present world, and to

set their affections principally upon that which is to come; these are the things which, when the Christian religion was in its primitive and purest state, worked men up actually to such a pitch of cheerful and generous obedience to the laws of God, and taught them to obtain such a complete victory over the world, and over all the desires and appetites of sense, as the best philosophers have acknowledged their instructions were never able to do. Lastly, even those positive and external observances, (the two sacraments,) which are instituted in the Christian religion, as means and assistances to keep men stedfast in the practice of those great and moral duties which are the weightier matters of the law; even those positive institutions (I say) are so free from all appearance of superstition and vanity, and so wisely fitted to the end for which they were designed, that no adversaries of Christianity have ever been able to object any thing at all against the things themselves, but only against certain corruptions and superstitions, which some who call themselves Christians, have, directly in opposition to the true design of Christianity, introduced and annexed to them. For what reasonable man can pretend to say, that it is any way unreasonable or superstitious for every member of the society to be solemnly admitted into his profession, by a plain and significant rite, entitling him to all the privileges, and charging him with all the obligations, which belong to the members of that society as such? which is the design of one of the sacraments: Or that it is unreasonable and superstitious for men frequently to commemorate, with all thankfulness, the love of their greatest benefactor, and humbly and solemnly to renew their obligations and promises of obedience to him? which is the design of the other.

This a great evidence of a religion coming from God. Let now any impartial person judge whether this be not a wise and excellent

institution of practical religion, highly conducive to the happiness of mankind, and worthy to be established by a revelation from God; when men had confessedly corrupted themselves to such a degree, that not only the light of nature, and right reason, was altogether insufficient to restore true piety; but even that light itself (as Cicero expressly acknowledges) nowhere appeared. [328] Let any impartial person judge, whether a religion that tends thus manifestly to the recovery of the rational part of God's creation, to restore men to the imitation and likeness of God, and to the dignity and highest improvement of their nature, has not within itself an intrinsic and very powerful evidence of its being truly divine. Let any one read the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of St Matthew's Gospel, and judge if they do not, as it were, set before his eyes such a lovely image and representation of true virtue, as Plato said, could not but charm men with the highest degree of love and admiration imaginable. [329] In a word, let any man of an honest and sincere mind consider, whether that practical doctrine has not even in itself the greatest marks of a divine original; wherein whatsoever things are true, whatsoeverPhil. iv. 8. things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any thing praiseworthy; all these, and these only are the things that are earnestly recommended to men's practice. What wise precept was ever delivered by any philosopher of any sect which is not more plainly laid down by our Saviour and his apostles? And not only so, but enforced moreover with greater efficacy and strength? founded upon nobler and more consistent principles? urged with greater weight and authority? and pressed with more powerful and affecting arguments? Nay, neither is this all the difference, even in respect barely of the excellency of the doctrine itself. For the

philosophers taught indeed many excellent moral truths, but some upon one occasion and upon one set of principles; some upon another; and every one of them were mistaken in some instances of duty, and mingled particular superstitions and false notions with their good instructions, and built their doctrine upon no sure foundation of consistent principles; and all of them (as has been before shown) were very imperfect and deficient, and far from being able to make up an entire and complete scheme of the whole duty of man in all cases. But now, [330] to put together all the wise and good precepts that ever were delivered by any wise men of any sect and in any age, to improve and exalt every one of them to the highest possible degree of excellency and perfection, to separate and lay aside all the superstitious opinions and practices that had been mixed by all or any of the different sects of philosophers, or teachers of religion in any nation, with their respective moral instructions, and to supply all those doctrines wherein both moral philosophy and the additional institutions of all religions in the world had in the whole been hitherto altogether deficient; and all this, in one plain, entire, and regular system upon the foundation of certain and consistent principles: This is the peculiar character of the Christian institution; and all this cannot, with any colour of reason, be imagined to have ever been done by any man but one sent immediately from God: Upon this consideration alone, by all sincere deists (if any such there be) who really are what they pretend to be, who believe the being and attributes of God, and are firmly convinced of the obligations of virtue and natural religion, and the certainty of a future state of rewards and punishments, must needs, by their own principles, be strongly inclined to embrace the Christian religion, to believe, at least to hope confidently, that a doctrine so plainly

fitted to recover men out of their universally corrupt estate, and restore them to the knowledge and favour of God, is truly divine; and to entertain it with all cheerfulness, as what in itself has those manifold marks of goodness and perfection which are themselves sufficient, though not indeed to prove it demonstrably, yet to satisfy a good man, that it cannot be any thing else than a revelation from God, even though it had wanted all those outward proofs, [331] and divine and miraculous testimonies, which shall hereafter be mentioned in their proper place.

[328] ----Ut naturæ lumen nusquam appareat.--Cic. Tusc. Qu. lib. 3. See this passage cited before at large.

[329] Formam ipsam, et tanquam faciem honesti, quæ si oculis cerneretur, mirabiles amores, ut ait Plato, excitaret sui.--Cic. de Offic. lib. 1.

[330] Ouk hoti allotria esti ta Platonos didagmata tou Christou all' hoti ouk esti pante homoia; hoster oude ta ton allon.----hekastos gar tis, apo metous tou spermatikou theiou logou to sungenes oron, kalos ephthenxato;----hosa oun para pasi kalos, iretai, hemon ton Christianon esti.--Justin Apolog.1. Quod si extitisset aliquis, qui veritatem sparsam per singulos per sectasque diffusam, colligeret in unum ac redigeret in corpus, is profecto non dissentiret a nobis. Sed hoc nemo facere, nisi veri peritus ac sciens, potest. Verum autem non nisi ejus scire est, qui sit doctus a Deo.--Lactant. lib. 7.

[331] Sed si vel causa id efficeret, certissime philosopharentur, et quamvis non posset divinis testimoniis illa defendere, tamen seipsam veritas illustraret suo lumine.--Lactant. lib. 7.

Proposition XI.

XI. Proposition XI. Secondly, The motives by which the Christian religion enforces the practice of the duties it enjoins are such as are most suitable to the excellent wisdom of God, and most answerable to the natural expectations of men.

1. Of the acceptableness of true repentance, a motive to obedience. The acceptableness of true repentance, in the sight of God, and the certain assurance of pardon upon such repentance, which the Christian religion affords us, is a most powerful and necessary motive to frail and sinful creatures, to encourage and support them effectually in the practice of their duty. It is indeed in general evidently most agreeable to right reason, and to men's natural notions of God, to believe him placable, and merciful, and willing to forgive. But since at the same time it cannot be proved, by any arguments from reason, that God is absolutely obliged to forgive, and it is confessedly evident that it becomes the supreme governor of the universe to vindicate the honour and authority of his laws and government, to give some evidences of his hatred and indignation against sin, and sometimes, by instances of severity, to prevent sinners from abusing his mercy and patience, no less than that it is agreeable to his infinite wisdom and goodness to suffer his anger to be by some means appeased: No motive in this case can be imagined more expedient and powerful to encourage sinners to return to the practice of their duty, and to persuade them to continue therein immoveably for the future; nothing can be imagined more seasonable and satisfactory to the mind of man, and >more agreeable to the excellent wisdom of God, and worthy of the supreme and infinitely merciful governor of all things, than such a positive declaration of

the acceptableness of sincere repentance, and such an authentic assurance of pardon and forgiveness thereupon, as under the Christian dispensation the divine goodness and mercy has found means to afford unto us, in such manner as is at the same time abundantly consistent with the honour and dignity of the laws of God, and with his irreconcileable hatred against all unrighteousness and sin.

2. Of the divine assistance, as another motive to obedience. That divine and supernatural assistance, which, under the Christian dispensation, they who sincerely endeavour to obey the will of God, have encouragement to hope for, upon all necessary occasions, is another powerful motive to support men effectually in the practice of their duty. The wisest of the philosophers were so far sensible of the great corruption and depravity of human nature in its present state; they were sensible that such was the carelessness, stupidity, and want of attention, of the greater part of mankind; so many the early prejudices and false notions taken in by evil education; so strong and violent the unreasonable lusts, appetites, and desires of sense; and so great the blindness, introduced by superstitious opinions, vicious customs, and debauched practices through the world; that (as has been before shown,) they themselves openly confessed they had very little hope of ever being able to reform mankind with any considerably great and universal success, by the bare force of philosophy and right reason; but that, to produce so great a change, and enable men effectually to conquer all their corrupt affections, there was need of some supernatural and divine assistance, or the immediate interposition of God himself. Now this divine assistance is vouchsafed to men under the Christian dispensation, in such a manner, as (from what has been already said concerning the judgment of the wisest of the ancient philosophers in this matter,) appears to be undeniably agreeable to the

natural expectations of right reason, and suitable to the best and worthiest notions that men have ever by the light of nature been able to frame to themselves, concerning the attributes and perfections of God. Luke xi. 13. If ye, says our Saviour, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly father give the holy spirit to them that ask him? The effect of this divine assistance evidenced itself in a very visible and remarkable manner in the primitive times, [332] by the sudden, wonderful, and total reformation of far greater numbers of wicked men than ever were brought to repentance by the teaching and exhortations of all the philosophers in the world. And even at this day, notwithstanding all the corruption introduced among Christians, I think it can hardly be denied by any unbelievers of revelation, but that there are among us many more persons of all conditions, who worship God in sincerity and simplicity of heart, and live in the constant practice of all righteousness, holiness, and true virtue, than ever were found in any of the most civilized nations, and most improved by philosophy in the heathen world.

3. Of the clear discovery of future rewards and punishments, as another motive to obedience. The rewards and punishments which the Christian religion proposes, to obedience or disobedience, are a motive perfectly agreeable to men's natural hopes and fears, and worthy of God to make known by positive and express revelation. For since it is confessedly suitable to the divine wisdom, to make variety of creatures, indued with very different powers and faculties, and capable of very different kinds and degrees of improvement, and since all rational creatures, by reason of that natural liberty of will which is essentially necessary to their being such, cannot but be capable of exalting and improving their nature by the practice of virtue and the imitation of God, and on

the contrary of depraving and debasing their nature by the practice of vice and alienation of themselves from God; it follows undeniably, (as has been before shown by a more particular deduction,) that it is highly agreeable to the light of nature and to right reason to suppose that God, the supreme governor and disposer of all things, will finally make a just and suitable distinction between his creatures, by the distribution of proportionable rewards and punishments. Nevertheless, both the truth itself of these final rewards and punishments was so far called in question, and rendered doubtful and uncertain, by the disputations even of the wisest philosophers that ever lived; and those who did in general believe the truth and certainty of them, had yet so very blind and obscure notions of what nature and kind they were to be, having their imaginations strangely prejudiced with poetical fictions and fabulous stories, that the setting this matter clear and right, and the supplying this single defect in the light of nature, was a thing highly worthy of divine revelation: It being plainly a very different thing, and of very different force as to the influencing men's actions, for men to be able to argue themselves into a reasonable expectation of future rewards and punishments; and to be certainly assured of the reality of them by express testimony of divine revelation. And accordingly, by divine revelation in the gospel, this defect of the light of nature is now actually supplied in such a manner; life and immortality are so brought to light, and the wrath of God is so revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, that this very thing, the clear and distinct and consistent account which the gospel gives us of these final rewards and punishments, (which, though indeed in themselves so absolutely necessary, that without them no tolerable vindication could be made of the attributes of God, yet neither by the light of nature, nor by any

positive institution of religion, excepting only the Christian, were they ever so clearly and plainly represented to mankind, as to have their full and proper effect upon the hearts and lives of men;) this very thing (I say) the clear, distinct, and consistent account which the gospel gives us of these final rewards and punishments, is itself no contemptible argument of the truth and divine authority of the Christian revelation. By the certain knowledge of these rewards and punishments it is that the practice of virtue is now established upon a sure foundation. Men have now abundantly sufficient encouragement to support them in their choice of virtue, and in their constant adherence to it, in all cases and under all circumstances that can be supposed. There is now sufficient weight on the side of virtue to enable men to conquer all the temptations of the devil, the flesh, and the world; and to despise the severest threatenings, even death itself. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. The only difficulty in this matter, arising from the duration of the final punishment of the wicked, shall be considered when I come to discourse of the articles of our belief.

[332] Da mihi virum, qui sit iracundus, maledicus, effrænatus, paucissimis Dei verbis tam placidum quam ovem reddam. Da libidinosum, &c.--Lactant. lib. 3. Para men tois Ellesin eis tis, &c,--Origen, advers. Cels. lib. 1. See this passage cited above.

Proposition XII.

XII. Proposition XII. Thirdly, the peculiar manner and circumstances with which the Christian religion enjoins the duties, and urges the motives before mentioned, are exactly consonant to the dictates of sound reason, or the unprejudiced light of nature, and most wisely perfective of it.

The proposition proved by particular instances. For what can be more agreeable to the light of nature, and more evidently perfective of it, than to have those duties, which nature hints at only in general, explained fully and largely, and urged in particular, and inculcated upon the meanest capacities with great weight and authority, and exemplified in the lives of holy persons, proposed as patterns for our imitation? What can be more perfective of the light of nature than to have those great motives of religion, the rewards and punishments of a future state, which nature only obscurely points at, described to us most plainly, affectionately, and lively? What can be more perfective of the light of nature, than to have the means of atoning for sin, which nature discovers only the want of, plainly declared and exhibited to us? What can be more perfective of the light of nature, than such a discovery of the heinousness of sin and the necessity of holiness, as the death of Christ and the purity of the gospel does make unto us? In fine, what can more effectually perfect the religion of nature, than the gathering together the worshippers of the true God into one body; the causing them to enter into solemn obligations to live suitably to their holy profession? The giving them gracious assurances that true repentance shall be accepted for what is past, and sincere renewed obedience for the future? The uniting them by a few positive rites in

one religion as well as civil communion, for mutual assistance and improvement? And the establishing a certain order or perpetual succession of men, whose constant business it may be to explain the great duties of religion to persons of meaner capacities; to urge and enforce the practice of them; to set before men the reasons of their duty, and the necessity of it; to show them clearly and impartially the danger of neglecting it, and the great advantage of performing it sincerely; in a word, to instruct the ignorant, and to admonish the wicked; to reclaim those that err, to comfort the doubting, to reprove the obstinate; and to be instruments of conveying to men all proper assistances, to enable them to perform their whole duty effectually?

If these things be the ordinances of one who came to contradict the dictates of right reason, and not to perfect the law of nature, but to destroy it; then let all wise men for ever forsake the assemblies of Christians, and profess themselves again disciples of the philosophers. But if these things be perfectly agreeable to nature and right reason, and tend exceedingly to the supplying the deficiences there of; then let none, under pretence of maintaining natural religion, revile and blaspheme the Christian, lest they be found liars unto God.

An answer to the objection drawn from the division among Christians.

The many contentions, indeed, about opinions of great uncertainty and little importance, which, to the very great scandal of Christianity, have in several ages of the church been, with unreasonable zeal, kept up, instead of promoting the universal interest of true practical religion and virtue, have, it must be confessed, given some occasion to the enemies of our most holy religion to blaspheme and revile both it and the teachers of it. But though such things as these have indeed afforded them too plausible an occasion, yet they have not given them any just reason so to do: For the acknowledged corruption of a doctrine

or institution, in any particular part or respect, is by no means a weighty or real objection against the truth of the whole: And there has always been extant a sufficient rule to enable sincere persons, in the midst of the greatest disputes and contentions, to distinguish the doctrine which is of God from the opinions of men; the doctrine of Christ having been plainly and fully delivered in our Saviour's own discourses, and in the writings of his immediate followers the Apostles, who cannot, with any reason, be imagined either to have misrepresented it, or to have represented it imperfectly. But besides, I think it can hardly be denied, even by our adversaries themselves, but that in all times and places, wherein Christianity has been professed in any tolerable degree of purity; whatever contentions and disputes may have arisen about particular, and perhaps unnecessary doctrines; yet the great, the most necessary, and fundamental doctrines of religion, concerning God and providence; concerning the gracious method of God's reconciliation with penitent sinners; concerning the necessity of true piety, righteousness, and sobriety; concerning a judgment to come, and the final reward of the righteous, and the punishment of wicked men, in such a manner as will effectually vindicate both the justice and goodness, the wisdom and honour of God; these things (I say) have, notwithstanding all differences concerning smaller matters, been nevertheless at the same time universally and constantly taught, pressed and inculcated upon persons of all capacities, by the earnest and continual preaching of all the ministers of the gospel; with an effect infinitely more considerable and visible, both in extent and duration, than by the teaching of any heathen philosophers that ever lived: Which shows undeniably the excellency at least, if not the divine authority of the Christian institution, in this particular respect.

Proposition XIII.

XIII. Proposition XIII. Fourthly; all the [credenda, or] doctrines, which the true, simple, and uncorrupted Christian religion teaches, (that is, not only those plain doctrines which it requires to be believed as fundamental and of necessity to eternal salvation, but even all the doctrines which it teaches as matters of truth,) are, though indeed many of them not discoverable by bare reason unassisted with revelation; yet, when discovered by revelation, apparently most agreeable to sound unprejudiced reason, have every one of them a natural tendency, and a direct and powerful influence to reform men's minds, and correct their manners, and do together make up an infinitely more consistent and rational scheme of belief than any that the wisest of the ancient philosophers ever did, or the cunningest of modern unbelievers can invent or contrive.

1. Of the one supreme God. That there is one only living and true God, existing of himself, by the necessity of his own nature, absolutely independent, eternal, omnipresent, unchangeable, incorruptible, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, knowledge, and wisdom; of perfect liberty, and freedom of will; of infinite goodness, justice, and truth, and all other possible perfections; so as to be absolutely self-sufficient to his own infinite and unalterable happiness: This is not only the first and principal article of the Christian faith, but also the first and most evident truth that the light of nature itself teaches us, being clearly demonstrable, upon certain and undeniable principles of right reason.

2. Of the only begotten son of God. That this supreme self-existent cause and father of all things did, before all ages, in an

incomprehensible manner, by his almighty power and will, beget or produce a divine person, styled the Logos, the word, or wisdom, or son, of God; God, of God; [333] in whom dwells the fulness of Divine perfections, (excepting absolute supremacy, independency, or self-origination;) being the image of the invisible God, the Col. i. 15. Heb. i. 3. Apaugasma tes doxes autou. John i. 2. xvii. 5. Heb. i. 3. Rom. ix. 5. and John i. 1. brightness of his father's glory, and the express image of his person, having been in the beginning with God, partaker with him of his glory before the world was; the upholder of all things by the word of his power, and himself over all, (by communication of his father's glory and dominion) God blessed for ever: This doctrine (I say) though not indeed discoverable by bare reason, yet, when made known by revelation, appears plainly very consistent with right reason, and (it is manifest) contains nothing that implies any manner of absurdity or contradiction in it.

Indeed, if any men, pretending to be wise above and beyond what is written, have at any time given such explications of the manner how the son of God derived his being from the father, or have offered such accounts of his nature and attributes, as can by any just and necessary consequence be reduced to imply or involve any contradiction, (which perhaps many of the schoolmen have but too justly been accused of doing,) [334] such explications are, without all controversy, false, and very injurious to religion. But as this doctrine is delivered in Scripture I think there is nothing in it in any degree contrary to right reason, as I have elsewhere endeavoured to show in a particular discourse, to which I refer the reader.

Of the Holy Spirit. Now the same that is said of the son, may in like manner, with little variation, be, very agreeably to right reason, understood concerning the original procession or manner of derivation

of the Holy Spirit likewise from the father.

3. Of the creation of the universe. That the universe, the heavens, and the earth, and all things that are therein, were created and made by God, and this through the operation of his son, that divine word, or wisdom of the father, by whom Heb. i. 2. Eph. iii. 9. Col. i. 16. the Scripture says that God made the worlds, that by him God created all things, that by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all John i. 3. things, and by him all things consist; that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made: All this likewise is very agreeable to sound and unprejudiced reason. For that neither the whole, nor any part of the world; neither the form, nor motion, nor matter of the world, could exist of itself by any necessity in its own nature, is abundantly demonstrable from undeniable principles of reason, as has been shown in my former discourse: Consequently, both the whole world, and all the variety of things that now exist therein, must of necessity have received both their being itself, and also their form and manner of being, from God, the alone supreme and self-existent cause, and must needs depend upon his good pleasure every moment, for the continuance and preservation of that being. Accordingly, if we set aside the Epicureans, (whose absurd hypothesis has long since been given up even by all atheists themselves,) and some very few others, who with no less absurdity (as I have also at large shown) contended that the world was in its present form self-existent and necessary, all the philosophers of all ages, (even not excepting those who held the eternity of the world,) have unanimously agreed in this great truth, that the world evidently owes both its being and preservation to God, the supreme

cause and author of all things. And then, that God made the world by the operation of his son, though this could not indeed be known certainly without express revelation; yet is it by no means incredible, or contrary to right reason. For, to the judgment of reason, it is one and the same thing, whether God made the world immediately by himself, or mediately by the ministration of a second principle. And what Plato and his followers have said concerning a second Nous or mind, whom they frequently stile Demiourgos the minister or workman by whom God framed all things, proves undeniably thus much at least, that the doctrines delivered in Scripture concerning this matter cannot be rejected as inconsistent and irreconcilable with right reason.

4. Of the formation of the earth. Gen. i. 2. That, about the space of 6000 years since, the earth was without form and void, that is, a confused chaos, out of which God framed this beautiful and useful fabric we now inhabit, and stocked it with the seeds of all kinds of plants, and formed upon it man, and all the other species of animals it is now furnished with, is also very agreeable to right reason. For though the precise time, indeed, when all this was done, could not now have been known exactly without revelation, yet even at this day there are remaining many considerable and very strong rational proofs, which make it exceedingly probable, (separate from the authority of revelation,) that this present frame and constitution of the earth cannot have been of a very much longer date. The universal tradition delivered down from all the most ancient nations of the world, both learned and barbarous; the constant and agreeing doctrine of all ancient philosophers and poets, concerning the earth's being formed within such a period of time, out of water or a chaos; the manifold absurdities and contradictions of those few accounts which pretend to a much greater antiquity; the number of men with which the earth is at

present inhabited; the late original of learning and all useful arts and sciences; the impossibility that universal deluges, or other accidents, should at certain long periods have oft-times destroyed far the greatest part of mankind, with the memory of all former actions and inventions, and yet never have happened to destroy them all; the changes that must necessarily fall out naturally in the earth in vast length of time, by the sinking and washing down of mountains, the consumption of water by plants, and innumerable other such like accidents; these (I say) and many more arguments, drawn from nature, reason, and observation, make that account of the time of the earth's formation exceedingly probable in itself, which from the revelation delivered in Scripture-history we believe to be certain.

5. Of the continual government of Providence. That the same God who created all things by the word of his power, and upholds and preserves them by his continual concourse, does also by his all-wise providence perpetually govern and direct the issues and events of things; takes care of this lower world, and of all, even the smallest things that are therein; disposes things in a regular order and succession in every age, from the beginning of the world to its final period; and inspects, with a more particular and special regard, the moral actions of men: This, as it is far more expressly, clearly, and constantly taught in Scripture than in any of the writings of the philosophers; so it is also highly agreeable to right and true reason: For, that an omnipresent and infinitely wise being cannot but know every thing that is done in every part of the universe, and with equal ease take notice of the minutest things as of the greatest; that an infinitely powerful being must needs govern and direct every thing in such manner, and to such ends, as he knows to be best and fittest in the whole; so far as is consistent with that liberty of will which he has made essential to

all rational creatures; and that an infinitely just and good governor cannot but take more particular and exact notice of the moral actions of all his rational creatures, and how far they are conformable or not conformable to the rules he has set them; all this (I say) is most evidently agreeable to right reason, and as has been before shown, deducible from it.

6. Of paradise, and the loss of it by sin. That God, after the formation of the earth, created man at first upright and innocent, and placed him in a happy and paradisiacal state, where he enjoyed plenty and abundance of all things without labour or sorrow; and that sin was the original cause, that now on the contrary the very ground is cursed andGen. iii. 17, 18, 19.barren for our sake, and in sorrow we eat of it all the days of our life, that thorns also and thistles are brought forth to us, and in the sweat of our face we eat bread, till we return unto the ground: This likewise is very reasonable and credible in itself, as appears, not only from the abstract consideration of the nature of the thing, but also from the general opinion that the ancient learnedest heathens entertained, upon very obscure and uncertain tradition, that the original state of man was innocent and simple, and the earth, whereon they dwelt, fruitful of itself, and abundant with all plenty; [335] but that God, for the sin of man, changed this happy constitution of things, and made labour necessary for the support of our lives.

7. Of the flood. That in process of time, after the first entrance of sin into the world, men by degrees corrupted themselves more and more, till at length God, for the punishment of their sin and incorrigibleness, [336] brought upon them a general flood, which destroyed them all except a few persons, preserved for the restoration of the human race, is a truth delivered down to us, not only by

authority of Scripture, but also by the concurrent testimony of almost all heathen philosophers and poets: And the histories of all nations backwards terminate in it; and, (which is the most remarkable thing of all, because it is a demonstrative and ocular proof of the universality of some such kind of dissolution,) the present visible frame and constitution of the earth throughout, the disposition and situation of the several strata of different kind of matter, whereof it is composed; the numberless shells of fishes, bones of other animals, and parts of all kinds of plants, which in every country and in almost every place are, at great variety of depths, found inclosed in earth, in clay, in stones, and in all sorts of matter; are such apparent demonstrations of the earth's having been in some former times, and perhaps more than once, (the whole surface of it at least) in a state of fluidity; that whosoever has seen the collections of this kind made by the very ingenious Dr Woodward and others, must in a manner abandon all use both of his senses and reason, if he can in the least doubt of this truth.

8. Of God's revealing himself to the patriarchs, and giving the law to the Jews. That God, after the flood, made particular revelation of himself and of his will to the patriarchs, is a thing very credible in itself, for the same reasons that I have before shown, in general, that the expectation of some revelation from God was a reasonable and probable expectation. And that, after this, God should vouchsafe, by express revelation, to give a law to the whole nation of the Jews, consisting very much in sacrifices, and in external rites and ceremonious observances, cannot with any just reason be rejected as an incredible fact; if we consider that such a kind of institution was necessary, in those times and circumstances, to preserve that nation from the idolatry and worship of false gods, wherewith the countries around them were overspread; that those rites and ceremonies were

typical of, and preparative to, a higher and more excellent dispensation; that the Jews were continually told by their prophets, that their observance of those rites and ceremonies was by no means so highly acceptable to God, nor so absolutely and indispensably insisted upon by him, as obedience to the moral law; and that the whole matter of fact, relating to that revelation, is delivered down to us in a history, on which the policy of a whole nation was founded, at a time when nobody could be ignorant of the truth of the principal facts, and concerning which we can now have no more reason to doubt than of any history of any ancient matter of fact in the world. The most considerable and real difficulty, viz. Why this favour was granted to that single nation only, and not to all the rest of the world likewise, is to be accounted for by the same reasons which prove (as has been before shown) that God was not obliged to make known the revelation of the gospel to all men alike.

9. Of the other particulars of Scripture-history in the Old Testament. That all the other particulars of Scripture history contained in the Old Testament, are true relations of matter of fact, (not to insist now on the many arguments which prove in general the antiquity, genuineness, and authority of the books themselves,) will to a rational inquirer appear very credible from hence, that very many of the particular histories, and some even of the minuter circumstances also of those histories, are confirmed by concurrent testimonies of profane and unquestionably unprejudiced authors: Of which Grotius, in his excellent book of the truth of the Christian religion, [337] has given us a large collection: As particularly, that the manner of the formation of the earth out of a chaos is mentioned by the ancientest Phoenician, Egyptian, Indian and Greek historians; the very names of Adam and Eve, by Sanchuniathon and others; the longevity of the

antediluvians, by Berosus and Manethos, and others; the ark of Noah, by Berosus; many particulars of the flood, by Ovid and others; the family of Noah, and two of every kind of animals entering into the ark with him, mentioned by Lucian himself, as a tradition of the ancient Grecians; the dove which Noah sent out of the ark, by Abydenus and Plutarch; [338] the building of Babel, by Abydenus, the burning of Sodom, by Diodorus Siculus and Strabo, and Tacitus, and others; several particulars of the history of Abraham and the rest of the patriarchs, by Berosus and others; many particulars of Moses's life, by several ancient writers; the eminent piety of the most ancient Jews, by Strabo and Justin; [339] divers actions of David and Solomon, in the Phnician annals; some of the actions of Elijah, by Menander, and confessed by Julian himself; the history of Jonah, under the name of Hercules, by Lycophron and Æ neas Gazæus; and the histories of the following times, by many more authors. Besides that (as learned men have upon exceeding probable grounds supposed, [340]) many of the most ancient scripture-histories are acknowledged and asserted in the writings of the poets, both Greeks and Latins; the true histories being couched under fictitious names and fabulous representations.

10. Of God's sending his son into the world for the redemption of mankind. That God, in the fulness of time, that is, at that time which his infinite wisdom had fore-appointed, which all the ancient prophecies had determined, and which many concurrent circumstances in the state of the Jewish religion, and in the disposition of the Roman empire, had made a fit season for the reception and propagation of a new institution of religion; that God (I say) at that time, should send his only-begotten son, that word or wisdom of the father, that divine person by whom (as has been before shown) he created the world, and by whom he made all former particular manifestations of himself unto men,

that he should send him, to take upon him our human nature, and therein to make a full and particular revelation of the will of God to mankind (who by sin had corrupted themselves and forfeited the favour of God, so that by the bare light of nature they could not discover any certain means by which they could be satisfactorily and absolutely secure of regaining that favour;) to preach unto men repentance and remission of sin; and by giving himself a sacrifice and expiation for sin, to declare the acceptableness of repentance, and the certainty of pardon thereupon, in a method evidently consistent with all necessary vindication of the honour and authority of the divine laws, and with God's irreconcileable hatred against sin; to be a mediator and intercessor between God and man, to procure the particular assistance of God's holy spirit which might be in men a new and effectual principle of a heavenly and divine life; in a word, to be the Saviour and judge of mankind, and finally to bring them to eternal life; all this, when clearly and expressly revealed, and by good testimony proved to be so revealed, is apparently agreeable and very credible to right and true reason. As (because it is the main and fundamental article of the Christian faith,) I shall endeavour to make out more largely and distinctly, by showing, in particular, that none of the several objections, upon which speculative unbelievers reject this doctrine, do at all prove any inconsistency in the belief of it, with sound and unprejudiced reason.

That it is not unreasonable to suppose God making a revelation of his will to men. For, first, it cannot be thought unreasonable to be believed in the general, that God should make a revelation of his will to mankind, since, on the contrary, (as has been before proved at large,) it is very agreeable to the moral attributes of God, and to the notions and expectations of the wisest and most rational men that lived

in the heathen world.

That it is not unreasonable to believe, that God would appoint a sacrifice or expiation for sin. Secondly, it cannot be thought unreasonable to be believed, that in such a revelation, wherein God freely proclaims remission of sin, and the acceptableness of repentance, he should nevertheless have appointed such a sacrifice or expiation for sin, as might at the same time be a sufficient testimony of his irreconcilable hatred against it. For though, by the light of nature, it was indeed exceeding probable and to be hoped for that God would forgive sin upon true repentance, yet it could not be proved that he was absolutely obliged to do so, or that he would certainly do so. On the contrary, there was reason to suppose, that, in vindication of the honour and dignity of his laws, he would require some further satisfaction and expiation. And accordingly we find the custom of sacrificing to have prevailed universally over the heathen world in all ages; which, how unreasonable soever an expectation it was, to think that the blood of beasts could truly expiate sin, yet thus much it plainly and undeniably shows, that it has been the common apprehension of mankind, in all ages, that God would not be appeased, nor pardon sin, without some punishment and satisfaction; and yet at the same time they had good hopes, that, upon the repentance of sinners, God would accept some other satisfaction instead of the destruction of the offenders. It is therefore plainly agreeable to right reason, to believe that God, in vindication of the honour of his laws, and for a testimony of his hatred against sin, should appoint some sacrifice or expiation for sin, at the same time that he forgives the sinner upon his true repentance.

Thirdly, That it is not unreasonable to believe, that a mediator should be appointed between God and man. It cannot be thought unreasonable to

be believed, that a mediator or intercessor should be appointed between God and man, through and by whom the prayers of sinners may be offered up, so as to be acceptable in the sight of God. It is well known, the generality of the wisest heathens thought it agreeable to reason to make use of subordinate intelligences, demons or heroes, by whom they put up their prayers to the superior gods, hoping, that, by the mediation of those intercessors, the unworthiness of their own persons, and the defects of these prayers might be supplied, and they might obtain such merciful and gracious answers to their prayers as they could not presume to hope for upon their own account. Wherein though those pagans laboured indeed under very great uncertainty, in doing a thing for which they had no sufficient warrant, and in using mediators whom they neither knew distinctly to have any being, nor could they however have any good security that such mediation would be acceptable to the supreme God; yet, at the same time, this undeniably proves, that it is by no means inconsistent with right reason, to believe that a mediator may by divine authority be appointed between God and sinful men, to be their intercessor and advocate with a justly offended God. Fourthly, Of the objection drawn from the dignity of the person whom we believe to be our mediator and redeemer. The greatest real difficulty in this matter, to the judgment of right reason, seems to arise from the consideration of the dignity of the person whom we believe to have given himself a sacrifice and propitiation for the sins of mankind, viz. how it is possible, that the only-begotten son of God should be incarnate and become man; how it is conceivable that God should condescend so far as to send, and the son of God condescend willingly to be sent, and do such great things for his creatures; and, above all, how it is consistent with reason, to suppose God condescending to do so much for such frail and weak creatures as men, who, in all appearance

seem to be but a very small, low, and inconsiderable part of the creation. And here indeed it must readily be acknowledged, that human reason could never have discovered such a method as this, for the reconciliation of sinners to an offended God without express revelation. But then neither, on the other side, when once this method is made known, is there any such difficulty or inconceivableness in it as can reasonably make a wise and considerate man call in question the truth of a well attested revelation, merely upon that account; which, indeed, any plain absurdity, or contradiction in the matter of a doctrine pretended to be revealed, would, it must be confessed, unavoidably do. For as to the possibility of the incarnation of the son of God, whatever mysteriousness there confessedly was in the manner of it, yet, as to the thing itself, there is evidently no more unreasonableness in believing the possibility of it, than in believing the union of our soul and body, or any other certain truth which we plainly see implies no contradiction in the thing itself, at the same time that we are sensible we cannot discover the manner how it is affected. Again, as to the incredibility of the doctrine, that God should make so great a condescension to his creatures, and that a person of such dignity as the only begotten son of God should vouchsafe to give himself a sacrifice for the sins of men: He that duly considers, how it is no diminution to the glory and greatness of the father of all things, to inspect, govern, and direct every thing by his all-wise providence through the whole creation; to take care even of the meanest of his creatures, so that not a sparrow falls to the ground, or a hair of our head perishes, without his knowledge; and to observe exactly every particle, even of inanimate matter in the universe; he (I say) who duly considers this, cannot with reason think it any real disparagement to the son of God, (though it was indeed a

most wonderful and amazing instance of humility and condescension,) that he should concern himself so far for sinful men as to appear in their nature to reveal the will of God more clearly to them, to give himself a sacrifice and expiation for their sins, and to bring them to repentance and eternal life. The greatest enemies and deriders of Christianity have asserted things, far more incredible, to have been done upon far less occasions; witness what Julian the apostate [341] thought fit to believe concerning Æ sculapius's coming down from heaven, and conversing upon earth in a visible form, only to teach men the art of healing diseases. And modern unbelievers, who seem willing, in the contrary extreme, to deny God's having any regard, or taking any care in any respect, for the welfare and happiness of his creatures, are forced, if they will go about to give any account or explication of things, to invent much more incredible hypotheses, dishonourable to God, and utterly inconsistent with his divine attributes. Indeed, if we will consider things impartially, so far is it from being truly any diminution of the greatness and glory of God, to send his son into the world for the redemption and salvation of mankind, that, on the contrary, it is a means of bringing the very greatest honour to the laws and government of God that can be imagined. For what can be imagined more honourable, and worthy of the supreme lord and governor of all things, than to show forth his mercy and goodness, in forgiving the sins of frail and fallible creatures, and suffering himself to be reconciled to them upon their true repentance; and yet at the same time to cause such an expiation to be made for sin, by the sufferings and death of his own son, in their nature, as might be abundant evidences of his irreconcilable hatred against sin, a just vindication of the authority and dignity of his laws, and a sufficient and effectual warning to deter men from sin, to create in them the greatest dread and

detestation of it, and for ever to terrify them from venturing upon wilful transgression and disobedience? It is true, no man can take upon him certainly to say, but God, by his absolute sovereignty and authority, might, if he had so pleased, have pardoned sin upon repentance, without any sacrifice or expiation at all. But this method of doing it by the death of Christ is more wise and fit, and evidently more proper and effectual to discountenance and prevent presumption, to discourage men from repeating their transgressions, to give them a deep sense of the heinous nature of sin, and to convince them of the excellency and importance of the laws of God, and the indispensable necessity of paying obedience to them; forasmuch as it shows us, that at the same time that God was willing to save the sinner, yet, lest encouragement should be given to sin by letting it go unpunished, he did not think fit to forgive the transgressions of men without great sufferings in our nature, and to put away the guilt of our sins but upon such difficult terms as the death of his own son. So that in this dispensation, justice, and mercy, and truth, are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other. And by how much the greater the dignity of the person was, who gave himself thus a sacrifice for the sins of men, of so much the greater weight and force is this argument to deter men for the future from sin, and to convince them of the necessity of obedience. Wherefore, so far is it from being true, that the consideration of the dignity of the person suffering is a real objection against the credibility of the doctrine, that, on the contrary, that very consideration contains the highest vindication imaginable of the greatness, and honour, and authority of the laws of God, and at the same time the greatest possible instance or expression of his mercy and compassion towards men, agreeable to our natural notions of his divine attributes. And then, as to the last part of this

difficulty, viz. how it can be consistent with reason, to suppose God condescending to do so very great things for such mean and weak creatures, as men are, who in all appearance seem to be but a very small, low, and inconsiderable part of the creation; forasmuch as the whole earth itself is but a little spot, that bears no proportion at all to the universe; and in all probability of reason, the large and numberless orbs of heaven cannot but be supposed to be filled with beings more capable than we to show forth the praise and glory of their Almighty Creator, and more worthy to be the objects of his care and love. To this part of the difficulty, I say, the answer is very easy: That the mercy and love of the infinitely good God is extended equally over all his works; that, let the universe be supposed as large, and the rational creatures, with which it is furnished, as many and excellent as any one can imagine; yet mankind is plainly the chief, indeed the only inhabitant for whose sake it is evident this our globe of earth was formed into a habitable world; and this our earth is, as far as we have any means of judging, as considerable and worthy of the divine care as most other parts of the system; and this our system as considerable as any other single system in the universe; and finally, that, in like manner as the same divine providence, which presides over the whole creation, does particularly govern and direct every thing in this our lower world, as well as in every other particular part of the universe; so there is no real difficulty to right reason, in conceiving that the same divine logos, the word or messenger of the father, who, in various dispensations, according to the particular needs and exigencies of mankind, has made various manifestations of God, and discoveries of the divine will, to us here upon earth; may also, for ought we know, have to other beings, in other parts of the universe, according to their several capacities or wants, made different

manifestations of God, and discoveries of his will, in ways of which we can know nothing, and in which we have no concern; there being nothing in this at all contrary to the nature of God, or the condition of things.

Fifthly, Of the objection drawn from the Christian revelation not being in fact universal. and lastly, if any one thinks it unreasonable to be believed, that God should send his Son into the world for the redemption of mankind, and yet that this appearance of the Son of God upon earth should not be till the later ages of the world; and after he has appeared, yet his appearance not be made known equally to all nations; such a one must likewise, for the same reason, affirm, that it is unreasonable to believe the necessity and obligations even of natural religion itself, because it is plain all men are not furnished equally with the same capacities and opportunities of understanding those obligations, and consequently no deist can, consistently with his own principles, make this objection against the truth of Christianity. He must likewise, for the same reason, affirm, that God is obliged in all other respects also to make all his creatures equal; to make men angels; to indue all men with the same faculties and capacities as any, at least to make all men capable of the very same kind and the same degree of happiness, and to afford to all of them all the very same means or opportunities of obtaining it: In a word, he must assert that infinite wisdom cannot reasonably be supposed to have a right of making variety of creatures in very various circumstances; which is an assertion palpably most absurd, in experience false, and a very unjust diminution of God's sovereignty in the world. But besides, though the redemption purchased by the Son of God is not indeed actually made known unto all men, yet as no man ever denied but that the benefit of the death of Christ extended backwards to those who lived before his

appearance in the world, so no man can prove but that the same benefit may likewise extend itself forwards to those who never heard of his appearance, though they lived after it.

11. Of the other particulars of scripture-history contained in the New Testament. That the history of the life of Christ, contained in the New Testament, is a true relation of matters of fact, (not to insist here on the testimony of his disciples and followers, which shall be considered hereafter in its proper place,) will to a rational inquirer appear very credible from hence, that very many particulars of that history are confirmed by concurrent testimonies of profane and unquestionably unprejudiced authors. That, before the coming of our Saviour, there was a general expectation spread over all the eastern nations, that out of Judea should arise a person, who should he governor of the world, is expressly affirmed by the Roman historians, Suetonius [342] and Tacitus. [343] That there lived in Judea, at the time which the Gospel relates, such a person as Jesus of Nazareth, is acknowledged by all authors, both Jewish and pagan, who have written since that time. The star that appeared at his birth, and the journey of the Chaldæan wise men, is mentioned by Chalcidius the Platonist. [344] Herod's causing all the children in Bethlehem, under two years old to be slain, and a reflection made upon him on that occasion by the emperor Augustus, is related by Macrobius. [345] Many of the miracles that Jesus worked in his life-time are, as to matters of fact, (particularly, his healing the lame and the blind, and casting out devils,) expressly owned by the most implacable enemies of Christianity, by Celsus and Julian, [346] and the authors of the Jewish Talmud. And how the power of the heathen gods ceased after the coming of Christ is acknowledged by Porphyry, who attributes it to their being angry at the setting up of the Christian religion, which he styles

impious and profane. Many particulars of the collateral history, concerning John Baptist, and Herod, and Pilate, (not to mention the famous testimony concerning Jesus himself, because it is by some suspected not to be genuine, notwithstanding it is found in all the ancient copies,) are largely recorded by Josephus. The crucifixion of Christ under Pontius Pilate, is related by Tacitus; [347] and divers of the most remarkable circumstances attending it, such as the earthquake and miraculous darkness, were recorded in the public Roman registers, [348] commonly appealed to by the first Christian writers, as what could not be denied by the adversaries themselves. Then, as to the resurrection and ascension of Christ; these depend on the general proofs of the credibility of his disciples' testimony, and other following evidences, which will be considered hereafter in their proper place.

12. Of the day of judgment, and Christ the judge. That God has appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, by that person whom he has ordained, in order to reward every man according to his works; is a doctrine perfectly agreeable to right reason, and to our natural notions of the attributes of God; as may appear more particularly from what has been before said concerning the necessity and certainty of another life after this; and is evident from the opinion of all the wiser heathens concerning this matter. Nor may it perhaps be altogether impertinent to observe here, that the poets, both Greek and Latin, have unanimously agreed in this one particular circumstance, that men after death should not have judgment passed upon them immediately by God himself, but by just men appointed for that purpose.

13. Of the resurrection of the body. That, in order to this final judgment, not only the soul shall survive the dissolution of the body,

but the body itself also shall be raised again; this doctrine, though not indeed discoverable with any kind of certainty by the bare light of nature, because the belief of the soul's immortality (for ought that appears to reason alone) is sufficient to answer all the purposes of a future state, as far as is discoverable merely by the light of nature; yet this doctrine (I say) of the resurrection of the body, when made known by revelation, evidently contains nothing in it in the least contrary to right reason: For, what reasonable man can deny but that it is plainly altogether as easy for God to raise the body again after death as to create and form it at first? Some of the Stoical philosophers seem to have thought it not only possible, but even probable: [349] And many of the Jews, who had no express revelation concerning it, did yet believe it upon an ancient tradition, as appears from all their writings, and particularly from the translation in the last verse of the book of Job, which according to the Seventy runs thus: So Job died, being old and full of days, but it is written that he shall rise again with those whom the Lord raises up. [350] The only real difficulty in this doctrine seems to arise upon putting the supposition of one body's being turned into the nourishment, and becoming part of the substance of another, so as that the same parts may equally belong to two bodies, to both of which it shall nevertheless be absolutely impossible that the same parts should be restored. But this objection, as great and principal a difficulty as it is, is really but a great trifle. For there does not at all appear any absolute necessity, that, to constitute the same body, there must be an exact restitution of all and only the same parts. And if there was any such necessity; yet even still without making that hard supposition (which Grotius and others have done, [351]) that God by a miraculous providence always interposes to prevent the parts of one human body

from incorporating with and becoming the nourishment of another, (for I cannot see any sufficient ground to deny, but that it may be possible in nature for barbarous cannibals, if any such there be, to subsist for some time and live wholly one upon another, if deprived of all other sustenance;) without any such hard suppositions as these (I say,) it is easy to imagine many ways by which the resurrection of the same body, properly speaking, shall nevertheless be very possible; and the whole foundation of this, and all other difficulties of this kind, concerning the parts, and forms, and magnitudes, and proportions of our future bodies, be entirely taken away.

Of the resurrection of the same body. As first, No man can say it is improbable, (and they who have been most and best versed in microscopical observations think it more than probable,) that the original stamina, which contain all and every one of the solid parts and vessels of the body, not excepting even the minutest nerves and fibres, are themselves the entire body, and that all the extraneous matter, which, coming in by way of nourishment, fills up and distends the minute and insensible vessels, of which all the visible and sensible vessels are composed, is not strictly and properly part of the body. Consequently, while all this extraneous matter, which serves only to swell the body to its just magnitude, is in continual flux, the original stamina may continue unchanged, and so no confusion of bodies will be possible in nature. There may be made many very considerable observations, concerning the determinate figure into which every respective body unfolds itself by growth; concerning the impossibility of the body's extending itself, by any nourishment whatsoever, beyond that certain magnitude to which the original vessels are capable of being unfolded; and concerning the impossibility of restoring by any nourishment any the smallest vessel or solid part of the body that has

at any time happened to be mutilated by any accident; all which observations, often and carefully made, will seem very much to favour some such speculation as this.

Secondly, It may also be supposed otherwise, not without good probability, that in like manner as in every grain of corn there is contained a minute insensible seminal principle, [352] which is itself the entire future blade and ear, and in due season, when all the rest of the grain is corrupted, evolves and unfolds itself visibly into that form; so our present mortal and corruptible body may be but the exuviæ, as it were of some hidden and at present insensible principle, (possibly the present seat of the soul,) which at the resurrection shall discover itself in its proper form. This way also, there can be no confusion of bodies possible in nature. And it is not without some weight that the ancientest writers of the church have always made use of this very similitude; that the apostle St Paul himself alleges the same comparison; and that the Jewish writers seem to have had some obscure glimpse of this notion, when they talked of a certain incorruptible part of the body; though these latter indeed explained themselves very weakly and unphilosophically.

Many other ways perhaps may be imagined, by which the same thing may be explained intelligibly. But these speculations are nice and subtile, and neither needful nor proper to be enlarged upon in this place. Only the bare mention of them shows the manifold possibility of the doctrine of the resurrection, against the objections of those who would have it seem contradictory.

14. Of the eternal happiness of the blessed, and the eternal punishment of the damned. Lastly, That after the resurrection and the general judgment, wherein every man shall be judged according to his works, they that have done well shall go into everlasting happiness, and they

that have done evil, into everlasting punishment, is a doctrine in itself very credible, and reasonable to be believed. Concerning the everlasting happiness of the righteous there is no dispute, it being evident that God in his infinite bounty may reward the sincere obedience of his creatures, as much beyond the merit of their own weak and imperfect works, as he himself pleases. But the everlasting punishment threatened to the wicked has seemed to many a great difficulty; since it is certain, from our natural notions of the attributes of God, that no man shall be punished beyond the just demerit of his sins. Here, therefore, it is to be observed, first that no man can say, it is unreasonable that they who by wilful and stubborn disobedience to their almighty creator and most merciful benefactor, and by the habitual practice of unrepented wickedness, have, during the state of trial, made themselves unfit for the enjoyment of that happiness which God has prepared for them that love and obey him, should be eternally rejected, and excluded from it. Thus much, the wickedest of men are willing enough to believe: And if bare deprivation of happiness was all the punishment they had reason to fear, they would be well content to sit still in their wickedness. But is it at all agreeable to reason to believe, that the punishment to be inflicted by the final wrath of a provoked God upon his most obstinate and incorrigible enemies, should be merely such a thing as is in its own nature less dreadful and terrible than even those afflictions which by certain experience we see in this present life fall sometimes upon such persons with whom God is not angry at all? Is it agreeable to reason to believe, that God, who (as is evident by experience) suffers the very best of his own servants, for the punishment of their sins, or even only for the trial of their virtue, to fall sometimes under all the calamities and miseries which it is possible for the cruellest and most

powerful tyrants to invent and execute, should punish his most obstinately rebellious and finally impenitent creatures, with nothing more than the negation of happiness? There must, therefore, in the next place be some sensible and positive punishment, besides the mere negative loss of happiness. And whoever seriously considers the dreadful effects of God's anger in this present world, in the instance of the general deluge, the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, the amazing calamities which befel the whole Jewish nation at the destruction of Jerusalem, and other such like examples; in some of which cases, the judgments have fallen upon mixed multitudes of good men and bad together; (not to mention the calamities which sometimes befal even good men by themselves;) whosoever, I say, seriously considers all this, cannot but frame to himself very terrible apprehensions of the greatness of that punishment which the despised patience of God shall finally inflict on the impenitently wicked and incorrigible, when they shall be separated and be by themselves. And then, as to the duration of this punishment, no man can presume, in our present state of ignorance and darkness, to be able truly to judge, barely by the strength of his own natural reason, what in this respect is or is not consistent with the wisdom, and justice, and goodness of the supreme governor of the world, since we neither know the place, nor kind, nor manner, nor circumstances, nor degrees, nor all the ends and uses of the final punishment of the wicked. Only this one thing we are certain of, that the justice of God will abundantly vindicate itself, and all mouths shall be stopped before him, and be forced to acknowledge the exact righteousness of all his judgments, and to condemn their own folly and wickedness; forasmuch as the degrees or intenseness of the punishment which shall be inflicted on the impenitent shall be exactly proportionate to their sins, as a recompense of their demerit, so that

no man shall suffer more than he has deserved. [353] This being once clearly established, the difficulty about the duration of the punishment will not appear so insuperable to right reason: For nothing can be more evident than that God may justly banish the wicked eternally from his kingdom of glory, and from that happiness which is his free and undeserved gift to the righteous; and the positive punishment which shall be inflicted upon them in that state of eternal rejection shall undoubtedly be such, and so proportioned to men's deserts, as the righteous judge will then make appear before men and angels, to be just, and wise, and necessary, and such only as becomes the infinitely wise and good lord and governor of the universe to inflict. The wisest of the heathen philosophers, without the help of revelation, have taught, and did believe it agreeable to right reason, that the punishment of the incorrigible should be [aionios] without any determinate or known end; [354] and we cannot tell how many wise designs God may serve thereby. We know not but that as God has now discovered to us in some measure the fall and punishment of evil angels, to be a warning to us, so he may hereafter use the example of the punishment of wicked and incorrigible men, to be a means of preserving other beings in their obedience. And many other considerations there may possibly be, very necessary to enable us to judge rightly concerning this matter, which, in this present state, we have no sufficient means of coming to the knowledge of.

Thus, all the credenda, or doctrines, which the Christian religion teaches; (that is, not only those plain doctrines which it requires to be believed as fundamental and of necessity to eternal salvation, but even all the doctrines which it teaches as matters of truth;) are, in the first place, though indeed many of them not discoverable by bare reason unassisted with revelation, yet, when discovered by revelation,

apparently most agreeable to sound and unprejudiced reason. [355] Every one of them has a direct tendency and powerful influence to reform men's manners. In the next place, every one of these doctrines hasa natural tendency, and a direct and powerful influence to reform men's lives, and correct their manners. This is the great end and ultimate design of all true religion; and it is a very great and fatal mistake to think that any doctrine or any belief whatsoever can be any otherwise of any benefit to men, than as it is fitted to promote this main end. There was none of the doctrines of our Saviour, (as an excellent prelate of our church admirably expresses this matter [356]) calculated for the gratification of men's idle curiosities, the busying and amusing them with airy and useless speculations; much less were they intended for an exercise of our credulity, or a trial how far we could bring our reason to submit to our faith: But, as, on the one hand, they were plain and simple, and such as by their agreeableness to the rational faculties of mankind, did highly recommend themselves to our belief; so, on the other hand, they had an immediate relation to practice, and were the genuine principles and foundation upon which all human and divine virtues were naturally to be superstructed. Particularly, what can be a more necessary and excellent foundation of true religion than that doctrine which the Christian religion clearly and distinctly teaches us, concerning the nature and attributes of the one only true God, without any of that ambiguity and doubtfulness, those various and inconsistent opinions and conjectures, those uncertain and oft-times false reasonings concerning the nature of God, which, notwithstanding the natural possibility of discovering very many of the attributes of God by the light of true reason, did yet in fact overspread the greatest part of the heathen world with polytheism or atheism? What can be so certain a preservative against idolatry, and

the worship of false gods, as the doctrine, that the universe, the heavens, and the earth, and all things contained therein, are the creatures and workmanship of the one true God, and have a continual dependence upon him for the preservation of their being? What can be so sure a ground of true piety and reliance upon God, as the clear Christian doctrine concerning providence, concerning God's perpetually governing and directing the issues and events of all things, and inspecting with a more especial regard the moral actions of men? Which doctrine was perplexed by the philosophers with endless disputes. What can be so just a vindication of the goodness of God, and consequently so necessary in order to our maintaining in our minds worthy and honourable notions concerning him, as the doctrine that God created man at first upright, and that the original of all evil and misery is sin? The want of a clear knowledge of which truth extremely perplexed the heathen world, and made many recur to that most absurd fiction of a self-existent evil principle. What can be a more proper motive to piety than the doctrine that the deluge and other remarkable calamities which have befallen mankind, were sent upon them by God's immediate direction, as punishments for their wickedness? What can be a greater encouragement to the practice of holiness, than the doctrine that God has at several times vouchsafed to make several particular revelations of his will to men, to instruct and support them more effectually in that practice? But above all, what doctrine could ever have been imagined so admirably fitted in all respects to promote all the ends of true religion, as that of the incarnation of the Son of God? Which way could men have been filled with so deep a sense of the mercy and love of God towards them, and have been instructed in all divine truths in a method so well accommodated to their present infirmities, as by God's sending his only-begotten Son, to take upon him our nature, and therein

to make a general revelation of the will of God to mankind? How could the honour, and dignity, and authority of the laws of God have been so effectually vindicated, and at the same time so satisfactory an assurance of pardon upon true repentance have been given unto men, as by this method of the son of God giving himself a sacrifice and expiation for sin? What could have been a more glorious manifestation of the mercy and compassion of God, and at the same time a more powerful means to discountenance men's presumption, to discourage them from repeating their transgressions, to give them a deep sense of the heinous nature of sin, and of God's extreme hatred and utter irreconcilableness to it, and to convince them of the excellency and importance of the laws of God, and the indispensable necessity of paying obedience to them, than this expedient of saving sinners by the sufferings and death of the son of God, and by establishing with them a new and gracious covenant upon the merits of that satisfaction? How could men be better encouraged to begin a religious life, than by having such a mediator, advocate, and intercessor for them with God, to obtain pardon of all their frailties, and by being assured of the assistance of the Spirit of God, to enable them to conquer all their corrupt affections, and to be in them an effectual principle of a heavenly and divine life? In fine, what stronger and more powerful motives could possibly have been contrived to persuade men to live virtuously, and to deter them from vice, than the clear discovery made to us in the gospel of God's having appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, every man according to his works, and that they who have done well shall be adjudged to everlasting happiness, and they that have done evil to endless punishment; of which the light of nature afforded men but obscure glimpses? And may we not here, upon the whole, appeal now even to our adversaries themselves,

whether, in all and every one of these doctrines, there be not a more powerful, a more effectual method laid down, for the reforming human nature, and obliging the whole world to forsake their sins, and to lead holy and virtuous lives, than was ever taught before; nay, or than was possible to have been contrived by all the wit of mankind? This is the great and highest recommendation of the Christian doctrine; this is what to a well disposed mind would well nigh satisfactorily prove, even without the addition of any external testimony, that the revelation of Christianity could not possibly but come from God, seeing that not only all its practical precepts, but even all its articles of belief also, tend plainly to this one and the same end, to make men universally amend and reform their lives, to recover and restore them to their original excellent state, from the corruption and misery which had been introduced by sin, and to establish upon earth the practice of everlasting righteousness, and entire and hearty obedience to the will of God; which would have been the religion of men (had they continued innocent) in paradise, and now is the religion of angels, and for ever will be the religion of saints in heaven. Vain men may value themselves upon their speculative knowledge, right opinions, and true and orthodox belief, separate from the practice of virtue and righteousness; but as sure as the gospel is true, no belief whatsoever shall finally be of any advantage to men, any otherwise than only so far as it corrects their practice, hinders them from being workers of iniquity, and makes them likeLuke, xiii. 7. unto God.

Lastly, And all of them together make up the most consistent and rational scheme of belief in the world. all the doctrines of the Christian faith do together make up an infinitely more consistent and rational scheme of belief than any that the wisest of the ancient philosophers ever did, or the cunningest of modern unbelievers can

invent or contrive. This is evident from a summary view of the fore-mentioned scheme of the Christian doctrines, wherein every article has a just dependence on the foregoing ones, and a close connexion with those that follow; and the whole account of the order and disposition of things, from the original to the consummation of all things, is one entire, regular, complete, consistent, and every way a most rational scheme: Whereas the wisest of the ancient philosophers, that is, those of them who hit upon the greatest number of single truths, and taught the fewest absurdities, were yet never able to make out any universal, entire, and coherent system of doctrines, [357] and scheme of the whole state of things, with any manner of probability: And the cunningest of modern deists, (besides that they must needs, in their own way, believe some particular things stranger, and in themselves more incredible, than any of the fore-mentioned Christian doctrines,) cannot, in the whole, as has been before shown, frame to themselves any fixed and settled principles upon which to argue consistently; but must unavoidably either be perplexed with inextricable absurdities, or confessedly recur to downright atheism. There have indeed, even among Christians themselves, been many differences and disputes about particular doctrines: (But, excepting such as have intolerably corrupted the very fundamental doctrines, and even the main design itself of the whole Christian dispensation; of which there are too many instances in writers of the Romish church especially;) these disputes among Christians have not been, like those among the philosophers, de rerum summa, concerning the whole scheme and system of things, but only concerning particular explications of particular doctrines; which kind of disputes do not at all affect the certainty of the whole religion itself, [358] nor ought in reason to be any manner of hindrance to the effect which the plain and weighter, and confessedly more important

fundamental doctrines ought to have upon the hearts and lives of men.

[333] Theos ek Theou, in contradistinction to Autotheos.

[334] It is not to be denied but that the schoolmen, who abounded in wit and leisure, though very few among them had either exact skill in the Holy Scriptures, or in ecclesiastical antiquity, and the writings of the ancient fathers of the Christian Church; I say, it cannot be denied but that these speculative and very acute men, who wrought a great part of their divinity out of their own brains, as spiders do cobwebs out of their own bowels, have started a thousand subtilties about this mystery, such as no Christian is bound to trouble his head withal, much less is it necessary for him to understand those niceties which we may reasonably presume that they who talk of them did themselves never thoroughly understand; and, least of all, is it necessary to believe them.--Archbishop Tillotson. Sermon concerning the Unity of the Divine Nature. It were to be wished, that some religionists did not here symbolize too much with the atheists, in affecting to represent the mystery of the Christian trinity as a thing directly contradictory to all human reason and understanding.--Cudworth's System, page 560.

[335] To palaion pant' en alphiton kai aleuron plere, kathaper kai n8un koneos; kai krenai d' errheon, hai men hudatos galaktos d' allai; kai omoios hai men melitos, hai d' oiou, tines d' elaiou; upo plesmones, d' hoi anthropoi kai truphes, eis hubrin exep9eson. Zeus de misesas ten katastasin, hephanise panta, kai dia ponou ton bionapedeixe.--Calanus Indus apud Strabon. lib. 15.

[336] Epei de he tou theou men moira exetelos egigne o en autois, pollo to thneto kai pollakis anakerannumene, to de anthropinon hethos epekratei, tote Theos ho Theon Zeus, ate dunamenos kathoran ta toiauta, ennnoesas genos epieikes athlios diatithemenon, diken autois epitheinai

bouletheis, &c.--Plato in Critia sive Atlantico.

[337] Lib. 1. c. 16, and lib. 3. c. 16, where see the citations at large.

[338] Deukalioni phasi peristeran ek tes larnakos aphiemenen deloma genesthai, cheimonos men eiso palin enduomenen, eudias du apoptasan.--Plutarch: utrum Terrestria an Aquatica animantia plus habeant Solertiæ.

[339] Oi de [Mosen] diadexamenoi, chronous men tinas en tois autois diemenon dikaiopragount9es, kai theosebeis hos alethos ontes; Hepeit', &c.--Lib. 16.

[340] See Stillingfleet's Origin. Sacræ, lib. 3. cap. 5. and Bocharti Phaleg. et Vossius de Idololatria.

[341] Ho gar Zeus ex eautou ton Asklepion; egennesen eis de ten gen dia tes heliou gonimou zoes enephenen; outos epi ges ex ouranou poiesamenos proodon, enoeidos men peri ten Epidauron ephane.--Julian.

[342] Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus et constans opinio esse in fatis, ut Judæa profectirerum potirentur.--Sueton.

[343] Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum libris contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur.--Tacit. lib. 21.

[344] See the place cited by Grotius, de Veritate Christian Religionis.--Lib.3. c. 14.

[345] Cum audisset [Augustus,] inter pueros quos in Syria Herodes rex Judæorum intra bimatum jussit interfici, filium quoque ejus occisum; ait, melius est Herodis porcum esse quam filium.--Macrob. lib. 2. cap. 4. [A testimony so very remarkable and pertinent, that it is strange how Grotius could omit to mention it in the place now cited.]

[346] See the places cited by Grotius, de Veritate Christ. Rel. lib. 2. cap. 5.

[347] Tiberio imperitante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum, supplicio affectus erat.--Lib. 15.

[348] Eum mundi casum relatum in arcanis vestris habetis.--Tertullian. Apol.

[349] Delon hos ouden adunaton kai hemas meta to teleutesai, palin periodon tinon eilumenon chronou, eis ho nun esmen apokatastesesthai schema.--Chrysippus, citat. a Lactant. lib. 7.

[350] Gegraptai de auton palin anastesesthai, meth' on o Kurios anistesi.--Job42. ult.

[351] De Veritate Rel. Chr.--Lib. 2. c. 10.

[352] Hemeis men oun hou phamenoto diaphtharen soma epanerchesthai eis ten ex arches phusin, hos oude ton diaphtharenta kokkon tou sitou; legomen gar, hoster epi tou kokkou tou sitou egeiretai stachus ohuto logos tis enkeitai to somati. aph' ou me phtheiromenou egeiretai to soma en aphtharsia.--Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 5.

[353] Rev. xiv. 10. shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the Holy Angels, and in the presence of the Lamb.

[354] Hoi de an doxosin aniatos echein dia ta megethe ton hamartematon, toutous he prosekousa moira rhiptei eis ton Tartaron, hothen oupote ekbainousi.--Plato in Phd. Hosper su kolaseis aionious nomizeis, houto kai hoi ton hiexon ekeinon exegetai teletai te kai mustagogoi.--Cels. apud Origen. lib. 8. Hoi de adikoi pampan aionios kakois sunezontai.--Id. ibid.

[355] Ta tes pisteos hemon, tais koinais ennoiais archethen sunagoreuonta.--Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 3.

[356] Archbishop Sharp's Sermon before the Queen on Christmas day, 1704.

[357] Diversi ac diverse omnia protulerunt non annectentes nec causas rerum, nec consequentias, nec rationes; ut summam illam, quæ continet

universa, et compingerent et complerent.--Lactant. lib. 7.

[358] Sed perturbat nos opinionum varietas, hominumque dissensio. Et qua non idem contingit in sensibus, hos natura certos, putamus; illa, quæ aliis sic, aliis secus, nec iisdem semper uno modo videntur, ficta esse dicimus. Quod est longe aliter.--Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

Proposition XIV.

XIV. Proposition XIV. Fifthly, As this revelation, to the judgment of right and sober reason, appears of itself highly credible and probable, and abundantly recommends itself in its native simplicity, merely by its own intrinsic goodness and excellency, to the practice of the most rational and considering men, who are desirous in all their actions to have satisfaction and comfort and good hope within themselves, from the conscience of what they do: So it is moreover positively and directly proved to be actually and immediately sent to us from God, by the many infallible signs and miracles which the author of it worked publicly as the evidence of his divine commission, by the exact completion both of the prophecies that went before concerning him, and of those that he himself delivered concerning things that were to happen after; and by the testimony of his followers, which in all its circumstances was the most credible, certain, and convincing evidence, that was ever given to any matter of fact in the world.

First, The Christian revelation is positively and directly proved to be actually and immediately sent to us from God, by the many infallible signs and miracles which the author of it worked publicly as the evidence of his divine commission.

Of the life and character of our Saviour, as an evidence of the truth of the Christian revelation. Besides the great excellency and reasonableness of the doctrine considered in itself, of which I have already treated, it is here of no small moment to observe, that the author of it (separate from all external proof of his divine commission) appeared in all his behaviour, words, and actions, to be neither an impostor nor an enthusiast. [359] His life was innocent and

spotless, spent entirely in serving the ends of holiness and charity, in doing good to the souls and bodies of men, in exhorting them to repentance, and inviting them to serve and glorify God. When his bitterest enemies accused him, in order to take away his life, they could not charge him with any appearance of vice or immorality. And so far was he from being guilty of what they did accuse him of, namely, of vain-glory and attempting to move sedition, that once, when the admiring people would by force have taken him and made him their king, he chose even to work a miracle to avoid that, which was the only thing that could be imagined to have been the design of an impostor. In like manner, whoever seriously considers the answers he gave to all questions whether moral or captious, his occasional discourses to his disciples, and more especially the wisdom and excellency of his sermon upon the mount, which is as it were the system and summary of his doctrine, manifestly surpassing all the moral instructions of the most celebrated philosophers that ever lived; cannot, without the extremest malice and obstinacy in the world, charge him with enthusiasm.

Of the miracles of Christ as the evidence of his divine commission.

These considerations cannot but add great weight and authority to his doctrine, and make his own testimony concerning himself exceedingly credible. But the positive and direct proof of his divine commission are the miracles which he worked for that purpose; his healing the sick,--his giving sight to the blind,--his casting out devils,--his raising the dead,--the wonders that attended his crucifixion,--his own resurrection from the dead,--his appearance afterwards to his disciples,--and his ascension visibly into heaven.

These, and the rest of his stupendous miracles, were, to the disciples that saw them, sensible demonstrations of our Lord's divine commission: And to those who have lived since that age, they are as certain

demonstrations of the same truth, as the testimony of those first disciples, who were eye-witnesses of them, is certain and true.

To the disciples that saw them, these miracles were sensible and complete demonstrations of our Lord's divine commission, because they were so great, and so many, and so public, and so evident, that it was absolutely impossible they should be the effect of any art of man, of any chance, or fallacy; and the doctrine they were brought to confirm was of so good and holy a tendency, that it was impossible he should be enabled to work them by the power and assistance of evil spirits; so that, consequently, they must of necessity have been performed, either immediately or mediately by God himself.

Of miracles in general. But here, because there have been many questions raised, and some perplexity introduced by the disputes and different opinions of learned men, concerning the power of working miracles, and concerning the extent of the evidence which miracles give to the truth of any doctrine, and because it hath been much controverted, whether true miracles can be worked by any less power than the immediate power of God; and whether, to complete the evidence of a miracle, the nature of the doctrine pretended to be proved thereby is requisite to be taken into the consideration or no; it may not perhaps be improper, upon this occasion, to endeavour to set this whole matter in its true light, as briefly and clearly as I can.

1st, That in respect of the power of God, all things are alike easy. then; In respect of the power of God, and in respect to the nature of the things themselves, absolutely speaking, all things that are possible at all, that is, which imply not a direct contradiction, are equally and alike easy to be done. The power of God extends equally to great things as to small, and to many as to few; and the one makes no more difficulty at all, or resistance to his will, than the other.

That therefore miracles ought not to be defined by any absolute difficulty in the nature of the things themselves to be done. It is not therefore a right distinction to define or distinguish a miracle by any absolute difficulty in the nature of the thing itself to be done; as if the things we call natural were absolutely and in their own nature easier to be effected, than those that we look upon as miraculous; on the contrary, it is evident and undeniable, that it is at least as great an act of power to cause the sun or a planet to move at all, as to cause it to stand still at any time: Yet this latter we call a miracle; the former not. And to restore the dead to life, which is an instance of an extraordinary miracle, is in itself plainly altogether as easy as to dispose matter at first into such order as to form a human body in that which we commonly call a natural way. So that, absolutely speaking, in this strict and philosophical sense, either nothing is miraculous, namely, if we have respect to the power of God; or, if we regard our own power and understanding, then almost every thing, as well what we call natural, as what we call supernatural, is in this sense really miraculous; and it is only usualness or unusualness that makes the distinction.

2. What degrees of power God may have communicated to created beings is not possible for us to determine. What degrees of power God may reasonably be supposed to have communicated to created beings, to subordinate intelligences, to good or evil angels, is by no means possible for us to determine. Some things absolutely impossible for men to effect, it is evident may easily be within the natural powers of angels; and some things beyond the power of inferior angels may as easily be supposed to be within the natural power of others that are superior to them; and so on. So that, (unless we knew the limit of communicable and incommunicable power) we can hardly affirm, with any

certainty, that any particular effect, how great or miraculous soever it may seem to us, is beyond the power of all created beings in the universe to have produced.

That therefore a miracle is not rightly defined to be such an effect as could not have been produced by any less power than the divine omnipotence. It is not therefore a right distinction to define a miracle (as some very learned and very pious men have done,) to be such an effect as could not have been produced by any less power than the divine omnipotence. There is no instance of any miracle in scripture, which, to an ordinary spectator, would necessarily imply the immediate operation of original, absolute, and underived power: And consequently such a spectator could never be certain that the miraculous effect was beyond the power of all created beings in the universe to produce.

There is one supposition, indeed, upon which the opinion of all miracles being necessarily the immediate effects of the divine omnipotence, may be defended; and that is, if God, together with the natural powers wherewith he hath indued all subordinate intelligent beings, has likewise given a law, or restraint, whereby they be hindered from ever interposing in this lower world, to produce any of those effects which we call miraculous or supernatural: But then, how certain soever it is, that all created beings are under some particular laws and restraints, yet it can never be proved that they are under such restraints universally, perpetually, and without exception: And, without this, a spectator that sees a miracle can never be certain that it was not done by some created intelligence. Reducing the natural power of created beings to as low a degree as any one can desire to suppose, will help nothing in this matter; for, supposing (which is very unreasonable to suppose) that the natural powers of the highest angels were no greater than the natural powers of men, yet, since

thereby an angel would be enabled to do all that invisibly, which a man can do visibly, he would even in this supposition be naturally able to do numberless things which we should esteem the greatest of miracles.

3. All things that are done in the world, are done either immediately by God himself, or by created intelligent beings; matter being capable of no laws or powers. And consequently there is, properly speaking, no such thing as the course or power of nature. All things that are done in the world are done either immediately by God himself, or by created intelligent beings; matter being evidently not at all capable of any laws or powers whatsoever, any more than it is capable of intelligence, excepting only this one negative power, that every part of it will, of itself, always and necessarily continue in that state, whether of rest or motion, wherein it at present is; so that all those things which we commonly say are the effects of the natural powers of matter and laws of motion, of gravitation, attraction, or the like, are indeed (if we will speak strictly and properly) the effects of God's acting upon matter continually and every moment, either immediately by himself, or mediately by some created intelligent beings: (Which observation, by the way, furnishes us, as has been before noted, with an excellent natural demonstration of Providence.) Consequently, there is no such thing as what men commonly call the course of nature, or the power of nature. The course of nature, truly and properly speaking, is nothing else but the will of God producing certain effects in a continued, regular, constant, and uniform manner; which course or manner of acting being in every moment perfectly arbitrary, is as easy to be altered at any time as to be preserved. And if (as seems most probable,) this continual acting upon matter be performed by the subserviency of created intelligences appointed to that purpose by the supreme Creator, then it is as easy for any of them, and as much within their natural

power, (by the permission of God,) to alter the course of nature at any time, or in any respect, as to preserve or continue it.

That therefore a miracle is not rightly defined to be that which is against the course of nature or above the natural powers of created agents. It is not therefore a right distinction to define a miracle to be that which is against the course of nature, meaning, by the course of nature, the power of nature or the natural powers of created agents; for, in this sense, it is no more against the course of nature for an angel to keep a man from sinking in the water, than for a man to hold a stone from falling in the air by overpowering the law of gravitation; and yet the one is a miracle, the other not so. In like manner, it is no more above the natural power of a created intelligence to stop the motion of the sun or of a planet, than to continue to carry it on in its usual course; and yet the former is a miracle, the latter not so:

But, if by the course of nature, be meant only (as it truly signifies) the constant and uniform manner of God's acting, either immediately or mediately, in preserving and continuing the order of the world, then, in that sense, indeed, a miracle may be rightly defined to be an effect produced contrary to the usual course or order of nature, by the unusual interposition of some intelligent being superior to men, as I shall have occasion presently to observe more particularly.

The unreasonableness of those who deny the possibility of miracles in general. And from this observation we may easily discover the vanity and unreasonableness of that obstinate prejudice which modern deists have universally taken up against the belief of miracles in general:

They see that things generally go on in a constant and regular method; that the frame and order of the world is preserved by things being disposed and managed in an uniform manner; that certain causes produce certain effects in a continued succession according to certain fixed

laws or rules; and from hence they conclude, very weakly and unphilosophically, that there are in matter certain necessary laws or powers, the result of which is that which they call the course of nature, which they think is impossible to be changed or altered, and consequently, that there can be no such thing as miracles: Whereas, on the contrary, if they would consider things duly, they could not but see that dull and lifeless matter is utterly incapable of obeying any laws, or of being indued with any powers; and that, therefore, that order and disposition of things, which they vulgarly call the course of nature, cannot possibly be any thing else but the arbitrary will and pleasure of God exerting itself and acting upon matter continually, either immediately by itself, or mediately by some subordinate intelligent agents, according to certain rules of uniformity and proportion, fixed indeed, and constant, but which yet are made such merely by arbitrary constitution, not by any sort of necessity in the things themselves, as has been abundantly proved in my former discourse: And, consequently, it cannot be denied, but that it is altogether as easy to alter the course of nature as to preserve it; that is, that miracles, excepting only that they are more unusual, are in themselves, and in the nature and reason of the thing, as credible in all respects, and as easy to be believed, as any of those we call natural effects.

4. Some effects prove the constant providence of God, and others prove the occasional interposition either of God himself, or of some intelligent being superior to man. Those effects which are produced in the world regularly and constantly, which we call the works of nature, prove to us, in general, the being, the power, and the other attributes of God. Those effects, which upon any rare and extraordinary occasion, are produced in such manner that it is manifest they could neither have

been done by any power or art of man, nor by what we call chance, that is, by any composition or result of those laws which are God's constant and uniform actings upon matter, these undeniably prove to us the immediate and occasional interposition either of God himself, or at least of some intelligent agent superior to men, at that particular time, and on that particular account. For instance, the regular and continued effects of the power of gravitation, and of the laws of motion; of the mechanic, and of the animal powers; all these prove to us, in general, the being, the power, the presence, and the constant operation, either immediate or mediate, of God in the world. But if, upon any particular occasion, we should see a stone suspended in the air, or a man walking upon the water, without any visible support, a chronical disease cured by a word speaking, or a dead and corrupted body restored to life in a moment; we could not then doubt but there was an extraordinary interposition either of God himself, in order to signify his pleasure upon that particular occasion, or at least of some intelligent agent far superior to man, in order to bring about some particular design.

5. Whether such interposition be the immediate work of God, or of some good or evil angels, can hardly be discovered merely by the work itself. Whether such an extraordinary interposition of some power superior to men be the immediate interposition of God himself, or of some good angel, or of some evil angel, can hardly be distinguished certainly, merely by the work or miracle itself; because it is impossible for us to know, with any certainty, either that the natural power of good angels, or of evil ones, extends not beyond such or such a certain limit, or that God always restrains them from exercising their natural powers in producing such or such particular effects.

That there is no reason to suppose all the wonders worked by evil

spirits to be mere delusions. It is not therefore a right distinction, to suppose the wonders which the scripture attributes to evil spirits, to be mere præstigiæ, sleights, or delusions. For if the devil has any natural power of doing any thing at all, even but so much as the meanest of men, and be not restrained by God from exercising that natural power, it is evident he will be able, by reason of his invisibility, to work true and real miracles. Neither is it a right distinction to suppose the miracles of evil spirits not to be real effects in the things where they appear, but impositions upon the senses of the spectators; for, to impose in this manner upon the senses of men, (not by sleights and delusions, but by really so affecting the organs of sense as to make things appear what they are not;) is to all intents and purposes a true a miracle, and as great an one, as making real changes in the things themselves.

6. How we are to distinguish miracles worked by God, for the proof of any doctrine, from the frauds of evil spirits. When therefore, upon any particular occasion, for instance, when at the will of a person who teaches some new doctrine as coming from God, and in testimony to the truth of that doctrine, there is plainly and manifestly an interposition of some superior power producing such miraculous effects as have been before mentioned; the only possible ways by which a spectator may certainly and infallibly distinguish whether those miracles be indeed the works, either immediately of God himself, or (which is the very same thing,) of some good angel employed by him, and, consequently, the doctrine witnessed by the miracles be infallibly true and divinely attested; or whether, on the contrary, the miracles be the works of evil spirits, and consequently the doctrine a fraud and imposition upon men: The only possible ways (I say) of distinguishing this matter certainly and infallibly, are these:--If the doctrine

attested by miracles be in itself impious, or manifestly tending to promote vice, then, without all question, the miracles, how great soever they may appear to us, are neither worked by God himself, nor by his commission; because our natural knowledge of the attributes of God, and of the necessary difference between good and evil, is greatly of more force to prove any such doctrine to be false than any miracles in the world can be to prove it true: As, for example, suppose a man, pretending to be a prophet, should work any miracle, or give any sign or wonder whatsoever, in order to draw men from the worship of the true God, and tempt them to idolatry, and to the practice of such vices as in all heathen nations have usually attended the worship of false Gods, nothing can be more infallibly certain, than that such miracles ought at first sight to be rejected as diabolical. If the Deut. xiii. 1, &c. doctrine attested by miracles be in itself indifferent, that is, such as cannot by the light of nature and right reason alone, be certainly known whether it be true or false; and, at the same time, in opposition to it, and in proof of the direct contrary doctrine, there be worked other miracles, more and greater than the former, or at least attended with such circumstances as evidently show the power by which these latter are worked to be superior to the power that worked the former; then that doctrine which is attested by the superior power must necessarily be believed to be divine: This was the case of Moses and the Egyptian magicians. The magicians worked several miracles to prove that Moses was an impostor, and not sent of God; Moses, to prove his divine commission, worked miracles more and greater than theirs, or else (which is the very same thing,) the power by which he worked his miracles restrained the power by which they worked theirs, from being able at that time to work all the same miracles that he did; and so appeared evidently the superior power: Wherefore, it was necessarily to

be believed that Moses's commission was truly from God. If, in the last place, the doctrine attested by miracles be such as, in its own nature and consequences, tends to promote the honour and glory of God and the practice of universal righteousness amongst men, and yet, nevertheless, be not in itself demonstrable, nor could, without revelation, have been discovered to be actually true, (or even if it was but only indifferent in itself, and such as could not be proved to be any way contrary to or inconsistent with these great ends,) and there be no pretence of more or greater miracles on the opposite side to contradict it; (which is the case of the doctrine and miracles of Christ;) then the miracles are unquestionably divine, and the doctrine must, without all controversy, be acknowledged as an immediate and infallible revelation from God: Matt. xii. 25. Because, (besides that it cannot be supposed that evil spirits would overthrow their own power and kingdom,) should God, in such cases as these, permit evil spirits to work miracles to impose upon men, the error would be absolutely invincible; and that would, in all respects, be the very same thing as if God worked the miracles to deceive men himself. No man can doubt but evil spirits, if they have any natural powers at all, have power to destroy men's bodies and lives, and to bring upon men innumerable other calamities; which yet, in fact, it is evident God restrains them from doing, by having set them laws and bounds which they cannot pass. Now, for the very same reason, it is infinitely certain that God restrains them likewise from imposing upon men's minds and understandings, in all such cases where wise, and honest, and virtuous men would have no possible way left by which they could discover the imposition.

The difference between those who teach that the immediate power of God is, or is not, necessarily requisite to the working of a miracle, is not very great at bottom. And here at last the difference between those

who believe that all miracles necessarily require the immediate power of God himself to effect them, and those who believe created spirits able to work miracles, is not very great. They who believe all miracles to be effected only by the immediate power of God, must do it upon this ground, that they suppose God, by a perpetual law, restrains all subordinate intelligent agents from interposing at any time to alter the regular course of things in this lower world; (for, to say that created spirits have not otherwise a natural power, when unrestrained, to do what we call miracles, is saying that those invisible agents have no power naturally to do any thing at all.) And they who believe that subordinate beings have power to work miracles must yet of necessity suppose that God restrains them in all such cases at least where there would not be sufficient marks left, by which the frauds of evil spirits could be clearly distinguished from the testimony and commission of God.

And now, from these few clear and undeniablo propositions, it evidently follows;--

1st. The true definition of a miracle: That the true definition of a miracle, in the theological sense of the word, is this--that it is a work effected in a manner unusual or different from the common and regular method of providence, by the interposition either of God himself, or of some intelligent agent superior to man, for the proof or evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation to the authority of some particular person. And if a miracle so worked be not opposed by some plainly superior power; nor be brought to attest a doctrine either contradictory in itself, or vicious in its consequences, (a doctrine of which kind no miracles in the world can be sufficient to prove;) then the doctrine so attested must necessarily be looked upon as divine, and the worker of the miracle entertained as

having infallibly a commission from God.

2. The strength of the evidence of our Saviour's miracles. From hence it appears, that the complete demonstration of our Saviour's being a teacher sent from God, was, to the disciples who saw his miracles, plainly this: That the doctrine he taught, being in itself possible, and in its consequences tending to promote the honour of God and true righteousness among men; and the miracles he worked being such that there neither was nor could be any pretence of more or greater miracles to be set up in opposition to them,--it was as infallibly certain that he had truly a divine commission as it was certain that God would not himself impose upon men a necessary and invincible error.

3. Concerning the objection, that we prove in a circle the miracles by the doctrine, and the doctrine by the miracles. From hence it appears, how little reason there is to object, as some have done, that we prove in a circle the doctrine by the miracles, and the miracles by the doctrine. For the miracles, in this way of reasoning, are not at all proved by the doctrine; but only the possibility and the good tendency, or at least the indifferency of the doctrine, is a necessary condition or circumstance, without which the doctrine is not capable of being proved by any miracles. It is indeed the miracles only that prove the doctrine, and not the doctrine that proves the miracles; but then, in order to this end, that the miracles may prove the doctrine, it is always necessarily to be first supposed that the doctrine be such as is in its nature capable of being proved by miracles. The doctrine must be in itself possible and capable to be proved, and then miracles will prove it to be actually and certainly true. The doctrine is not first known, or supposed to be true, and then the miracles proved by it; but the doctrine must be first known to be such as is possible to be true, and then miracles will prove that it actually is so. Some doctrines

are, in their own nature, necessarily and demonstrably true, such as are all those which concern the obligation of plain moral precepts; and these neither need nor can receive any stronger proof from miracles than what they have already (though not perhaps so clearly indeed to all capacities,) from the evidence of right reason. Other doctrines are in their own nature necessarily false and impossible to be true; such as are all absurdities and contradictions, and all doctrines that tend to promote vice; and these can never receive any degree of proof from all the miracles in the world. Lastly, other doctrines are in their own nature indifferent, or possible, or perhaps probable to be true; and these could not have been known to be positively true, but by the evidence of miracles, which prove them to be certain. To apply this to the doctrine and miracles of Christ. The moral part of our Saviour's doctrine would have appeared infallibly true, whether he had ever worked any miracles or no. The rest of his doctrine was what evidently tended to promote the honour of God, and the practice of righteousness amongst men: Therefore that part also of his doctrine was possible and very probable to be true; but yet it could not from thence be known to be certainly true, nor ought to have been received as a revelation from God, unless it had been proved by undeniable miracles. And the miracles he worked did indeed undeniably prove it to be the doctrine of God. Nevertheless, had his doctrine in any part of it been either absurd and contradictory in itself, or vicious in its tendency and consequences, no miracles could then possibly have proved it to have been true. It is evident therefore that the nature of the doctrine to be proved must be taken into the consideration, as a necessary circumstance; and yet that only the miracles are properly the proof of the doctrine, and not the doctrine of the miracles.

4. Of the pretended miracles of Apollonius and others. From hence it

follows, that the pretended miracles of Apollonius Tyaneus, Aristeas Proconnesius, and some few others among the heathens, even supposing them to have been true miracles, (which yet there is no reason at all to believe, because they are very poorly attested, and are in themselves very mean and trifling, as has been fully shown by Eusebius in his book against Hierocles, and by many late writers; but supposing them, I say, to have been true miracles,) yet they will prove nothing at all to the disadvantage of Christianity: Because they were worked either without any pretence of confirming any new doctrine at all; or else to prove absurd and foolish things; or to establish idolatry and the worship of false Gods; and consequently they could not be done by the divine power and authority, nor bear any kind of comparison with the miracles of Christ, [360] which were worked to attest a doctrine that tended in the highest degree to promote the honour of God and the general reformation of mankind.

To return therefore to the argument. The miracles (I say) which our Saviour worked were, to the disciples that saw them, sensible demonstration of his divine commission. And to those who have lived since that age they are as certain demonstrations of the same truth as the testimony of those first disciples, who were eye-witnesses of them, is certain and true: Which I shall have occasion to consider presently.

Secondly. Of the fulfilling the prophecies, as an evidence of our Saviour's divine commission. The proof of the divine authority of the Christian revelation is confirmed and ascertained, by the exact completion both of all those prophecies that went before concerning our Lord, and of those that he himself delivered concerning things that were to happen after.

Of the prophecies that went before, concerning the Messiah. Concerning the Messiah it was foretold, (Gen. xlix.10.) that he should come,

before the sceptre departed from Judah: And accordingly Christ appeared a little before the time when the Jewish government was totally destroyed by the Romans. It was foretold that he should come before the destruction of the second temple, (Hagg. ii. 7.) The desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts; the glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former: And accordingly Christ appeared some time before the destruction of the city and temple. It was foretold that he should come at the end of 490 years, after the restoring of Jerusalem which had been laid waste during the captivity, (Dan. ix. 24.) and that he should be cut off; and that, after that, the city and sanctuary should be destroyed and made desolate: And accordingly, at what time soever the beginning of the four hundred and ninety years can, according to any interpretation of the words, be fixed, the end of them will fall about the time of Christ's appearing, and it is well known how entirely the city and sanctuary were destroyed some years after his being cut off. It was foretold that he should do many great and beneficial miracles; that the eyes of the blind (Isa. xxxv. 5.) should be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; that the lame man should leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing;--and this was literally fulfilled in the miracles of Christ,--the blind received their sight, and the lame walked, the deaf heard, &c. (Matt. xi. 5.) It was foretold that he should die a violent death, (Isai.liii. throughout,) and that not for himself, (Dan. ix. 26.) but for our transgressions, (Isai. liii. 5, 6, and 12.) for the iniquity of us all, and that he might bear the sin of many;--all which was exactly accomplished in the sufferings of Christ. It was foretold, (Gen. xlix. 10.) that to him should the gathering of the people be, and (Psal. ii. 8.) that God would give him the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his

possession;--which was punctually fulfilled by the wonderful success of the gospel, and its universal spreading through the world. Lastly, many minuter circumstances were foretold of the Messiah,--that he should be of the tribe of Judah, and of the seed of David, that he should be born in the town of Bethlehem, (Mic. v. 2.) that he should ride upon an ass in humble triumph into the city of Jerusalem, (Zech. ix. 9.) that he should be sold for thirty pieces of silver, (Zech. xi. 12.) that he should be scourged, buffeted, and spit upon, (Is. l. 6.) that his hands and feet should be pierced, (Psal. xxii. 16.) that he should be numbered among malefactors, (Is. liii. 12.) that he should have gall and vinegar offered him to drink, (Psal. lxix. 21.) that they who saw him crucified, should mock at him, and at his trusting in God to deliver him, (Psal. xxii. 8.) that the soldiers should cast lots for his garments, (Psal. xxii. 18.) that he should make his grave with the rich, (Is. liii. 9.) and that he should rise again without seeing corruption, (Psal. xvi. 10.) All which circumstances were fulfilled to the greatest possible exactness, in the person of Christ: Not to mention the numberless typical representations which had likewise evidently their complete accomplishment in him. And it is no less evident, that none of these prophecies can possibly be applied to any other person that ever pretended to be the Messiah.

Of the prophecies that Christ himself delivered concerning things that were to happen after. Further, the prophecies or predictions which Christ delivered himself, concerning things that were to happen after, are no less strong proofs of the truth and divine authority of his doctrine, than the prophecies were which went before concerning him. He did very particularly, and at several times, foretel his own death, and the circumstances of it, (Matt.xvi. 21.) that the chief priests and scribes should condemn him to death and deliver him to the Gentiles,

that is to Pilate and the Roman soldiers, to mock, and scourge, and crucify him, (Matt. xx. 18 and 19.) that he should be betrayed into their hands, (Matt. xx. 18.) that Judas Iscariot was the person who would betray him, (Matt. xxvi. 23.) that all his disciples would forsake him and flee, (Matt. xxvi. 31.) that Peter particularly would thrice deny him in one night; (Mar. xiv. 30.) he foretold further, that he would rise again the third day, (Matt. xvi. 21.) that, after his ascension, he would send down the Holy Ghost upon hi sapostles, (John xv. 26.) which should enable them to work many miracles: (Mar. xvi. 17.) he foretold also the destruction of Jerusalem, with such very particular circumstances, in the whole 24th chapter of St Matthew, and the 13th of St Mark and 21st of St Luke, that no man who reads Josephus's history of that dreadful and unparalleled calamity, [361] can without the greatest obstinacy imaginable, doubt of our Saviour's divine fore-knowledge. Lastly, he foretold likewise many particulars concerning the future success of the gospel, and what should happen to several of his disciples; he foretold what opposition and persecution they should meet withal in their preaching; (Matt. x. 17.) he foretold what particular kind of death St Peter should die; (Job xxi. 18.) and hinted, that St John should live till after the destruction of Jerusalem; (Job, xxi. 22.) and foretold, that, notwithstanding all opposition and persecutions, the gospel should yet have such success as to spread itself over the world; (Matt. xvi. 18. xxiv. 14. xxviii. 19.) all and every one of which particulars were exactly accomplished, without failing in any respects.

Some of these things are of permanent and visible effects, even unto this day; particularly the captivity and dispersion of the Jews through all nations, for more than 1600 years; and yet their continuing a distinct people, in order to the fulfilling the prophecies of things

still future: This (I say) is particularly a permanent proof of the truth of the ancient prophecies: But the greatest part of the instances above mentioned were sensible and ocular demonstrations of the truth of our Lord's doctrine only to those persons who lived at the time when they happened: The credibility of whose testimony, therefore, shall be considered presently in its proper place.

Objections answered. But before I proceed to this, it may not be improper in this place to take notice of some objections which have of late been revived and urged against this whole notion, both of the prophecies themselves, and of the application of them to Christ. The sum and strength of which objections is briefly this.

That all the promises supposed to be made to the Jews before Christ's time, of a Messiah, or deliverer, were understood and meant of some "temporal deliverer" only, who should restore to the Israelites a mere worldly kingdom, "without the least imagination of a spiritual deliverance," or of any such Saviour as is preached in the New Testament.

That, consequently, "all the prophecies" in the Old Testament, applied to Christ by the apostles in the New, are applied to him in a sense merely "typical, mystical, allegorical, or enigmatical;" in a sense "different from the obvious and literal sense," by "new interpretations put upon them not agreeable to the obvious and literal meaning of those books" from whence they are cited: That is to say, that the prophecies were all of them intended concerning other persons, and other persons only; and, therefore, are falsely and groundlessly applied either to Christ in particular, or in general to the expectation of any such Messiah as should introduce a spiritual and eternal kingdom.

That there are several passages, cited by the apostles out of the Old Testament, which are either not found there at all, or else are very

different in the text itself from the citations alleged; and consequently, are, by the apostles, either misunderstood or misapplied. That even miracles themselves "can never render a foundation valid, which is in itself invalid;--can never make a false inference true;--can never make a prophecy fulfilled, which is not fulfilled;"--can never make those things to be spoken concerning Christ, which were not spoken concerning Christ: And, consequently, that the miracles said to have been worked by Christ could not possibly have been really worked by him; but must, of necessity, together with the whole system, both of the Old and New Testament, have been wholly the effect of imagination and enthusiasm, if not of imposture.

Now, in order to enable every careful and sincere reader to find a satisfactory answer to these, and all other objections of the like nature, I would lay before him the following considerations.

1. I suppose it to have been already proved in the foregoing part of this discourse, that there is a God, and that the nature and circumstances of men, and the necessary perfections of God, do demonstrate the obligations and the motives of natural religion; that is, that God is a moral as well as natural governor of the world. Whoever denies either of these assertions is obliged to invalidate the arguments alleged for proof of them in the former part of this book, before he has any right to intermix atheistical arguments and objections in the present question: It being evidently ridiculous in all who believe not that God is, and that he is a moral judge as well as natural governor, to argue at all about a revelation concerning religion, or to make any inquiry whether it be from God or no.

2. As God has in fact made known even demonstrable truths, [362] natural and moral truths, not to all men equally, but in different degrees and proportions to such as have a disposition and desire to

inquire after them; so it is agreeable to reason and to the analogy of God's proceedings, to believe that he may possibly, by revelation and tradition, have given some further degrees of light to such as are sincerely desirous to know and obey him; so that they who will do his will may know of the doctrine whether it be of God: As our natural knowledge of moral and religious truths in fact is, so revelation possibly may further be, as it were a light shining in a dark place.

3. It appears in history, that the great truths and obligations of natural religion have, from the beginning, been confirmed by a perpetual tradition in particular families, who, though in the midst of idolatrous nations, yet stedfastly adhered to the worship of the God of nature, the one God of the universe. And by the nation of the Jews (notwithstanding all their corruptions in practice, yet in the system and constitution of their religion) has the same tradition been continually preserved: Whereby they have been as it were a city upon a hill, a standng testimony against an idolatrous world.

4. Among the writings of all, even the most ancient and learned nations, there are none but the books of the Jews, which (agreeably to the above demonstrated truths concerning the God of nature, and the foundations of natural religion,) have, exclusive of chance and of necessity, ascribed either the original of the universe in general (an universe full of infinite variety and choice,) to the will and operation of an intelligent and free cause, or given any tolerable account, in particular, of the formation of this our earth into its present habitable state.

5. But in these books there is not only (in order to prevent idolatry) a full account (agreeable to the principles of natural reason,) how the heavens, and the earth, and all things therein contained, are the creatures of God, but, moreover, an uniform series of history from the

infancy of mankind, consistent with itself, and with the state of the Jewish and Christian church at this day, and with the possibilities of the predicted series for the future, for several thousands of years. Which consistency with the possibilities of such predicted future events could not be by chance (as I shall show presently,) but is itself a great and standing miracle.

6. In these books, agreeably to the hopes and expectations naturally founded on the divine perfections, God did from the beginning make, and has all along continued to his church or true worshippers, a promise that truth and virtue shall finally prevail; should prevail over the spirit of error and wickedness, of delusion and disobedience: That the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head: (Gen. iii. 15.) That among her posterity should arise a deliverance from the delusion and power of sin, by which Satan should be bruised under their feet: (Rom. xvi. 20.) That, in particular, from the seed of Abraham, and from the family of Isaac, and from the posterity of Jacob, and from the house of David, should arise the accomplishment of all God's promises to his church, and all the blessings included in God's covenant with his true worshippers. That at length the earth should be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea, (Is. xi. 9.) that the kingdoms of this world should become the kingdoms of the Lord: (Rev. xi. 15. Dan. vii. 27.) That in the last days, unto the mountain of the Lord's house, the seat of his true worship, should all nations flow; (Is. ii. 2.) That God would create new heavens and a new earth; (Is. lxv. 17.) wherein dwelleth righteousness; (2 Pet. iii. 13.) wherein the people should be all righteous, and inherit the land for ever: (Is. lx. 21. lxv. 25. xi. 9. 1. 26.) Should be all holy; (Is. iv. 8.) even every one that is written among the living. [363] That God would set up a kingdom, which should never be destroyed, but stand for

ever; (Dan. ii. 44.) and that the saints of the Most High should take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever, (Dan. vii. 18, 22, 27. Is. chap. lx.)

7. All the great promises, therefore, which God has ever made to his church, to his people, to the families or nations of his true worshippers, are evidently to be all along so understood as that wicked and unworthy persons, of whatever family, or nation, or profession of religion they be, shall be excluded from the benefit of those promises, shall be cut off from God's people; and worthy persons of all nations, from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, shall be accepted in their stead. That is to say; in like manner as the promise was made originally, not to all the children of Abraham, but to Isaac only, and not to both the sons of Isaac, but to Jacob only; and among the posterity of Jacob, all were not Israel which were of Israel, but in Elijah's days, seven thousand only were the true Israel; and in the time of Isaiah, though the number of the children of Israel was as the sand of the sea, (Is. x. 22.) yet a remnant only was to be saved, (Rom. ix. 27.); and in Hosea God says, I will call them my people which were not my people, and her beloved which was not beloved, (Hos. ii. 23. Rom. ix. 25.) So it is all along evidently to be understood, that the children of the promise, in the literal sense, according to the flesh, the visible church, or professed worshippers of the true God, are but the type or representative of the real invisible church of God, the (Rom. ii. 28. iii. 7 and 9. iv. 12.) true children of Abraham, in the spiritual and religious sense, the saints of the Most High, who shall possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever, (Dan. vii. 18.) even every one that is written among the living. (Is. iv. 3.)

8. It being evident that God cannot be the God of the dead, but of the

living; and that all promises made to such worshippers of the true God as at any time forsook all that they had, and even life itself, for the sake of that worship, could be nothing but mere mockery if there was no life to come and God had no power to restore them from the dead: This (I say) being self-evident, it follows necessarily, that when the time comes that the promised kingdom shall take place, the dead must be raised, and the saints, which have died in the intermediate time, must live again, and stand in their lot at the end of the days, (Dan. xii. 13.) When God styles himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; (Exod. iii. 6, 16.) and said to Abraham, I am thy exceeding great reward, (Gen. xv. 1.) and I will--be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, (Gen. xvii. 7.) and I will give the land unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, (Gen. xvii. 8, 13, 15, 17.) and repeated the very same promises to Isaac, (Gen. xxvi. 3.) and to Jacob personally, (Gen. xxviii. 13.) as well as to their posterity after them; (Deut. i. 8.) and yet gave Abraham none inheritance in the land, though he promised that he would give it to him and to his seed after him, (Acts vii. 5.) but Abraham himself sojourned only in the land of promise as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise, (Heb. xi. 9.) who all confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, (Heb. xi. 13.) and Jacob particularly complained that the days of the years of his pilgrimage had been few and evil; (Gen. xlvii. 9.) and, in blessing Isaac and Ishmael, God promised to make Ishmael fruitful, and to multiply him exceedingly, (Gen. xvii. 20. xxi. 18.) so that he should beget twelve princes, and God would make him a great nation, and multiply his seed exceedingly, that it should not be numbered for multitude; (Gen. xvi. 10.) and yet in the very same sentence expressly, by way of opposition, and of high and eminent distinction, declares

that, notwithstanding all this, yet his covenant, his everlasting covenant, he would establish with Isaac: (Gen. xvii. 19, 21.) When all this (I say) is considered, the inference of the apostle to the Hebrews cannot but appear unanswerably just, that these patriarchs looked for a city somewhat more than temporal, even a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; (Heb. xi. 10.) and that they who said such things declared plainly that they sought a country, a better country, that is, an heavenly; (Heb. xi. 14, 16.) and that for this reason God was not ashamed to be called their God, because he had prepared for them a city. And if this inference was necessarily true concerning the patriarchs, who confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth; (Heb. xi. 13.) much more concerning those who were tortured, not accepting deliverance, (Heb. xi. 35.) must it needs be true that the only possible reason of this their choice was that they might obtain a better resurrection.

Other notices in the Old Testament, that the worshippers of the true God, in every age of the world, should at the end have their lot in the kingdom promised to the saints of the Most High, are, the translation of Enoch, (Gen. v. 24.) that he should not see death; (Heb. xi. 5. Wisd. iv. 10. Eccles. xliv. 16. xlix. 14.) and the taking up of Elijah into Heaven, (2 Kings ii. 11, Eccles. xlviii. 9. 1 Macc. ii. 58.) Allusions to it at least, if perhaps not direct assertions, are the words of Job, (Job xix. 25.) I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God. [364] And those of Isaiah: Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. A wake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. (Is. xxvi. 19.) And your bones shall flourish like an herb. (Is. lxvi. 14.)

And that passage in Hosea: I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. (Hos. xiii. 14.) O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction. And that in Ezekiel: Behold,--the bones came together, bone to his bone; and-- the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above;-- and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet;----Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. (Ezek.xxxvii. 7, 8, 10, 12.) Again: The words of Isaiah; The righteous perisheth, and-- is taken away from the evil to come; He shall enter into peace: (Is. lvii. 1, 2.) What more natural signification have they than that which the Book of Wisdom expresses, ch. iii. 1, 3. The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God;--They are in peace. And what but the future state can the conclusion of Isaiah's prophecy reasonably be referred to? Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth;--As the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And-- all flesh shall come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: For their worm shall not die; neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh, (Is. lxv. 17. lxvi. 22, 23, 24.) In like manner; Whom does God speak of by Ezekiel, when he says, the sons of (Ezek. xliv. 15, 16.) Zadock, that kept the charge of my sanctuary, when the children of Israel went astray from me; [365] [which went not astray when the children of Israel went astray, (Ezek. xlviii. 11.)]--they shall enter into my sanctuary. And to what do the following words of the same prophet most naturally refer? [366] Every thing shall live whither the river cometh:--And by the river, upon the bank

thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade; neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: It shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary; and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine. Still more strong is that allusion in Daniel; I beheld till the thrones were cast down, [till the thrones were placed,] and the ancient of days did sit:--A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: The judgment was set, and the books were opened. (Dan.vii. 9. 10.) But the following words of the same prophet are direct and express. Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, [every one that shall be found written in the book,] and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.--But go thou thy way, till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and shalt stand in thy lot at the end of the days; (Dan. xii 2, 3, 13.) Can any one, who considers these texts, with any truth or reason affirm that all the promises supposed to be made to the Jews before Christ's time were meant of some "temporal" deliverance only, "without the least imagination of a spiritual deliverance?"

9. There are in the Old Testament many intimations, and some direct predictions, that all the great promises of God, made to his true worshippers, shall receive their final accomplishment by means of a particular person, anointed of God for that purpose; who, after the reduction of all adversaries, shall set up the everlasting kingdom. The seed of Abraham, in which all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, (and, in like manner, the seed of the woman, which was to

bruise the serpent's head,) might originally, with equal propriety, and in as reasonable and natural a sense of the words, be understood to signify (what St. Paul afterward asserts it did signify, [367]) in the singular sense, a particular person, as, in the plural sense, a number of persons. The Shiloh which was to come, and to whom the gathering of the people was to be, (Gen. xlix. 10.) (the promise laid up in store, ta apokeimena auto, as the LXX render it,) by its opposition in the text to the terms sceptre and lawgiver, most naturally signifies a single person who was to reign; and, by the gradation in the words of the text, somewhat of superior dignity to that of a sceptre and a lawgiver. The words of Balaam:--(Num. xxiv. 17, 19.) I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh: There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel;--out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion;--are words so put in his mouth, as most properly and obviously to describe a much greater person than perhaps he thought of, a much greater person than one who should smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. Again; that the words of Moses:--(Deut. xviii. 15.) The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, like unto me, unto him shall ye hearken;--were not meant barely of Joshua, or of "a succession of prophets," but of one who should have as eminent a legislative authority as Moses, may reasonably be gathered from the occasion of their being spoken, not merely by Moses, upon a general reliance and trust that God would provide him a successor, but by God himself, upon the people's desiring in Horeb,--saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not: Then the Lord said, They have well spoken:--I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I

command him: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him. (Deut.xviii. 16, 17, 18, 19.)--And that the words were anciently, long before the application of them by the writers of the New Testament, thus understood, and not concerning Joshua, or a succession of prophets, appears from those additional words at the conclusion of the book of Deuteronomy:--(Deut.xxxiv. 9, 10.) Joshua, the son of Nun, was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him--But there arose not a prophet since in Israel, like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.--The prediction of Isaiah is still clearer:--(Is. ix. 6, 7.) Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace: [368] Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever: The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this. Again:--(Is. xi. 1, 3, 6, 9.) There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse.--He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.--The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, &c.--They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. And (Is. xlii. 1, 3, 4.--Matt. xii. 17.) Behold my servant,--mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him:--A bruised reed shall he not break:--He shall bring forth judgment unto truth:--till he have set

judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for his law. The prophet Jeremiah no less plainly:--(Jer.xxiii. 5, 6.--xxxiii. 15, 16.) I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth:--And this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. And Ezekiel:--(Ezek.xxxiv. 23, 25.--xxxvii. 22, 23, 24, 25.--Hos.iii. 5.) I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David;--And I will make with them a covenant of peace, &c.--One king shall be king to them all;--neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols;--and they all shall have one shepherd; they shall also walk in my judgments,--and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. By Haggai is the same predicted:--(Hagg. ii. 6, 7.--Heb. xii. 26.) Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth,--And the desire of all nations shall come. [369] And by Zechary:--(Zech. ix. 9, 10.--Matt. xxi. 5.) Behold, thy king cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass:--He shall speak peace unto the heathen; and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth. And by Malachi;--(Mal.iii. 1.) The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant. But most expressly of all by Daniel:--(Dan.vii. 13, 14.) I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him: [370] And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom; that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. And the anointing of the Holy One, this prophet calls (Dan. ix. 24.) the sealing up of the vision and prophecy,

and the finishing of transgression, and the making an end of sins, and the making reconciliation for iniquity, and the bringing in ever-lasting righteousness. [Do all these things denote nothing but "temporal" deliverance, "without the least imagination of a spiritual deliverance?"] And in the words next following, he is styled, by name, Messiah. (Dan. ix. 25.) Know, therefore, [vtd know also] and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks. [371]

10. Concerning this Messiah, in the setting up of whose kingdom all the promises of God terminate, it is clearly predicted in the Old Testament that he should arise particularly from the tribe of Judah, from the family of David, and in the town of Bethlehem.

The first of these particulars is expressed in those emphatical words of Jacob:--(Gen. xlix. 8, 10.) Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise,-- thy father's children shall bow down before thee:-- The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, [LXX, heos an elthe ta apokeimena auto, till the accomplishment of the promises which God has laid up in store for him,] and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. To which the writer of the Chronicles seems to refer, when he says:--(Chr. v. 1, 2.) The genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birth-right; for Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler, [Heb. and from him was it prophesied the ruler should arise.] And the Psalmist,--(Ps.lx. 7. cviii. 8.) Judah is my lawgiver.

The second is expressed in that promise to David,--(2 Sam. vii. 16.) thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee, [LXX, enopio`n mou, before me;] thy throne shall be established for ever. Which words might, indeed, of themselves be understood concerning

a succession of kings in the house of David: But that God had a further and a greater meaning in them, he very clearly explains by the following prophets. By Isaiah:--(Is. xi. 1, &c. compare Rev. iii. 7. v. 5. xxii. 16.) there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots; and then follows through the whole chapter a glorious description of an everlasting kingdom of righteousness, over both Jews and Gentiles. By Jeremiah;--(Jer. xxiii. 5.) I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth:--And this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our righteousness. By Ezekiel;--(Ezek.xxvii. 23, 24, 25, 26.) they shall be my people, and I will be their God; and David my servant shall be king over them, and they all shall have one shepherd;--and my servant David shall be their prince for ever; Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant. And by Hosea:--(Hos. iii. 4.) The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king and without a prince, and without a sacrifice:--Afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days.

The third particular is expressed in those words of Micah:--(Micah, v. 2. Mat. i. 6.) But thou Bethlehem Euphratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. After the passages now cited out of the foregoing prophets, what can be more jejune than to understand these words of Micah concerning Zorobabel only as having been of an ancient family?

11. In the books of the Old Testament it is expressly predicted, that

the kingdom of the Messiah should extend not over the Jews only, but also over the Gentiles. The (Gen. xii. 3. xviii. 18. xxii. 18. xxvi. 4. xxviii. 14.) promise made to Abraham, and so often repeated to him, and to Isaac, and to Jacob, that in their seed should all the nations of the earth be blessed, is thus opened and explained by the prophets.--(Is.xi. 10.) There shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious.--(Is.xlii. 1, 6. Matt. xii. 18.) Behold my servant--in whom my soul delighteth,--he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles;--I will--give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles. (Is.xlix. 6.) It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. (Is.lvi. 6, 7, 8.--John x. 16.) Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord,--even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and--mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. The Lord God, which gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, yet will I gather others to him, besides those that are gathered unto him. (Ezek. xlvii. 22.) The strangers that sojourn among you,--shall have an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel. (Mal. i. 11.) From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts.

12. Concerning the same Messiah, of whom so great things are spoken, and whose kingdom is to be an everlasting kingdom, it is still expressly predicted by the prophets that he should suffer and be cut off. Concerning the very same person, who (with respect to his coming

to reign, and to introduce the everlasting jubilee or rest to the people of God, (Heb. iv. 9. sabbatismo's.) is styled Messiah the prince; (Dan. ix. 25.) concerning the very same person, I say, it is in the very same sentence expressly predicted that he should be cut off, but not for himself, (Dan. ix. 26.) [Heb. and the people should not then be his; unto him should not then the gathering of the people be. (Gen. xlix. 10.)] For which reason, and also because the words can with no tolerable sense be applied to any other person, and because moreover the connexion of the whole prophecy leads to the same interpretation; the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah likewise is most justly understood to be spoken of the Messiah: There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse; (Isa. xi. 1.)--with righteousness shall he judge the poor: (Isa.xi. 4.)--Behold my servant--mine elect in whom my soul delighteth;--he shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street; a bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. (Isa. xlii. 1, 2, 3.--Behold, my servant shall deal prudently; (Is. lii. 13.) Surely he hath born our griefs;--he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities:--He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth: He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation?--For the transgression of my people was he stricken; and he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death:--When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin;--my righteous servant shall justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities:--He was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Is. liii. 4, &c.)

13. All prophecies of blessings to the worshippers of the true God,

expressed either as being to happen in the latter days, or in words which imply a lasting duration, are in reason to be understood as having reference to the times of the promised kingdom of the Messiah, of whom it is expressly said, that he shall bring in everlasting righteousness, (Dan. ix. 24.) and that his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. (Dan. vii. 14.) Some prophecies of this kind are direct and express. Others, beginning with promises of particular intermediate blessings, and proceeding with general expressions more great and lofty than can naturally be applied to the temporal blessing immediately spoken of, are most reasonably understood to have a perpetual view and regard to that great and general event, in which all God's promises to his true worshippers do centre and terminate, and of which all intermediate blessings promised by God are justly looked upon as beginnings, types, pledges, or earnests.

14. For since, from the express prophecies before cited, of the Messiah's everlasting kingdom of righteousness, it appears that God had in fact a view to that, as the great and general end of all the dispensations of providence towards his true worshippers from the beginning; and no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation, (2 Pet. i. 20.) (that is, the meaning of prophecies is not what perhaps the prophet himself might imagine in his private judgment of the state of things then present,) because the prophecy in old time came not by the will of man, but holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; there may, therefore, very possibly, and very reasonably, be supposed to be many prophecies, which, though they may have a prior and immediate reference to some nearer event, yet, by the spirit of God, (whom those prophecies which are express show to have had a further view,) may have been directed to be uttered in such

words, as may even more properly and more justly be applied to the great event which providence had in view, than to the intermediate event which God designed as only a pledge or earnest of the other: For instance; suppose these words of Daniel,--I beheld till the thrones were cast down, [till the thrones were placed,] and the ancient of days did sit:--A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him; thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened: (Dan. vii. 9, 10.) Suppose (I say) these words were spoken concerning the slaying of a wild beast, or the destruction of a temporal empire, (ver. 11.) yet what reasonable man, who had ever elsewhere met with any notices of a judgment to come, could doubt but the destruction there spoken of was therefore expressed in those words, that it might be understood to be the introduction to the general judgment? The exact and very particular description of a resurrection, in the 37th of Ezekiel, supposing it to be indeed spoken of a temporal restoration of the Jews, yet who can doubt but it was so worded with design to allude to a real resurrection of the dead? The words of Micah: Thou, Bethlehem, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting: (Micah, v. 2. Mat. ii. 6.) Supposing it possible they could be spoken of Zorobabel, yet, if afterwards there should arise out of Bethlehem one in whom were found all the other prophetic characters of the promised Messiah, who could doubt but the words were intended either solely, or at least chiefly, of the latter? The words of Jeremiah: (Jer. i. 7.--vi. 5.) Babylon hath been a golden cup;--the nations have drunken of her wine, therefore the nations are mad: Flee out of the midst of Babylon,--be not cut off in her iniquity:--My people, go ye

out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord. Who, that considers the nature and character of the Babylon in Jeremiah's time, and compares it with the nature and character of the Babylon described by St John, can doubt but the spirit which influenced Jeremiah foresaw and intended to allude to that Babylon which had (Rev. xvii. 4.) a golden cup in her hand full of abominations, (ver. 2.) and the inhabiters of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication, (ch. xviii. 3, 4.) and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her:--Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: For the words of Jeremiah are more strictly applicable to this latter Babylon than to that in his own time. Again; The words of Isaiah:--(Is. vii. 14.--Matt. i. 23.) Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call his name Immanuel, that is to say, God with us. Supposing Isaiah himself could possibly at that time understand them concerning a son of his own, concerning a son to be born of a young woman afterwards, who at the time then present was a virgin; and that his being styled Immanuel meant nothing more than that, before this child was grown up, Judah should be delivered from the then threatened incursions of Israel and Syria; (all which, notwithstanding the seeming connexion of the words in the place they stand, is very difficult to suppose;) yet, if afterwards any person, comparing the solemn introduction wherewith the words are brought in, "Hear ye now, O house of David; is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold a virgin shall conceive," &c. If any one, I say, comparing this solemn introduction with the promises repeated to the house of David in other passages of the prophets, that there should be born unto them a Son who should (Is. ix. 7.--Ezek. xxxvii. 25.) sit

upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom for ever, and of the increase of whose government and peace there should be no end;--and considering, moreover, the character of this promised Son, that he should (Dan. ix. 24.) finish transgression, and make an end of sins, and make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness: If a person, considering and comparing these things, should in his own days find a son really born of a virgin, attested to by numerous miracles, and by God's command named Jesus, (which is synonymous to immanuel, a potent Saviour or God with us,) because he (Matt. i. 21.) should save his people from their sins, that is, should (Dan. ix. 24.) make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness; Could such a person possibly entertain the least doubt, whether God, who sent Isaiah to repeat the fore cited words to the house of David, did not intend thereby to describe, if not wholly and solely, at least chiefly and ultimately, this latter saviour? In like manner; suppose those great promises to David, (2 Sam. vii. 13, 14, 16.) concerning the establishment of the throne of his Son for ever, were by David, and the prophet himself that delivered them, understood (te idia epilusei, as St. Peter speaks,) concerning Solomon, and a succession of kings in his family; yet, when following prophecies clearly and expressly declared, that out of the root of Jesse should arise a Messiah who should reign for ever, no reasonable man can doubt, but that the former and less clear prophecy was likewise intended of God, and therefore rightly applied by the apostles of Christ to the same purpose? To give but one instance more: Suppose the words, (Ps. xvi. 10.) Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption, were by David spoken concerning himself, (which, however, can by no way be proved,) yet who, that (Acts. ii. 30.) knew David himself to be a prophet, and that had

compared the other prophecies concerning the (Is. xi. 1, &c.) branch out of the roots of Jesse, the (Ezek. xxxvii. 24.) one shepherd of Israel, even God's (ver. 25.) servant David who should be their prince for ever, and yet was to be (Dan. ix. 26.--Is. liii. tot.) cut off before he should reign for ever; and that had himself seen (as St. Peter did) and actually conversed with Christ risen from the dead; who, (I say) in these circumstances, could possibly doubt but that (2 Sam. xxiii. 2.) the spirit of the Lord which spake by David intended the fore-mentioned words should be understood of, and applied to Christ? And the like may be said concerning some other prophecies which are vulgarly supposed to be applied typically to Christ.

15. It is not agreeable to reason, or to the analogy of Scripture, to suppose that the Jews, before our Saviour's time, could have a clear and distinct understanding of the full meaning, even of the express prophecies, much less of those which were more obscure and indirect; when both were intended to be only as it were a light shining in a dark place. [372] But thus much is evident, that the Jews, both before and in our Saviour's time, had from these prophecies a general expectation of a Messiah, [373] and that this Messiah was to be, not merely a "temporal" deliverer, but 'vytsr, Pater futuri seculi, the head of the future state, as well as of the present. Nor does it at all appear that our Lord's disciples, when they (Luke, xxiv. 21.) thought he would have redeemed Israel, or when they (Acts, i. 6.) asked if he would at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel, I say, it does not at all appear that they expected merely a "temporal" kingdom, but their error was in expecting a present kingdom; and therefore our Lord's answer to them, is not concerning the nature but the time of the kingdom. And the modern Jews, at this day, who to be sure have entertained no prejudicate notions from the New Testament writer's interpretation or

application of prophecies, have (I think) still an universal expectation, that the Messiah shall be their prince in the future state as well as in the present.

16. When Jesus Christ, by (John x. 25.) the works which he did in his father's name, and (John v. 36.) which his father gave him to finish, had proved himself to be sent of God; (which truth the apostles likewise confirmed by their testimony, by their works, and by laying down their lives, not for their opinions, which possibly erroneous and enthusiastic persons may sometimes sincerely do, but in attestation to facts of their own knowledge) and it appeared, moreover, that there was wanting in him no circumstance, no sine qua non, no character, appropriated by any of the ancient prophets to the promised Messiah, he had then a clear right to apply to himself all the prophecies, which either directly spoke of the Messiah, or which, through any intermediate events, pointed at him, and were applicable to him.

17. The application of this latter sort of prophecies to Christ is not allegorical. It is not an allegorical application, much less an allegorical argument or reasoning. But they are applied to him, as being really and intentionally, in the view of providence, the end and complete accomplishment of that, whereof the intermediate blessing was a pledge or beginning.

18. The application of this latter sort of prophecies to Christ, was never by reasonable men urged as being itself a proof that Jesus was the true Messiah. Nay, the application of the most direct and express prophecies whatsoever, (unless when the characters be so particular as not to be at all compatible to different persons, or the marks of time be very definite and exact,) has not of itself the nature of a direct or positive proof, but can only be a sine qua non, an application of certain marks or characters, without which no person could be the

promised Messiah. Many men were of the seed of Abraham, and of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David, and born in Bethlehem of Judea, and suffered, and were cut of; and yet neither any nor all of these characters could prove any man to be the promised Messiah, but the want of any one of them would prove that any man was not he. The proof of Jesus being the Christ were (John v. 36.) the works which his father gave him to finish. The application of direct and express prophecies to him is nothing but such a congruity of marks or characters as removes all objections by which an adversary would endeavour to prove that it was not he. Ought not Christ (Luke, xxiv. 26.) to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory, is not proving from his sufferings, that Jesus was the Christ; but removing the objection, by which some were apt to infer from his sufferings that he could not possibly be the Christ. The application of indirect prophecies to him is only a giving of further light from the analogy and conformity of the Old Testament to the New, by way of illustration and confirmation, to such as have been before convinced by the direct proofs. The proof, therefore, of the truth of Christianity does not stand upon the application of prophecies; but the works by which Christ proved himself to be sent of God gave him a right to apply to himself the prophecies concerning the Messiah; and the marks or characters of the promised Messiah, given by the prophets, were so many tests by which his claim was to be tried. "Miracles," indeed, "can never render a foundation valid, which is in itself invalid; can never make a false inference true; can never make a prophecy fulfilled, which is not fulfilled; can never mark out a Messias, or Jesus for the Messias, if both are not marked out in the Old Testament:" But miracles can give a man a just and undeniable claim to be received as the promised Messiah, if the prophetic characters of the Messiah be applicable to him: And

this it is by which Jesus was proved to be the Christ.

19. From what has been said concerning the application of indirect prophecies, it is easy to observe the nature and use of types and figures, and allegorical manner of speaking; that these were much less intended to be ever alleged for proofs of the truth of a doctrine; and yet, in their proper place, may afford very great light and assistance towards the right understanding of it: An instance or two will make this matter obvious. There is a very remarkable passage in the epistle to the Galatians, where the apostle himself styles the thing he is speaking of, an (Gal. iv. 24.) allegory; that is, he draws an argument, a simile. The allegory, or similitude, he makes use of is not alleged by him as a "proof" of the truth of the doctrine he is asserting, but as a proof of the falseness and groundlessness of a particular objection urged by the unbelieving Jews against it: The doctrine the apostle asserts (both in the epistle to the Romans and in this to the Galatians,) is, that Christians of the Gentiles, who imitate the faith and obedience of Abraham, (being circumcised with the circumcision--of Christ, Col. ii. 11.) are equally capable of being admitted to the benefit of God's promises to his people, as the Jews of the literal circumcision, who were lineally descended from that patriarch. In opposition to this, the Jews alleged, that since to the Israelites confessedly (Rom. ix. 4.) pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; since theirs, confessedly, were the fathers or patriarchs, to whom all the promises of God were originally made, it could not possibly be true, nor consistent with the promises of God made to their fathers, that these Israelites, who had been all along the peculiar people or church of God, should at last be rejected for not receiving the gospel; and that believers from among the Gentiles of

all nations should be received in their stead. Now, in reply to this objection, the apostle argues with the greatest justness and strength, from the analogy of a like case acknowledged by themselves, in which the reason of the thing was the same, even from the analogy of God's method and manner of proceeding in the giving of those very original promises to the patriarchs, upon which this prejudice of the Jews was founded. (Gal. iv. 21. &c.) Tell me, says he, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? That is, will ye not attend to the analogy of God's method of proceeding, in those very promises on which ye depend? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free woman: But he who was of the bond-woman, was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman, was by promise: Which things are an allegory, &c. That is to say, even originally, the promise was not made to all the children of Abraham, but to Isaac only, which was, from the beginning, a very plain declaration that God did not principally intend his promise to take place in (Rom. ix. 8.) Abraham's descendants according to the flesh, but in those who, by a faith or fidelity like his, were in a truer and higher sense the children and followers of that Great Father of the faithful. In like manner, and for the same reason, the promise was not made (Rom. ix. 10.) to both the sons of Isaac, but to Jacob only; and, among the posterity of Jacob, all (Rom. ix. 6.) were not Israel, which were of Israel. What ye (Gal. iv. 21.) yourselves, therefore, saith St. Paul, who are so desirous to be under the Mosaic law, cannot but acknowledge to have been originally and always true, the same is true (ver. 29.) now. What was true concerning the two sons of Abraham, and likewise concerning the two sons of Isaac, who were the patriarchs with whom God's covenant was originally made, is, by continuance of the same analogy, true concerning the covenant established with the families,

and with the nation of the Jews, descended from those patriarchs; it is true concerning the church of God through all successive ages; it is true concerning the (Gal. iv. 25.) Jerusalem which now is, and concerning that which is to come. As (ver. 22.) Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free woman: And as (ver. 30.) the son of the bond-maid, though, according to the flesh, no less truly his natural descendant than the other, yet was not to be co-heir with him, who, by the promise of God, was appointed to inherit: So, says the apostle, the (ver. 25. 26.) Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children, the visible earthly church, which received the external ceremonial law from Mount Sina, is not, by that outward general denomination, entitled to the eternal favour of God: But the Jerusalem which is above, which is the mother of us all, of all who, by true faith and sincere obedience are pleasing to God; this heavenly Jerusalem, this spiritual invisible church or city of the living God it is, to which all the promises of God, made in all ages to his church, are, in reality, originally and finally appropriated.

From this remarkable instance, it is well worth observing, by the way, that when the apostles are supposed to argue with the Jews ad hominem, the meaning is, that arguments alleged by the apostles to the Jews in particular, differ from arguments brought to the Gentiles, in this; not that they were at any time arguments drawn from things acknowledged by the Jews, and in themselves otherwise inconclusive; but that they were drawn, justly and strongly, from things well known among the Jews, though what the Gentiles were strangers to.

The correspondences of types and antetypes, though they are not themselves proper proofs of the truth of a doctrine, yet they may be very reasonable confirmations of the foreknowledge of God; of the uniform view of providence under different dispensations; of the

analogy, harmony, and agreement between the Old Testament and the New. The words in the law, concerning one particular kind of death, (Deut. xxi. 23.) He that is hanged is accursed of God, can hardly be conceived to have been put in upon any other account than with a view and foresight to the application made of it by St. Paul. (Gal. iii. 13.) The analogies between the (Exod. xii. 22. 46. Johni. 29. xix. 36. Rev. i. 5.) Paschal Lamb, and the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world; between the Egyptian bondage and the tyranny of sin; between the (1 Cor. x. 1, 2.) baptism of the Israelites in the sea and in the cloud, and the baptism of Christians; between the (Heb. iii. 15.-9. iv. 1, 2, 3. 1 Cor. x. 1-11.) passage through the wilderness, and through the present world; between (Heb. iv. 8. 9.) Jesus [Joshua] bringing the people into the promised land, and Jesus Christ being the captain of salvation to believers; between the Sabbath of rest (Heb. iv. 5. ix. 1.) promised to the people of God in the earthly Canaan, and the eternal rest promised in the heavenly Canaan; between the (Numb. xxxv. 25. 28.) liberty granted from the time of the death of the High Priest, to him that had fled into a city of refuge, and the redemption purchased by the death of Christ; between the (Heb. ix. 25.) High Priest entering into the holy place every year with blood of others, and Christ's (Heb. iv. 12, 24, 26.) once entering with his own blood into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us; these (I say) and innumerable other analogies, between the (Col.ii. 17.) shadows of things to come, the (Heb. x. i.) shadows of good things to come, the (Heb. viii. 5.) shadows of heavenly things, the (Heb. ix. 9.) figures for the time then present, the (Heb. ix. 23.) patterns of things in the heavens, and (Heb. ix. 2.) the heavenly things themselves; cannot, without the force of strong prejudice, be conceived to have happened by mere chance, without any foresight or design. There are no such

analogies, much less such series of analogies, found in the books of mere enthusiastic writers, much less of enthusiastic writers living in such remote ages from each other. It is much more credible and reasonable to suppose, (what St. Paul affirms,) that (1 Cor. x. 6.) these things were our examples; and that, in the uniform course of God's government of the world, (Ver. 11.) all these things happened unto them of old for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come. And hence arises that aptness of similitude, in the application of several legal performances to the morality of the gospel, that it can very hardly be supposed not to have been originally intended. As (1 Cor. v. 6, 7, 8.) know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Again; (Phil. iii. 3.) we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus; and have no confidence in the flesh. And (Col. ii, 13, 11.) you being dead in your sins, and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath God quickened together with Christ:--In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by [the Christian, the spiritual circumcision,] the circumcision of Christ. And (1 Cor. ix. 13, 14, 8, 9, 10. 1 Tim. v. 18.) do ye not know that they which--wait at the altar, are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.--Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? for it is written in the law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.

Doth God take care for oxen? or saith he it altogether for our sakes? Some applications of texts out of the Old Testament are mere allusions; that is, nothing more is intended to be affirmed than that the words spoken in the Old Testament are as truly and as justly applicable to the present occasion as they were to that upon which they were originally spoken. Of this kind I think is that of St. Matthew:--(Matt. iii. 17.--Jer.xxxi. 15.) Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, in Rama there was a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not. Thus likewise St. Paul:--(2 Cor. viii. 13, 14, 15.) I mean not that other men be eased, and you burdened; but by an equality; as it is written he that had gathered much, had nothing over; and he that had gathered little, had no lack. Again:--(Is. vi. 9.) What Isaiah says of the Jews, (supposing he did not speak there prophetically, though the solemnity of the introduction makes it much more reasonable to believe he did: But, supposing he spake of the Jews in his own time,) Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye, indeed, but perceive not; make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed: was (Matt. xiii. 14.) fulfilled, was verified, was equally true, equally applicable to the Jews, in our Saviour's days. Of the same kind seems to be (Matt.viii. 17.) St. Matthew's explication of that passage in (Is. liii. 4.) Isaiah; Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. The sense of the words in the prophecy is what St. Peter expresses:--(1 Pet. ii. 24.) Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree. And the Apostle to the Hebrews:--(Heb. ix. 28.) Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. Yet St. Matthew

says:--(Matt. viii. 16, 17.) He healed all that were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses. His meaning is, Christ healed diseases in such a manner, that even in that sense also the words of Isaiah were literally verified. To give but one instance more; (Matt. xiii. 34, 35.) All these things, (saith the evangelist) spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables,--that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world: That is, the words (Ps. lxxviii. 2.) of the psalmist were as properly, as truly, and as justly applicable to the things which our Lord spoke, as to the occasion upon which they were originally spoken by the psalmist.

To such as are accustomed only to modern languages, and understand not the nature of the Hebrew and Syriac speech, it may seem very surprising, that, in the (Matt. viii. 17.--xiii. 35.) two last-mentioned passages, the citations are introduced with these words, That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, &c. But all who understand those languages well know, that the phrase answering to these expressions, hina plerothe, that it might be fulfilled; mean nothing more than, hereby was verified, or, so that hereby was verified, or the like. And they who understand not the languages may yet easily apprehend this, by considering the nature and force of some other expressions of the like kind. As: (Jer.xxvii. 15.) They prophecy a lie in my name, that I might drive you out. (Matt. xxiii. 34, 35.) Behold, I send unto you prophets,--That upon you may come all the righteous blood. With (Exod. xi. 9.--xvii. 3.--Numb. xxxii. 14.--Ps. li. 4.--Jer.vii. 18.--Matt. x. 34, 35.) many other passages of the same nature; where the words "that such a thing may

be," do not at all signify the intention, "to the end that it may be," but merely the event, "so that it will be." In the case of the most direct and express prophecies of all, the words, "this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet," never do, never possibly can signify literally, that the thing was done for that end, that the prophecy might be fulfilled; because, on the reverse, the reason why any thing is predicted always is, because the thing was (before that prediction) appointed to be done. Much more, therefore, in the case of indirect prophecies, the words--this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet--necessarily and evidently mean this only, that the thing was so done, as that thereby or therein was verified what the prophet had spoken.

20. It cannot, therefore, with any sort of reason or justice, be inferred from such citations out of the Old Testament as I have now mentioned, that the apostles either misunderstood, or enthusiastically misapplied the writings of the prophets. Nor can any just argument be drawn against the authority of the books of the Old and New Testament from such topics as these; that the copies of the law, in the times of the idolatrous kings of Judah and Israel, were well nigh lost, that some texts cited out of the Old Testament by the writers of the New, are not now found in the Old Testament at all; that other texts are read differently in the Old Testament itself, from the citations of the same texts recorded in the New, and the like: Which things have indeed given occasion to weak and ridiculous writers to invent certain senseless rules or regulations, according to which men may at any time rightly make what wrong quotations they please: But, in truth, the things themselves I am here speaking of are nothing but what must of necessity happen in a long succession of ages.

When--(2 Chr. xxxiv. 14.) Hilkiah the priest (in the days of Josiah,)

found, in the house of the Lord, a book of the law of the Lord, given by Moses; it is very probable, indeed, from the circumstances of the history, that copies of the law were then very scarce, and that this found by Hilkiah, was, to his surprise, an authentic or original copy. But that the whole should have been at that time a forgery of Hilkiah, is evidently impossible, because the very being and polity of the nation, as well as their religion, was founded upon the acknowledgment of the law of Moses, how much soever idolatrous kings might at certain times have corrupted that religion, and caused the study of the law to have been neglected. And in the very same book, wherein the account is given of this particular fact, of Hilkiah's finding a copy [an authentic copy] of the law, it is expressly and at large recorded how, in a foregoing reign, the king--(2 Chr. xvii. 7. 8, 9.) sent to his princes--to teach in the cities of Judah, and with them he sent Levites and priests;--and they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people.

That, in length of time, some whole books should have been lost, is nothing wonderful. There are several books expressly cited in the Old Testament, of which we have now nothing remaining. That in the books which remain there should sometimes, for want of infallibility in transcribers, [374] happen omissions, transpositions, and various readings, is still less to be wondered at. Nothing but perpetual miracle could prevent it: They who have skill to compare, in the original, certain passages in the books of Chronicles, with the correspondent places in the books of Kings, or the 18th Psalm, with 2 Sam. c. xxii. which is a transcript of the same Psalm, or the 14thPsalm with the 53d, which are also one and the same Psalm transcribed; and, much more, they who can compare the Septuagint translation with the

original will be able to find instances of these things, and very often also to see plainly how and whence they happened: (All which, far from diminishing the authority of the books, are strong arguments of their antiquity, and against their having been forged by Esdras, or any other hand.) What wonder then is it, that among the numerous texts cited in the New Testament out of the Old, one or two should now not be found in our present copies of the Old Testament, and that some others should be read differently in the Old Testament, from the citations of the same texts recorded in the New? Or how does this at all affect the authority of either, when much the greatest part of the texts cited agree perfectly either in words or at least in sense; and the whole series, harmony, analogy, connexion, and uniformity of both, compared with the system of natural and moral truths, and with the history of the world and the state of nations, through a long succession of ages, from the days of Moses to this present time, shows that the books are not the result of random and enthusiastic imaginations, but of long foresight and design? for the spirit of enthusiasm is very hardly consistent with itself through the writings of one single person. How then is it possible that for 3000 years together, and pretending too (through all that time) to an uniform series of predictions, it should happen never to have fallen into such a track of expected events, as the nature and truth of things and the situation of the kingdoms of the world should have rendered absolutely impossible, and altogether incapable of any farther, much less of any final completion?

21. I shall conclude this head with pointing at some particular extraordinary prophecies, which deserve to be carefully considered and compared with the events, whether they could possibly have proceeded from chance or from enthusiasm. Some of them are of such a nature as that they can only be judged of by persons learned in history, and

these I shall but just mention. Others are obvious to the consideration of the whole world, and with those I shall finish what I think proper at this time to offer upon this subject.

Concerning Babylon, "it was particularly foretold [375] that it (Is. xiii. 17. xxi. 2.) should be shut up, and besieged by the Medes, Elamites, and Armenians: That the river should be dried up: (Jer. l. 38. li. 36.) That the city should be taken in the time of a feast, (Jer.li. 39. 57.) while her--mighty men were drunken; which accordingly came to pass," when "Belshazzar and all his thousand princes, who were drunk with him at the feast," were "slain by Cyrus's soldiers;" (Cyropædia, lib. 7.) Also it was particularly foretold, "that God would make the country of Babylon (Is. xiv. 23.) a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; which was accordingly fulfilled by the overflowing and drowning of it, on the breaking down of the great dam in order to take the city." Could the correspondence of these events with the predictions be the result of chance? But suppose these predictions were forged after the event; can the following ones also have been written after the event? or with any reason be ascribed to chance? (Jer. l. 39.) The wild beasts of the desert--shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein: And it shall be no more inhabited for ever; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, &c. (Jer. li. 26. xxxvii. 64.) They shall not take of thee a stone for a corner,--but thou shalt be desolate for ever, saith the Lord:--Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling place for dragons, an astonishment and an hissing without an inhabitant:--It shall sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her. (Is. i. 19, 20, 21.) Babylon, the glory of kingdoms,--shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah: It shall never be inhabited; neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to

generation: Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there: But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there.

Concerning Egypt, was the following prediction forged after the event? Or, can it, with any reason, be ascribed to chance? (Ezek. xxix. 14, 15.) Egypt--shall be a base kingdom: It shall be the basest of kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: For I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.

Concerning Tyre, the prediction is no less remarkable: (Ezek.xxvi. 14, 21.) I will make thee like the top of a rock; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more;--thou shalt be no more; (Ezek. xxvii. 36.) The merchants among the people shall hiss at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt be any more. (Ezek. xxviii. 19.) All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee.

The description of the extent of the dominion of that people, who were to possess Judea in the latter days; Was it forged after the event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance? (Dan. xi. 40, 41, 42, 43.) He shall come--with horsemen and with many ships, and--shall overflow and pass over: He shall enter also into the glorious land, [and (ver.45.) shall plant the tabernacles of his palace between the seas in the glorious holy mountain;] and many countries shall be overthrown: But these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon. He shall stretch forth his hand also upon the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; and the Lybians and Ethiopians [ksym] shall be at his steps.

When Daniel, [376] in the vision of Nebuchadnezzar's image foretold (Dan. ii. 38-44.) four great successive monarchies; was this written after the event? Or can the congruity of his description with the things themselves reasonably be ascribed to mere chance?

When the angel says to Daniel; (Dan. ix. 24.) seventy weeks [377] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, &c. Was this written after the event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that from (Ezra, vii. 6, 7, 8.) the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king, (when Ezra went up from Babylon--unto Jerusalem with a commission to restore the government of the Jews,) to the death of Christ; [378] [from ann. Nabonass. 290, to ann. Nabonass. 788,] should be precisely 490. [70 weeks of] years?

When the angel tells Daniel, that (Dan. ix. 25.) threescore and two weeks the street [of Jerusalem] shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times [vvtsvq htym, but this in troublous times not like those that should be under Messiah the prince, when he should come to reign;] was this written after the event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that from the twenty-eighth of Artaxerxes, [379] when the walls were finished, to the birth of Christ, [from ann. Nabonass. 311, to ann. Nobonass. 745,] should be precisely 434 [62 weeks of] years?

When Daniel further says; (Dan. ix. 27.) and he shall confirm [or nevertheless he shall confirm] the covenant with many for one week; was this written after the event? Or can it reasonably be ascribed to chance, that from the death of Christ, (anno Dom.33,) to the command given first to St Peter to preach to Cornelius and the Gentiles, (anno Dom. 40,) should be exactly seven [one week of] years?

When he still adds; (Dan. ix. 27.) and in the midst of the week

[$word$, and in half a week] he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate: Was this written after the event? Or can it with any reason be ascribed to chance, that from Vespasian's marching into Judea in the spring anno Dom. 67, to the taking of Jerusalem by Titus in the autumn anno Dom. 70, should be [half a septenary of years,] three years and a half?

When the same Daniel foretels a tyrannical power, which should wear out the saints of the Most High, and they should be given into his hand until (Dan. vii. 25.) a time and times and the dividing of time, and (Dan. xii. 7.) again, for a time, [380] times, and a half: (Which can no way be applied to the short persecution of Antiochus, because these prophecies are expressly declared to be (Dan. viii. 26.) for many days concerning (Dan. x. 14.) what shall befal thy people in the latter days, for yet the vision is for many days, concerning (ch. viii. 17.) the time of the end, (ch. viii. 19.) what shall be in the last end of the indignation; concerning those who (ch. xi. 33.) shall fall by the sword and by flame, by captivity and by spoil, many days; (ch. xi. 35.) to try them, even to the time of the end, because it is yet for a time appointed; concerning (ch. xii. 1.) a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation; the time (ch. xii. 7.) when God shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people; (ch. xii. 9.) the time of the end, till which the words are closed up and sealed; (ch. xii. 4.) to which the prophet is commanded to shut up his words, and seal the book, for many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased: even (ch. xii. 13.) the end, till which Daniel was to rest, and then stand in his lot at the end of the days. When Daniel, I say, foretels such a tyrannical power to continue such a determined period of time; and St John prophecies that the (Rev. xi. 2.) Gentiles

should tread the holy city under foot, forty and two months, which is exactly the same period of time with that of Daniel: And again, that (Rev. xi. 3.) two witnesses clothed in sackcloth, should prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, which is again exactly the very same period of time: And again, that the (Rev. xii. 6.) woman which fled into the wilderness from persecution, should continue there a thousand two hundred and threescore days: And again, that she should (Rev. xii. 14.) fly into the wilderness for a time, and times, and half a time; which is still the very same period: And again, that a wild beast, a tyrannical power, (ch. xiii. 7.) to whom it was given to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, was (ch. xiii. 5.) to continue forty and two months, [381] (still the very same period of time,) and to have (ch. xiii. 7, 8.) power over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations, so that all that dwell upon the earth should worship him: Is it credible, or possible, that ignorant and enthusiastical writers should, by mere chance, hit upon such coincidences of [occult] numbers? especially since St John could not possibly take the numbers from Daniel, if he understood Daniel to mean nothing more than the short persecution of Antiochus. And if he did understand Daniel to mean a much longer, and greater, and more remote tyranny, which John himself prophesied of as in his time still future; then the wonder is still infinitely greater that in those early times, when there was not the least footstep in the world of any such power as St John distinctly describes, (but which now is very conspicuous, as I shall presently observe more particularly,) it should ever enter the heart of man to conceive so much as the possibility of such a power, sitting, not upon the pavilion of heathen persecutors, but expressly (2 Thess. ii. 4.) in the temple and upon the seat of God himself.

But these prophecies, which either relate to particular places, or

depend upon the computation of particular periods of time, are (as I said) of such a nature as that they cannot be judged of but by persons skilled in history. There are some others more general, running through the whole Scripture, and obvious to the consideration of the whole world.

For instance; it was foretold by Moses that when the Jews forsook the true God, they should (Deut.xxviii. 25.) be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth; should be (Levit. xxvi. 33.) scattered among the heathen, (Deut. iv. 27.) among the nations, (Deut. xxviii. 64.) among all people from the one end of the earth, even unto the other, should there be (Deut. iv. 37.) left few in number among the heathen, and (Levit. xxvi. 39.) pine away in their iniquity in their enemies' lands; and should (Deut. xxviii. 37.) become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all nations; and that (Deut. xxviii. 65.) among these nations they should find no ease, neither should the sole of their foot have rest; but the Lord should give them a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind; and (Levit. xxvi. 36.) send a faintness into their hearts, in the lands of their enemies, so that the sound of a shaken leaf should chace them. Had any thing like this in Moses's time ever happened to any nation? Or was there in nature any probability that any such thing should ever happen to any people? that, when they were conquered by their enemies, and led into captivity, they should neither continue in the place of their captivity, nor be swallowed up and lost among their conquerors, but be scattered among all the nations of the world, and hated by all nations for many ages, and yet continue a people? Or could any description of the Jews, written at this day, possibly be a more exact and lively picture of the state they have now been in for many ages, than this prophetic description given by Moses more than 3000 years ago?

The very same thing is in like manner continually predicted through all the following prophets; that God would (Jer. ix. 16. Ezek. iv. 13.) scatter them among the heathen; that he would (Jer. xv. 4. xxiv. 9. xxix. 18. xxxiv. 17.) cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth; that he would (Ezek. v. 10, 12.) scatter them into all the winds, and (Ezek. xx. 23. xxii. 15.) disperse them through the countries of the heathen; that he would (Amos, ix. 9.) sift them among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve; that (Jer. xxiv. 9. xxix. 18) in all the kingdoms of the earth, whither they should be driven, they should be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, and an astonishment, and an hissing; and that they should (Hos. iii. 4.) abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. And here concerning the predictions of Ezekiel, it is remarkable in particular that they being spoken (See Ezek. i. 1. iii. 11. xi. 24.) in the very time of the Babylonian captivity, it is therefore evident, from the time of his prophesying, as well as from the nature and description of the thing itself, that he must needs be understood of that latter (Tobit, xiv. 5.) "captivity into all places," which was to happen after the "fulfilling the time of that age" wherein God was first to "bring them again" (out of the Babylonian captivity) "into the land where they should build a temple," but not like to that which afterwards (after their final return) should "be built for ever with a glorious building." The fore-cited prophecies (I say) must of necessity be understood of that wide and long dispersion which in the New Testament also is expressly mentioned by (Luke xxi. 24) our Saviour, and by (Rom. xi. 25.) St Paul.

It is also, further, both largely and distinctly predicted as well by Moses himself, as by all the following prophets: that, notwithstanding

this unexampled dispersion of God's people, (Levit. xxvi. 44.) yet, for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, God will not destroy them utterly; but (Deut. xxx. 1, 2, 3, 4.) when they shall call to mind among all the nations whither God has driven them, and shall return unto the Lord, he will turn their captivity, and gather them from all the nations,--from the utmost parts of heaven,--(Deut. iv. 30.) even in the latter days: That (Jer. xxx. 11.) though he makes a full end of all other nations, yet will he not make a full end of them; but (Isa. x. 21, 22. vi. 13. Jer. xxiii. 3. Ezek. vi. 8, 9.) a remnant of them shall be preserved, and return out of all countries whither God has driven them: That he (Amos, ix. 9.) will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth: That (Isa. xi. 11.-16. xxvii. 13.) the Lord shall set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people,--and shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah, from the four corners of the earth: For (Isa. xliii. 5, 6. Jer. xvi. 15. xxiii. 7, 8. xxxi. 8-12. xxxii. 37, &c. Ezek. xi. 15, 16, 17. xx. 41. xxviii. 25. xxxiv. 12, 13. xxxvi. 24. xxxvii. 21. xxxix. 27, 28, 29.) I will bring thy seed from the east, saith the Lord, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, give up; and to the south, keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth: (Isa. xlix. 22. lx. 8, 9, 10. lxvi. 20.) Behold I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders: (Isa. liv. 7, and the whole chapter.) For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercy will I gather thee; in a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee. And

that these prophecies might not be applied to the return from the 70 years' captivity in Babylon, (which moreover was not a dispersion into all nations,) they are expressly referred to the latter days, not only by (Deut. iv. 30.) Moses, but by (Hos. iii. 4, 5.) Hosea, who lived long after, (for the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice: afterward they shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days;) and by Ezekiel, who lived in the captivity itself, (Ezek. xxxviii. 8. xii. 14, 16.) after many days [speaking of those who should oppose the return of the Israelites,] thou shalt be visited, in the latter years thou shalt come into the land;--upon the people that are gathered out of the nations;--in that day, when my people of Israel dwelleth safely,--thou shalt come up against them,--it shall be in the latter days. These predictions therefore necessarily belong to that age, when (Luke xxi. 24.) the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, and (Rom. xi. 25, 29.) the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And that, through all the changes which have happened in the kingdoms of the earth, from the days of Moses to the present time, which is more than 3000 years, nothing should have happened to prevent the possibility of the accomplishment of these prophecies, but, on the contrary, the state of the Jewish and Christian nations at this day should be such as renders them easily capable, not only of a figurative, but even of a literal completion in every particular, if the will of God be so; this (I say) is a miracle, which hath nothing parallel to it in the phenomena of nature.

Another instance, no less extraordinary, is as follows. Daniel foretels (Dan. vii. 23.) a kingdom upon the earth, which shall be divers from all kingdoms, (ver. 7.) divers from all that were before it, (ver. 19.) exceeding dreadful, (ver. 23.) and shall devour the whole earth: That,

among the powers into which this kingdom shall be divided, there shall arise one power (ver. 24.) divers from the rest, who (ver.8, 8. 20.) shall subdue unto himself three of the first powers, and he shall have (ver. 8. 20.) a mouth speaking very great things, and a look more stout than his fellows. He shall (ver. 21.) make war with the saints, and prevail against them; (ver. 25.) And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand, for a long season; even till (ver. 26. 27.) the judgment shall sit, and--the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High. (Dan. xi. 36. &c.) He shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every God, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of Gods;--Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, (the God of Gods, as in the foregoing verse,) nor the desire of women, (forbidding to marry, 1 Tim. iv. 3.) nor regard any God; for he shall magnify himself above all: And in his estate shall he honour [382] the God of forces; and a God [383] whom his fathers knew not shall he honour.--Thus shall he do in the most strong holds with a strange God, whom he shall acknowledge and increase with glory; and he shall cause them to rule over many, and shall divide the land for gain. Suppose now all this to be spoken by Daniel, of nothing more than the short persecution under Antiochus Epiphanes; which that it cannot be I have shown above: But suppose it were, and that it was all forged after the event; yet this cannot be the case of St. Paul, and St. John, who describe exactly a like power, and in like words; speaking of things to come in the latter days, of things still future in their time, and of which there was then no footsteps, no appearance in the world. The day of Christ, saith St. Paul, (2 Thess. ii. 3, &c.) shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the

son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, [384] sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God: Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness. Again, (1 Tim iv. 1, &c.) the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; [385] --forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, &c. St John, in like manner, prophesies of a wild beast, or tyrannical power, to whom was given (Rev. xiii. 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17.) great authority, and a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies; and he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God: And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds and tongues, and nations; and all that dwell upon the earth, shall worship him.--And he that exerciseth his power before him,--doth great wonders,--and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth, by the means of those miracles which he had power to do.--And he causeth--that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark of the name of the beast. And the kings of the earth (Rev. xvii. 13, 15, 17.) have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beasts;--even peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.--For God hath put in their hearts [in the hearts of the kings,] to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. The name of the person, in whose hands the (Rev. xvii. 3, 7.) reins or principal direction of the exercise of this power is lodged, is (Rev. xvii. 5.) mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth: (Ver. 2.) With whom the kings of the earth [386] have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of

the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication: And she herself is (Rev. xvii, 6.) drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: And (Rev. xviii. 23, 24.) by her [387] sorceries are all nations deceived: And in her is found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that are slain upon the earth. And this person, [the political person,] to whom these titles and characters belong, is (Rev. xvii. 18.) that great city, (standing (ver. 9) upon seven mountains,) which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

If in the days of St Paul, and St John, there was any footstep of such a sort of power as this in the world; or if there ever had been any such power in the world; or if there was then any appearance of probability that could make it enter into the heart of man to imagine that there ever could be any such kind of power in the world, much less in (2 Thess. ii. 4.) the temple or church of God; and if there be not now such a power actually and conspicuously exercised in the world; and if any picture of this power drawn, after the event, can now describe it more plainly and exactly than it was originally described in the words of the prophecy; then may it with some degree of plausibleness be suggested that the prophecies are nothing more than enthusiastic imaginations.

Thirdly; Of the testimony of our Saviour's disciples as an evidence of the truth of the Christian revelation. The chief evidence of the facts on which the truth and certainty of the Christian revelation depend, to us who live now at this distance of time, is the testimony of our Saviour's followers; which, in all its circumstances, was the most credible, certain, and convincing evidence that ever was given to any matter of fact in the world.

To make the testimony of our Saviour's followers a sufficient evidence

to us in this case, there can be required but these three things: What things are requisite to make the testimony of our Saviour's disciples a complete evidence. 1. That it be certain the apostles could not be imposed upon themselves: 2. That it be certain they neither had nor could have any design to impose upon others: And, 3. That it be certain their testimony is truly conveyed down to us unto this day. All which things are indeed abundantly certain, and clear enough to satisfy any reasonable and unprejudiced person.

For 1. That the apostles could not be imposed upon themselves. That the apostles could not be imposed upon themselves, is evident from what has been already said concerning the nature, and number, and publicness, of our Saviour's miracles: They conversed from the beginning with our Saviour himself; they heard with their ears, and saw with their eyes; they looked upon, and they handled with their hands of the word of life, as St John expresses it, (1 John, i. 1.) They saw all the prophecies of the Old Testament precisely fulfilled in his life and doctrine, his sufferings and death: They saw him confirm what he taught, with such mighty and evident miracles, as his bitterest and most malicious enemies could not but confess to be supernatural, even at the same time that they obstinately blasphemed the Holy Spirit that worked them: They saw him alive after his passion, by many infallible proofs; he appearing, not only to one or two, but to all the eleven, several times, and once to above five hundred together. And this, not merely in a transient manner, but they conversed with him familiarly for no less than forty days, and at last they beheld him ascend visibly into heaven; and soon after they received the Spirit, according to his promise. These were such sensible demonstrations of his being a teacher sent from heaven, and, consequently, that his doctrine was an immediate and express revelation of the will of God, that, if the apostles, even

though they had been men of the weakest judgments and strongest imaginations that can be supposed, could be all and every one of them deceived in all these several instances; men can have no use of their senses, nor any possible proof of any facts whatsoever, nor any means to distinguish the best attested truths in the world, from enthusiastic imaginations.

2. That the apostles could have no design of imposing upon others. It is certain the apostles neither had nor could have any design of imposing upon others. This is evident both from the nature of the things they did and suffered, and from the characters of the persons themselves: They confirmed what they taught by signs and miracles; they lived according to the doctrine they preached, though manifestly contrary to all the interests and pleasures of this present world; and, which deceivers can never be supposed to do, they died with all imaginable cheerfulness and joy of mind, for the testimony of their doctrine and the confirmation of their religion. This, I say, is what deceivers can never possibly be supposed to do: For it is very remarkable the apostles did not lay down their lives for their opinions, (which enthusiasts may possibly be supposed to do,) but in attestation to facts of their own knowledge: They were innocent and plain men, that had no bad ends to serve, nor preferment to hope for in the world: Their religion itself taught them to expect, not dominion and glory, not the praise of men, not riches and honour, not power and ease, not pleasure nor profit,--but poverty and want, trouble and vexation, persecution and oppression, imprisonments, banishments, and death: These things are not the marks and tokens of impostors. Besides the success and event of their undertaking, that plain and illiterate men should be able to preach their doctrine to many different nations, of different languages, and prevail also in establishing the belief of

it; that they should all agree exactly in their testimony, and none of them be prevailed upon, either by hopes or fears, to desert their companions, and discover the imposture, if there had been any; these things plainly show that their doctrine was more than human, and not a contrivance to impose upon the world. This argument is excellently urged by Eusebius: Is it a thing possible to be conceived, saith he, that deceivers and unlearned men, men that understood no other language but their mother tongue, [388] should ever think of attempting so extravagant a thing as to travel over all nations? and not only so, but that they should be able also to accomplish their design, and establish their doctrine in all parts of the world? Consider, moreover, how remarkable a thing it is, that they should in no respect disagree one from another in the account they gave of the actions of Christ. For if, in all questions of fact, and in all trials at law, and in all ordinary disputes, the agreement of several witnesses is always accounted sufficient to determine satisfactorily the matter in question; is it not an abundant evidence of the truth in this case, that twelve apostles, and seventy disciples, and innumerable other believers, have borne witness to the actions of Christ, with the most exact and perfect agreement among themselves; and not only so, but have endured also all kinds of torments, and even death itself, to confirm their testimony? Again, that illiterate men, saith he, [389] should preach the name of Christ in all parts of the world, some of them in Rome itself, the imperial city, others in Persia, others in Armenia, others in Parthia, others in Scythia, others in India, and the farthest parts of the world, and others beyond the sea, in the British isles: This I cannot but think to be a thing far exceeding the power of man, much more the power of ignorant and unlearned men, and still much more the power of cheats and deceivers. And again: No one of them, saith he, [390] being

ever terrified at the torments and deaths of others, forsook his companions, or ever preached contrary to them, and detected the forgery. Nay, on the contrary, that one, who did forsake his master in his life-time, and betray him to his enemies, being self-condemned, destroyed himself with his own hands. And much more to the same purpose, may be found, excellently said by the same author, in the seventh chapter of the third book of his Demonstratio Evangelica.

3. That the apostle's testimony had been truly conveyed down to us. It is very certain, that the apostles' testimony concerning the works and doctrine of Christ is truly and without corruption conveyed down to us, even unto this day; for they left this their testimony in their writings: Which writings have been delivered down to us by an uninterrupted succession, through all intermediate ages. Their books were all translated very early into several languages, and dispersed through all parts of the world; and have most of them been acknowledged to be the genuine writings of those whose names they bear, even by the bitterest enemies of Christianity in all ages. Passages, containing the most material doctrines, have been cited out of them by numberless authors, who lived in every age, from the very days of the apostles unto this time; so that there is no room or possibility of any considerable corruption, such as might in any wise diminish our certainty of the truth of the whole. In sum; there is no matter of fact in the world, attested in any history, with so many circumstances of credibility, with so many collateral evidences, and in every respect attended with so many marks of truth, as this concerning the doctrine and works of Christ.

Of the authority of the books of Holy Scripture. And here, by the way, it is to be observed, that the peculiar authority which we attribute to the books of Holy Scripture contained in the New Testament, is founded

in this; that they were written or dictated by the apostles themselves. The apostles were indued with the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, at Pentecost: And this not only enabled them to preach the doctrine of Christ with power, but also effectually secured them from making any error, mistake, or false representation of it. And the very same authority, that by this singular privilege was added to their preaching, it is manifest, ought, for the same reason, to be equally attributed to their writings also. Now, all the books of the New Testament were either written by the apostles; or, which is the very same thing, approved and authorized by them. Most of the books were uncontrovertedly written by the apostles themselves, St Paul having been made one of that number by a commission from heaven, no less visible and sensible than that which was granted to the rest at Pentecost. And those books which were written by the companions of the apostles were either dictated, or at least approved and authorised by the apostles themselves. Thus, Eusebius expressly tells us, that St Peter reviewed and approved the gospel of St Mark, and that [391] it was this approbation that authorised it to be received by the churches. And Irenæus; that what St Mark wrote was dictated by St Peter; [392] and that the gospel of St Luke was only a transcript of St Paul's preaching. [393] And Tertullian in like manner; [394] St Mark was only St Peter's scribe, and St Luke St Paul's. And Eusebius; that St John [395] also reviewed the Gospels of St Mark and St Luke, and confirmed the truth of them. And, to mention no more, the same historian tells us, that (besides some smaller reasons drawn from some mistaken passages in the book itself) the chief reason why the authority of the Epistle to the Hebrews was questioned by some, was [396] because they thought it not to be written by St Paul himself.

[359] Peusteon de auton, ei pote tis allos toioutos planos historetai,

praotetos kai epieikeias sophrosunes te kai tes alles aretes didaskalos tois apatomenois gegonos aitios,, &c.--Easeb. Demonstrat. Evangelic. lib. 3. c. 3.

[360] Dia ti ouchi kai bebasanismenos tou epangellom?nous tas donameis exetasomen apo tou biou kai tou hethous kai ton epakolouthounton tais dunamesin, etoi eis blaben ton anthropon, e eis hethon epanorthosin.--Origen. advers. Cels. lib. 2.. Meson toinun sauton stesas ton peri tou Aristeou ginomenon, kai ton peri tou Iesou histor9oumenon, hide ei me ek tou apobantos, kai ton hopheloume_on eis hethon epanorthosin kai eulabeian ten pros ton epi pasi theon, estin eipein; hote pisteuteon men hos ouk atheei genomenois tois peri Iesou hestoroumenois, ouchi de tois peri tes Prokonnesiou Aristeou. Ti men gar boulomene he p9ronoia ta peri ton Aristean paradoxa epragmateueto, kai ti hophelesai to ton anthropon genei boulomene, ta telik^uta (hos oiei) epideiknuto, ook echeis legein.--Id. lib. 3.

[361] Very remarkable also is the history recorded by a heathen writer of what happened upon Julian's attempting to rebuild the temple: Imperii sui memoriam magnitudine operum gestiens propagare, ambitiosum quondam apud Hierosolymam templum, quod post multa et interneciva certamina obsidente Vespasiano posteaque Tito ægrè est expugnatum, instaurare sumptibus cogitabat immodicis; negotiumque maturandum Alypio dederat Antiochensi, qui olim Britannias curaverat, pro præfectis. Cù m itaque rei idem instaret Alypius, juvaretque provinciæ rector; metuendi globi flammarum prope fundamenta crebris assultibus erumpentes fecere locum exustis aliquoties operantibus inaccessum; hocque modo, elemento destinatius repellente, cessavit inceptum.--Ammian. Marcellin. lib. 22. sub initio.

[362] See above, prop. vii. sec. 4.

[363] Or written unto life, rchyvm hvtvv So Dan. xii. 1. every one that

shall be found written in the book.

[364] The introduction to these words is very solemn: Oh! that my words were now----graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever. And how they were anciently understood, appears from that addition to the end of the book of Job in the LXX, ge'graptai de, auton palin anastesesthai, meth' hon ho kurios anistesin. So Job died, being old and full of days. "But it is written that he shall rise again with those whom the Lord raises up."

[365] vny ,rvq The sons of righteousness.

[366] Ezek. xlvii. 9, 12. compared with Rev. xxii. 1, 2. He showed me a pure river of water of life:--And of either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

[367] Gal. iii. 16. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed; that is to say, in the promise to Abraham, the Scripture uses the ambiguous word seed, not in the plural sense, but in the singular sense.

[368] 'vyk phd' yvts 'd dnvk, Wonderful, Counsellor, [LXX, Megales boules gagelos. as Mal. iii. 1, ho angelos tes diathekes XX .] the Mighty, the Potent One, the Father of the age to come. [Vulg. Pater futuri seucli. Compare Heb. ii. 5.]

[369] The Shiloh, unto whom shall the gathering of the people be. Gen. xlix. 10.

[370] With reference to this it is, that Christ in the gospel perpetually styles himself the son of man, and once the son of man which is in [which in the prophecy is described as coming in the clouds of] heaven, John iii. 13: And tells his disciples that they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, Matt. xxiv. 30. And the

high priest, that hereafter ye shall see the son of man sitting on the right hand of Power, and coming in the clouds of heaven, Matt. xxvi. 64.

[371] Seven septendaries (or weeks) of years (as the word is used, Gen. xxix. 27. That is to say, forty-nine years, the number of years appointed until the jubilee, Levit. xxv. 8, 9, 10. Concerning the other number of Daniel in this place I shall have occasion to speak presently.

[372] See above, Prop. VII. 4.

[373] Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus et constans opinio, esse in fatis, ut Judæâ profecti rerum potirentur.--Sueton. Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum libris contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judæâ rerum potirentur.--Tacit.

[374] In some few places there is reasonable ground for a worse suspicion. As, for instance, Psal. xxii. 16. where the sense most evidently shows it ought to be read, and the LXX version shows it anciently was read, k'rv or krv "they pierc'd my hands and my feet;" the Jewish masters, in all their correct Hebrew editions, have written it, k'ry "as a lion my hands and my feet;" which has no tolerable sense at all.

[375] Prideaux Connection, part I, book ii. page 67. edit. fol.

[376] The fame of which was so early spread, that Ezekiel, who was contemporary with Daniel, plainly alludes to it when he says of the prince of Tyre, chap. xxviii. 3. thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee.

[377] Weeks or septenaries, of years. Compare Gen. xxix. 27. Num. xiv. 34. Ezek. iv. 6.

[378] This and the following observation was extracted out of a MS. communicated by Sir Isaac Newton; and was published in his life-time in

the foregoing editions of this discourse, with his express consent.

[379] Tois Hierosolumois, anokodomethe to teichos, ogdoo kai aikosto tes Xerxou Basileias etei, meni ennato; telos de ton teichon labonton, &c.--Josephus, Antiq. Judaic. lib. 11. cap. 5. Compare Nehem. v. 14.

[380] Three years and a half, or 1260 days, is, according to the analogy of all the forementioned numbers, 1260 years.

[381] There has prevailed among learned men a very important error as if the 1260 days, (or years) here spoken of, took their beginning from the rise of the tyranny here described: Whereas, on the contrary, the words of Daniel are express; that, not from the time of his rise, but after his having made war with the saints, and from the time of their being given into his hand, should be a time, and times, and the dividing of time, chap. vii. 24, 25. And St John no less expressly says, that the time, not of the two witnesses prophesying, (for in part of that time they had great power,) but of their prophesying in sackcloth, should be a thousand two hundred and threescore days, Rev. xi. 3. And the persecuted woman, after her flight, was to be actually in the wilderness, (and in her place there, of riches and honour,) a thousand two hundred and threescore days, chap. xii. 6. Wherefore also the forty and two months, (the very same period,) during which time power was given unto the wild beasts to continue, (in the original it is, poiesai, to do what he pleased, (Rev. xiii. 5.) evidently ought not to be reckoned from his rise, or from the time when the ten kings (chap. xvii. 12.) received power with him, but from the time of his having totally overcome the saints, and of his being worshipped by all that dwell upon the earth, ch. xiii. 7. 8.

[382] Gods protector, as it is in the margin of the Bible, or saints protectors.

[383] Changing time and laws, ch. vii. 25. setting up new religions.

[384] It is therefore a Christian (not an infidel) power, that he here speaks of.

[385] Doctrines, concerning dæmons, that is, ghosts or souls of (good or bad) men departed. Epiphanius, citing this text, alleges the following words, as part of the text itself; esontai gar, phesi nekris latreuontes, hos kai en to Israel esebasthesan. "For they shall be, says the apostle, worshippers of the dead, even as the dead were anciently worshipped in Israel." And he applies the whole to the worshippers of the blessed Virgin.--Hæres. 78. § 22.

[386] Have been led into idolatrous practices.

[387] Pharmakeia, (sophois pharmakois) Methods of making men religious without virtue.

[388] Kakeino de pos ou meston ekplexeos, to planous aneras kai idiotas, mete lalein mete akouein pleon tes patriou phones epistamenous, me monon diansethenai tolmesai proelthein epi ten ton ethnon hap8anton periodon, alla kai proelthontas katorthosai to epitedeuma; Skepsai de, hopoion esti, kai to medena medamou diaphonon exenenkein peri ton praxeon tou Iesou logon. Ei gar epi panton amphignooumenon pragmaton, en te tois kata nomous dikasteriois, kai en tais koinais amphisbetesesi, ton marturon sumphonia kuroi to amphignooumenon; pos ouk an he aletheia kai epi tonde sustaie, dodeka men onton Apostolon, ebdomekonta de Matheton, muriou te plethous touton eksos, hapanton thaumasten sumphonian epidedeigmenon, kai marturesanton ge tois hupo tou Iesou pepragmenois, ouk anidroti, dia de basanon upomones, kai pases aikias kai thanatou.--Euseb. Demonstrat. Evang. lib. 3. cap. 2.

[389] Keruttein du agroikous andras eis pantas to tou Iesou onuma, kai tous men auton ten Rhomaion archen kai auten te ten basilikotaten polin neimasthai; tous de ten Person, tous de ten Armenion, heterous de to

Parthon ethnos, kai au palin to Skuthon, tinas de ede kai ep' auta tes oikoumenes elthein ta akra, epi te ten Indon phthasai choran, kai eterous huper ton Okeanon parelthein epi tas kaloumenas Brettanikas nesous; tauta ouk et' ego ge hegoumai kata anthropon einai, meti ge kat8a euteleis kai idiotas, pollou dei kata planous kai goetas.--Id. ibid. cap. 7.

[390] Oudeis te auton popote ta sumbanta tos proaneremenois tresas, exeste tes hetairias, oudu antekeruxe tois allois, eis phos agagon ta suntetheimana. Alla kai ho zonta prodounai tollesas auton, autocheiria kath' heautou parachrema ten diken epespasato--Id. ibid.

[391] Kurosai te ten graphen eis enteuxin tais ekklesiais.--Euseb. Histor. l. 2. c. 15.

[392] Marcus, discipulus et interpres Petri, quæ à Petro annuntiata erant, edidit.--Iren. lib. 3. c. 1.

[393] Lucas, sectator Pauli, quod ab illo prædicabatur Evangelium, in libro condidit.--Id. ibid. Vide et Tertullian. adv. Marcion, lib. 4.

[394] Licet et Marcus quod edidit, Petri adfirmetur, cujus interpres Marcus; nam et Lucæ digestum, Paulo adscribere solent.--Tertull. adv. Marcion. lib. 4.

[395] Hede de Markou kai Louka ton kat' autous euangelion ten hekdosin pepoiemenon, Ioannen apodexasthai men phasin, aletheian autois epimarturesanta;--Euseb. Hist. l.. 3. c. 24.

[396] Tines hezetekasi ten pros Hebraious, pros tes Romaion ekklesias hos me Paulou ousan auten antilegesthai phesantes,--Id. lib. 3. c. 3.

Proposition XV.

XV. Proposition XV. Lastly; They who will not, by the arguments and proofs before mentioned, be convinced of the truth and certainty of the Christian religion, and be persuaded to make it the rule and guide of all their actions, would not be convinced, (so far as to influence their practice and reform their lives,) by any other evidence whatsoever; no, not though one should rise on purpose from the dead to endeavour to convince them.

That the evidence which God has afforded us of the truth of our religion is abundantly sufficient. From what has been said, upon the foregoing heads, it is abundantly evident that men are not called upon to believe the Christian religion without very reasonable and sufficient proof; much less are they [397] required to set up faith in opposition to reason; or to believe any thing for that very reason, because it is incredible. On the contrary, God has given us all the proofs of the truth of our religion, that the nature of the thing would bear, or that were reasonable either for God to give, or men to expect. And unless God should work upon men by such methods, as are wholly inconsistent with the design of religion and the nature of virtue and vice, which we are sure he will never do, nothing could have been done more than has already been done, to convince men of the truth of religion, and to persuade them to embrace their own happiness. And indeed no reasonable man can fail of being persuaded by the evidence we now have. For if, in other cases, we assent to those things as certain and demonstrated, which, if our faculties of judging and reasoning do not necessarily deceive us, do upon the most impartial view appear clearly and plainly to be true; there is the same reason why in moral

and religious matters we should look upon those things likewise to be certain and demonstrated, which, upon the exactest and most deliberate judgment we are capable of making, do appear to us to be as clearly and certainly true, as it is certain that our faculties do not necessarily and unavoidably deceive us, in all our judgments concerning the nature of God, concerning the proper happiness of man, and concerning the difference of good and evil. And if, in other cases, we always act without the least hesitation, upon the credit of good and sufficient testimony, and look upon that man as foolish and ridiculous, who sustains great losses, or lets slip great opportunities and advantages in business, only by distrusting the most credible and well-attested things in the world; it is plain there is the same reason why we should do so also in matters of religion. So that unless our actions be determined by some other thing than by reason and right judgment, the evidence which we have of the great truths of religion ought to have the same effect upon our lives and actions as if they were proved to us by any other sort of evidence that could be desired.

That the cause of men's unbelief is not want of better evidence to prove the great truths of religion. It is true, the resurrection of Christ, and his other mighty works, must, after all, be confessed not to be such ocular demonstrations of the truth of his divine commission to after generations, as they were to those men who then lived, and saw him, and conversed with him. But since the matters of fact are as clearly proved to us, as it is possible for any matter of fact, at that distance of time, to be; since the evidence of this is as great, and greater, than of most of those things on which men venture the whole of their secular affairs, and on which they are willing to spend all their time and pains: Since (I say) the case is thus: He that will rather venture all that he can possibly enjoy, or suffer; he that will run the

hazard of losing eternal happiness, and falling into eternal misery, rather than believe the most credible and rational thing in the world, merely because he does not see it with his eyes, it is plain that that man does not disbelieve the thing because he thinks the evidence of it not sufficiently strong, but because it is contrary to some particular vice of his, which makes it his interest that it should not be true; and for that reason he might also have disbelieved it though he had seen it himself. Men may invent what vain pretences they please, to excuse their infidelity and their wickedness; but certainly that man who can despise the authority both of reason and scripture in conjunction; who can elude the plainest evidence of matter of fact; who can be deaf to all the promises and kind admonitions of the Gospel, and to all the threatenings and terrible denunciations of the wrath of God, made known in good measure by the light of nature, and confirmed by the addition of express revelation; certainly (I say) that man must have some other reason for his unbelief than the pretended want of sufficient evidence. Did men follow the unprejudiced judgment of their own minds, and the impartial dictates of natural reason, the least possibility of obtaining eternal happiness, or the least suspicion of falling into endless misery, would immediately determine them to make it the great study and business of their lives to obtain the one and to avoid the other. If then we see men act directly contrary to this natural principle, and almost wholly neglect these things, not only when there is a fair appearance and probability of their being true, which the light of nature itself affords; but also when there is all reasonable evidence given of their being certainly true, by express revelation in the Gospel, is it not very plain that such men are governed, not by reason and the force of evidence, but by some other very different cause of their actions?

But that wickedness and ungoverned lusts are the only causes of obstinate infidelity. What that cause is, is very apparent from the lives and actions of most of those persons who pretend want of evidence to be the ground of their infidelity. Their lusts, their appetites, their affections are interested: They are lovers of vice and debauchery, and slaves to evil habits and customs; and therefore they are not willing to discern the evidence which would compel them to believe that which yet they cannot believe with any comfort so long as they resolve not to part with their beloved vices. Their hearts and affections are habitually fixed upon things here below; and therefore they will not attend to the force of any argument that would raise their affections to things above. They are enslaved to the sensual pleasures and sinful enjoyments of earth; and therefore they will not hearken to any reasonable conviction which would persuade them to relinquish these present gratifications for the future and more spiritual joys of heaven. The love of this present world has blinded their eyes; [398] and therefore they receive not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto them: Neither can they know them, because they are spiritually discerned. In a word, the true and only reason why men love darkness rather than light, is, because their deeds are evil.

And so long as men are under the dominion of their lusts, they would not be convinced, though the evidence of religion was even much stronger than it is. And this reason affords a sufficient account indeed why men should be very unwilling to believe the doctrines of Christianity. If they are resolved not to reform their lives, it is no wonder they care not to discern the evidence of those truths which must needs make them very uneasy in the midst of the enjoyment of all their sinful pleasures. In this case, were the proofs of the truth of our

religion much stronger than they are, or than they can be imagined or desired to be, yet still these men would be in the very same case, and perpetually want stronger and stronger evidence. It is true, many men, who now are conscious and willing to acknowledge that they act contrary to all the reasonable evidence and convictions of religion, are nevertheless very apt to imagine within themselves, that if the great truths of religion were proved to them by some stronger evidence, they should by that means be worked upon to act otherwise than they do: But if the true reason why these men act thus foolishly, is not because the doctrines of religion are not sufficiently evidenced, but because they themselves are, without allowing themselves time for consideration, hurried away by some unruly passions to act directly contrary to all reason and evidence; it is plain (unless God should irresistibly compel them) they might well continue to act as they do, though the evidence of these things were really greater than it is. They are willing fondly to imagine, that if they had lived in our Saviour's time; if they had heard his preaching, and seen his miracles; if they had had the advantage of beholding those mighty works which he performed for the proof of his divine commission, as the Jews then had;--they should not, like them, have rejected the counsel of God against themselves, but with all cheerfulness have believed his doctrine, and embraced his religion. They fancy they should immediately have become disciples of Christ; and that the truths which he taught would have had a most powerful influence upon the whole course of their lives. And if their hearts and affections were not set upon this world, more than upon the next; if they valued not the present sinful enjoyments of sense above the expectation of the glory that shall be revealed, most certainly they would do the same now. But if their hearts be set upon earthly things, and their passions be stronger than all the arguments of

reason; if they do indeed so love the pleasures of sin now, as that they cannot persuade themselves, by all the motives of religion, to live like Christians, we need not doubt to affirm, that they might very well have been in the same case though they had lived in our Saviour's time. The Jews are a notorious and standing instance, how far prejudice, envy, pride, and affection, are able to prevail over the strongest convictions. When our Saviour began to preach that he was sent from God to instruct them in their duty, they required a sign of him, and they would believe him; but when he had worked so many miracles, that even the world itself could not contain the books if they should all be written, they persisted still in their infidelity.

When they saw him hanging upon the cross, and thought themselves secure of him, they said, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him: (Matt. xxvii. 42.) But when he arose out of the grave, wherein he had lain three days, which was a much greater and more convincing miracle, they grew more hardened and obstinate in their unbelief.

Nay, not even tho' one should rise on purpose from the dead to convince them. Others there are, who imagine that if they could but be convinced of the truth of another world, by the appearance of one sent directly from that unknown state, they would immediately become new creatures. But if God should satisfy their unreasonable demands, by sending one on purpose from the dead to convince them, there is little room to doubt, but as they harkened not to Moses and the prophets, to Christ and his apostles, so neither would they be persuaded by one rising on purpose from the dead. They might indeed be at first surprised and terrified at the appearance of so unusual and unexpected a messenger: But as wicked men upon a bed of sickness, at the amazing approach of death and eternity, resolve, in the utmost anguish of horror and despair, to

amend their lives and forsake their sins; but as soon as the terror is over, and the danger of death past, return to their old habits of sin and folly;--so it is more than probable it would be in the present case. Should God send a messenger from the dead, to assure men of the certainty of a future state, and the danger of their present wickedness, as soon as the fright was over, and their present terrible apprehensions ceased, it is by no means impossible or improbable that their old vicious habits and beloved sins should again by degrees prevail over them. Some there are, in our present age, who pretend to be convinced of the being of spirits, by the powerful demonstration of their own senses; and yet we do not observe that their lives are more remarkably eminent for exemplary piety, than other good men's, who, being convinced by the rational evidence of the gospel, go on in a sober, constant, and regular exercise of virtue and righteousness.
It is not therefore for want of sufficient evidence That therefore to make men judge rightly of the evidence of religion, it is absolutely necessary, in the first place, that, laying aside prejudice, lust, and passion, they become impartially willing to embrace all truth, and to obey all reasonable obligations which shall at any time be made known to them. that men disbelieve the great truths of religion; but plainly for want of integrity, and of dealing ingenuously and impartially with themselves, that they suffer not the arguments of religion to have that weight and influence upon them, which in the judgment of right reason they ought manifestly to have. So long as men permit their passions and appetites to over-rule their reason, it is impossible they should have due apprehensions in matters of religion, or make any right and true judgment concerning these things. Men that are strongly biassed and prejudiced even in worldly affairs, it is well known how hard and difficult it is for them to judge according to reason, and to suffer

the arguments and evidences of truth to have their due weight with them. How much more in matters of religion, which concern things future and remote from sense, must it needs be, that men's present interests, lusts, and passions, will pervert their judgment, and blind their understandings! Wherefore, men that pretend to be followers of right reason, if they will judge truly of the reasonableness and credibility of the Christian revelation, it is absolutely necessary that, in the first place, in order to that end, they become impartially willing to embrace whatever shall, upon the whole, appear to be agreeable to reason and truth, and grounded upon good evidence, without interesting their lusts and appetites in the judgment; and that, before all things, they resolve to be guided in all their actions by whatever rule shall at any time be well proved to them to be the will of God. And when they have put themselves into this temper and frame of mind, then let them try if they can any longer reject the evidence of the gospel. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. (Johnvii. 17.) For, them that are meek, God will guide in judgment; (Ps. xxv. 8.) and such as are gentle, them he will teach his way.

That men of such a disposition would think it their greatest wisdom to be truly religious, even tho' the evidences of religion were much less than they are. Indeed, men that are of this good disposition, willing to be governed by reason, and not prejudiced by lusts and vicious appetites, could not but give their assent to the doctrines of Christianity, upon account of the very intrinsic excellency and reasonableness of the things themselves, even though the external evidence of their certainty had been much less than it at present is. Nay, were there hardly any other evidence at all, than barely the excellency and reasonableness, and natural probability of the great

truths of religion, together with the consideration of the vast importance of them; yet even in that case it would be infinitely wisest and most agreeable to reason, for men to live according to the rules of the gospel. And though their faith extended no further than only to a belief of the possibility of the truth of the Christian revelation, yet even this alone ought in all reason to have weight enough to determine reasonable creatures to live soberly, righteously, and godly. For is it not plainly most reasonable, as an ancient writer expresses it, [399] if each of the opposite opinions were equally doubtful and uncertain, yet by all means to embrace and entertain that which brings some hope along with it, rather than that which brings none? For on one side of the question there is no danger at all of incurring any calamity, if that which we believe and expect should at last prove false; but, on the other side, there is the greatest hazard in the world, the loss of eternal life, if the opinion which unbelievers rely upon should at last prove an error. And again: [400] What say ye, O ye ignorant men, ye men of miserable and most deplorable folly? Can ye forbear fearing within yourselves that at least those things may possibly prove true which ye now despise and mock at? Have ye not at least some misgivings of mind, lest possibly that which ye now perversely and obstinately refuse to believe, ye should at last be convinced of by sad experience, when it will be too late to repent. Nor is this the judgment of Christian writers only, but also of the wisest and most considerate heathens. We ought to spare no pains, saith Plato, [401] to obtain the habits of virtue and wisdom in this present life; for the prize is noble, and the hope is very great. And Cicero: [402] They have gained a great prize indeed who have persuaded themselves to believe, that, when death comes, they shall perish utterly: What comfort is there; what is there to be boasted of in that opinion? And again: If after death, saith he,

as some little and contemptible philosophers think, [403] I shall be nothing, yet there is no danger that when we are all dead those philosophers should laugh at me for my error.

But this is not our case. God has afforded us, as has been largely and particularly shown in the foregoing discourse, many and certain proofs of the truth of our religion; even as certain as any matter of fact is capable of having. And we now exhort men to believe, not what is barely possible, and excellent and probable, and of the utmost importance in itself, but what moreover they have all the positive evidence and all the reason in the world to oblige them to believe.

That God may require us to take notice of certain things, and to inquire into them and consider them, at our peril. To conclude: No man of reason can pretend to say but God may require us to take notice of some things at our peril, to inquire into them, and to consider them thoroughly. Any pretence of want of greater evidence will not excuse carelessness or unreasonable prejudices, when God has vouchsafed us all that evidence which was either fit for him to grant, or reasonable for men to desire; or indeed which the nature of the thing itself to be proved was capable of.

[397] Allois de, hose dunamis, apodeiktikos di eroteseon kai apokriseon proserchometha; Oude legomen, (to meta chleues hupo tou Kelso eiremenon) hoti Pisteuson, hon eisegoumai soi, touton einai huion Theou, kan e dedemenos atimotata, e kakolasmenos aischista----Oude phamen, taute kai mallon pisteuson.--Orig. advers. Cels. lib. 1.

[398] 1 Cor. ii. 14. Enioi upokechumenous echousi tous ophthalmous, kai me blepontas to phos tou heliou. Houto kai su, o anthrope, echeis upokechumenous tous ophthalmous tes psuches sou upo ton amartematon kai ton araxeon sou ton poneron.--Theophil. Antioch. l. 1.

[399] Non purior ratio est, ex duobus incertis et in ambigua

expectatione pendentibus, id potius credere, quod aliquas spes ferat, quam quod nullas? In illo enim periculi nihil est, si, quod dicitur imminere, cassum fiat et vacuum; in hoc, damnum est maximum (id est, salutis amissio,) si, cum tempus advenerit, aperiatur hoc fuisse mendacium.--Arnob. adv. Gentes, lib. 2.

[400] Quid dicitis, O nescii, etiam fletu et miseratione dignissimi? ita non tam extimescitis, ne sorte hæc vera sint, quæ sunt despectui vobis et præbent materiam risus? nec saltem vobiscum sub obscuris cogitationibus volvitis, ne, quod hoc die credere obstinata renuitis perversitate, redarguat serum tempus, et irrevocabilis pnitentia castiget?--Id. ibid.

[401] Chre panta poiin, hoste aretes kai phroneseos en to bio metaschein; kalon gar to hathlon, kai he elpis megale.--Plato in Phæd.

[402] Præclarum nescio quid adepti sunt, qui didicerunt se, cum tempus mortis venisset, totos esse perituros.----Quid habet ista res aut lætabile aut gloriosum?--Cic. Tusc. Qu. lib. 1.

[403] Sin mortuus, ut quidam minuti philosophi censent, nihil sentiam, non vereor ne hunc errorem meum mortui philosophi irrideant.--Cic. De Senect.

Chapter 33

THE FIRST LETTER.

TO

THE REVEREND DR CLARKE,

FROM A GENTLEMAN IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE:

RELATING

TO THE FIRST VOLUME OF THE FOREGOING

SERMONS;

WITH THE DOCTOR'S ANSWERS.

"Reverend Sir,"

"I suppose you will wonder at the present trouble from one who is a perfect stranger to you, though you are not so to him; but I hope the occasion will excuse my boldness. I have made it, sir, my business, ever since I thought myself capable of such sort of reasoning, to prove to myself the being and attributes of God: And being sensible that it is a matter of the last consequence, I endeavoured, after a demonstrative proof, not only more fully to satisfy my own mind, but also, in order to defend the great truths of natural religion, and those of the Christian revelation which follow from them, against all opposers; but must own with concern, that hitherto I have been unsucessful; and though I have got very probable arguments, yet I can go but a very little way with demonstration in the proof of those things. When first your book on those subjects (which, by all, whom I have discoursed with, is so justly esteemed,) was recommended to me, I was in great hopes of having all my inquiries answered; but since, in some places, either through my not understanding your meaning, or what else I know not, even that has failed me, I almost despair of ever arriving to such a satisfaction as I aim at, unless by the method I now

use. You cannot but know, sir, that of two different expressions of the same thing, though equally clear to some persons, yet, to others, one of them is sometimes very obscure, though the other be perfectly intelligible: Perhaps this may be my case here; and could I see those of your arguments, of which I doubt, differently proposed, possibly I might yield a ready assent to them. This, sir, I cannot but think a sufficient excuse for the present trouble; it being such an one as I hope may prevail for an answer, with one who seems to aim at nothing more than that good work of instructing others."

"In your Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God Prop. VI. [edit. 2d, p. 69 and 70,] you propose to prove the infinity or omnipresence of the self-existent being. The former part of the proof seems highly probable, but the latter part, which seems to aim at demonstration, is not to me convincing. The latter part of the paragraph is, if I mistake not, an entire argument of itself, which runs thus; to suppose a finite being to be self-existent, is to say that it is a contradiction for that being not to exist, the absence of which may yet be conceived without a contradiction; which is the greatest absurdity in the world. The sense of these words [the absence of which] seems plainly to be determined, by the following sentence, to mean its absence from any particular place. Which sentence is to prove it to be an absurdity; and is this; for if a being can, without a contradiction, be absent from one place, it may, without a contradiction, be absent from another place, and from all places. Now, supposing this to be a consequence, all that it proves is, that if a being can, without a contradiction, be absent from one place, at one time, it may without a contradiction be absent from another place, and so from all places, at different times; (for I cannot see, that if a being can be absent from one place at one time, therefore it may

without a contradiction be absent from all places at the same time, i. e. may cease to exist.) Now, if it proves no more than this, I cannot see that it reduces the supposition to any absurdity. Suppose I could demonstrate, that any particular man should live a thousand years; this man might, without a contradiction, be absent from one, and from all places, at different times; but it would not from thence follow that he might be absent from all places at the same time, i. e. that he might cease to exist. No; this would be a contradiction, because I am supposed to have demonstrated that he should live a thousand years. It would be exactly the same, if, instead of a thousand years, I should say, for ever; and the proof seems the same, whether it be applied to a self-existent or a dependent being. What else I have to offer is in relation to your proof that the self-existent being must of necessity be but one: Which proof is as follows, in Prop. VII, [edit. 2d. p. 74,]--to suppose two or more different natures existing of themselves, necessarily and independent from each other, implies this plain contradiction; that each of them being independent from the other, they may either of them be supposed to exist alone; so that it will be no contradiction to imagine the other not to exist, and consequently neither of them will be necessarily existing. The supposition indeed implies, that since each of these beings is independent from the other, they may either of them exist alone, i. e. without any relation to, or dependence on the other; but where is the third idea, to connect this proposition and the following one, viz. so that it will be no contradiction to imagine the other not to exist? Were this a consequence of the former proposition, I allow it would be demonstration, by the first corollary of Prop. III, [2d ed. p. 26;] but since these two propositions [they may either of them be supposed to exist alone,] and [so that it will be no contradiction to imagine the

other not to exist,] are very widely different; since likewise it is no immediate consequence, that because either may be supposed to exist independent from the other, therefore the other may be supposed not to exist at all; how is what was proposed, proved? That the propositions are different, I think is plain; and whether there be an immediate connexion, every body that reads your book must judge for themselves. I must say, for my own part, the absurdity does not appear at first sight, any more than the absurdity of saying that the angles below the base in an isosceles triangle are unequal; which, though it is absolutely false, yet I suppose no one will lay down the contrary for an axiom; because, though it is true, yet there is need of a proof to make it appear so.

"Perhaps, it may be answered, that I have not rightly explained the words, to exist alone;' and that they do not mean only to exist independent from the other; but that existing alone means that nothing exists with it. Whether this or the other was meant, I cannot determine; but, whichever it was, what I have said will hold. For if this last be the sense of those words, [they either of them may be supposed to exist alone;] it indeed implies that it will be no contradiction to suppose the other not to exist. But then I ask, how come these two propositions to be connected: That, to suppose two different natures existing of themselves, necessarily and independent from each other, implies that each of them may be supposed to exist alone in this sense? which is exactly the same as I said before, only applied to different sentences. So that if existing alone be understood as I first took it, I allow it is implied in the supposition; but cannot see that the consequence is, that it will be no contradiction to suppose the other not to exist. But if the words existing alone,' are meant in the latter sense, I grant, that if either of them may be

supposed thus to exist alone, it will be no contradiction to suppose the other not to exist. But then I cannot see, that to suppose two different natures existing, of themselves, necessarily and independent from each other, implies that either of them may be supposed to exist alone in this sense of the words, but only that either of them may be supposed to exist without having any relation to the other, and that there will be no need of the existence of the one in order to the existence of the other. But though, upon this account, were there no other principle of its existence, it might cease to exist; yet, on the account of the necessity of its own nature, which is quite distinct from the other, it is an absolute absurdity to suppose it not to exist.

"Thus, sir, I have proposed my doubts, with the reasons of them: In which, if I have wrested your words to another sense than you designed them, or in any respect argued unfairly, I assure you it was without design. So I hope you will impute it to mistake. And, if it will not be too great a trouble, let me once more beg the favour of a line from you, by which you will lay me under a particular obligation to be, what, with the rest of the world, I now am,

"Reverend Sir,

Your most obliged Servant, &c."

Nov. 4. 1713.

Chapter 34

THE ANSWER TO THE FIRST LETTER.

"Sir,"

"Did men who publish controversial papers, accustom themselves to write with that candour and ingenuity with which you propose your difficulties, I am persuaded almost all disputes might be very amicably terminated, either by men's coming at last to agree in opinion, or at least finding reason to suffer each other friendly to differ.

"Your two objections are very ingenious, and urged with great strength and acuteness. Yet I am not without hopes of being able to give you satisfaction in both of them. To your first, therefore, I answer:

Whatever may, without a contradiction, be absent from any one place at any one time, may also, without a contradiction, be absent from all places at all times. For, whatever is absolutely necessary at all, is absolutely necessary in every part of space, and in every point of duration. Whatever can at any time be conceived possible to be absent from any one part of space, may, for the same reason, [viz. the implying no contradiction in the nature of things,] be conceived possible to be absent from every other part of space at the same time, either by ceasing to be, or by supposing it never to have begun to be.

Your instance about demonstrating a man to live 1000 years, is what (I think) led you into the mistake; and is a good instance to lead you out of it again. You may suppose a man shall live 1000 years, or God may reveal and promise he shall live 1000 years; and, upon that supposition, it shall not be possible for the man to be absent from all places in any part of that time. Very true; but why shall it not be possible? Only because it is contrary to the supposition, or to the promise of God; but not contrary to the absolute nature of things,

which would be the case if the man existed necessarily, as every part of space does. In supposing you could demonstrate a man should live 1000 years, or one year, you make an impossible and contradictory supposition. For though you may know certainly, (by revelation, suppose,) that he will live so long, yet this is only the certainty of a thing true in fact, not in itself necessary: And demonstration is applicable to nothing but what is necessary in itself, necessary in all places and at all times equally.

"To your second difficulty, I answer: What exists necessarily, not only must so exist alone, as to be independent of any thing else; but (being self-sufficient,) may also so exist alone as that every thing else may possibly (or without any contradiction in the nature of things) be supposed not to exist at all; and consequently, (since that which may possibly be supposed not to exist at all, is not necessarily existent,) no other thing can be necessarily existent. Whatever is necessarily existing, there is need of its existence in order to the supposal of the existence of any other thing; so that nothing can possibly be supposed to exist, without presupposing and including antecedently the existence of that which is necessary. For instance; the supposal of the existence of any thing whatever, includes necessarily a presupposition of the existence of space and time; and, if any thing could exist without space or time, it would follow that space and time were not necessarily-existing. Therefore, the supposing any thing possibly to exist alone, so as not necessarily to include the presupposal of some other thing, proves demonstrably that that other thing is not necessarily-existing; because, whatever has necessity of existence, cannot possibly, in any conception whatsoever, be supposed away. There cannot possibly be any notion of the existence of any thing, there cannot possibly be any notion of existence at all, but what shall

necessarily pre-include the notion of that which has necessary existence: And consequently the two propositions which you judged independent are really necessarily connected. These sorts of things are indeed very difficult to express, and not easy to be conceived but by very attentive minds: But to such as can and will attend, nothing (I think) is more demonstrably convictive."

"If any thing still sticks with you in this, or any other part of my books, I shall be very willing to be informed of it; who am,"

"Sir, your assured Friend and Servant,

"S. C."

Nov. 10, 1713.

"P. S. Many readers, I observe, have misunderstood my second general proposition; as if the words [some one unchangeable and independent being] meant [one only--being,] whereas the true meaning, and all that the argument there requires, is, [some one at least.] That there can be but one, is the thing proved afterwards in the seventh proposition."

Chapter 35

THE SECOND LETTER.

"Reverend Sir,"

"I have often thought that the chief occasions of men's differing so much in their opinions, were, either their not understanding each other; or else, that instead of ingenuously searching after truth, they have made it their business to find out arguments for the proof of what they have once asserted. However, it is certain there may be other reasons for persons not agreeing in their opinions; and where it is so, I cannot but think, with you, that they will find reason to suffer each other to differ friendly; every man having a way of thinking, in some respects, peculiarly his own.

"I am sorry, I must tell you, your answers to my objections are not satisfactory. The reasons why I think them not so are as follow:

"You say; whatever is absolutely necessary at all, is absolutely necessary in every part of space, and in every point of duration.' Were this evident, it would certainly prove what you bring it for; viz. that whatever may, without a contradiction, be absent from one place at one time, may also be absent from all places at all times. But I do not conceive that the idea of ubiquity is contained in the idea of self-existence, or directly follows from it, any otherwise than as whatever exists must exist somewhere. You add; whatever can at any time be conceived possibly to be absent from any one part of space, may, for the same reason [viz. the implying no contradiction in the nature of things] be conceived possibly to be absent from every other part of space at the same time. Now, I cannot see, that I can make these two suppositions for the same reason, or upon the same account. The reason why I conceive this being may be absent from one place, is, because it

doth not contradict the former proof [drawn from the nature of things,] in which I proved only that it must necessarily exist. But the other supposition, viz. that I can conceive it possible to be absent from every part of space at one and the same time, directly contradicts the proof that it must exist somewhere; and so is an express contradiction. Unless it be said, that as, when we have proved the three angles of a triangle equal to two right ones, that relation of the equality ofits angles to two right ones will be wherever a triangle exists; so, when we have proved the necessary existence of a being, this being must exist everywhere. But there is a great difference between these two things; the one being the proof of a certain relation, upon supposition of such a being's existence with such particular properties; and consequently, wherever this being and these properties exist, this relation must exist too. But, from the proof of the necessary existence of a being, it is no evident consequence that it exists everywhere. My using the word demonstration, instead of proof, which leaves no room for doubt, was through negligence, for I never heard of strict demonstration of matter of fact.

"In your answer to my second difficulty, you say; whatsoever is necessarily-existing, there is need of its existence, in order to the supposal of the existence of any other thing. All the consequences you draw from this proposition I see proved demonstrably; and consequently, that the two propositions I thought independent are closely connected. But how, or upon what account, is there need of the existence of whatever is necessarily-existing, in order to the existence of any other thing? Is it as there is need of space and duration, in order to the existence of any thing; or is it needful only as the cause of the existence of all other things? If the former be said, as your instance seems to intimate, I answer, space and duration are very abstruse in

their natures, and, I think, cannot properly be called things, but are considered rather as affections which belong, and, in the order of our thoughts are antecedently necessary, to the existence of all things. And I can no more conceive how a necessarily-existing being can, on the same account or in the same manner as space and duration are, be needful in order to the existence of any other being, than I can conceive extension attributed to a thought; that idea no more belonging to a thing existing, than extension belongs to thought. But if the latter be said, that there is need of the existence of whatever is a necessary being, in order to the existence of any other thing; only as this necessary being must be the cause of the existence of all other things; I think this is plainly begging the question; for it supposes that there is no other being exists, but what is casual, and so not necessary. And on what other account, or in what other manner than one of these two, there can be need of the existence of a necessary being in order to the existence of any thing else, I cannot conceive.

"Thus, sir, you see I entirely agree with you in all the consequences you have drawn from your suppositions; but cannot see the truth of the suppositions themselves.

"I have aimed at nothing in my style but only to be intelligible; being sensible that it is very difficult (as you observe) to express one's self on these sorts of subjects, especially for one who is altogether unaccustomed to write upon them.

"I have nothing at present more to add, but my sincerest thanks for your trouble in answering my letter, and for your professed readiness to be acquainted with any other difficulty that I may meet with in any of your writings. I am willing to interpret this as somewhat like a promise of an answer to what I have now written, if there be any thing in it which deserves one. I am,

"Reverend Sir,

"Your most obliged humble Servant."

Nov. 23, 1713.

Chapter 36

THE ANSWER TO THE SECOND LETTER.

"Sir,"

"It seems to me, that the reason why you do not apprehend ubiquity to be necessarily connected with self-existence, is, because, in the order of your ideas, you first conceive a being, (a finite being, suppose;) and then conceive self-existence to be a property of that being; as the angles are properties of a triangle, when a triangle exists: Whereas, on the contrary, necessity of existence, not being a property consequent upon the supposition of the things existing, but antecedently the cause or ground of that existence; it is evident this necessity being not limited to any antecedent subject, as angles are to a triangle; but being itself original, absolute, and (in order of nature) antecedent to all existence, cannot but be everywhere, for the same reason that it is anywhere. [404] By applying this reasoning to the instance of space, you will find, that by consequence it belongs truly to that substance whereof space is a property, [405] as duration also is. What you say about a necessary being existing somewhere, supposes it to be finite; and being finite, supposes some cause which determined that such a certain quantity of that being should exist, neither more or less: And that cause must either be a voluntary cause, or else such a necessary cause, the quantity of whose power must be determined and limited by some other cause. But in original absolute necessity, antecedent (in order of nature) to the existence of any thing, nothing of all this can have place; but the necessity is necessarily everywhere alike.

"Concerning the second difficulty, I answer, that which exists necessarily is needful to the existence of any other thing; not

considered now as a cause, (for that indeed is begging the question) but as a sine qua non; in the sense as space is necessary to every thing, and nothing can possibly be conceived to exist without thereby presupposing space: Which, therefore, I apprehend to be a property or mode of the self-existent substance; and that, by being evidently necessary itself, it proves that the substance, of which it is a mode, must also be necessary; necessary both in itself, and needful to the existence of any thing else whatsoever. Extension indeed does not belong to thought, because thought is not a being; but there is need of extension to the existence of every being, to a being which has or has not thought, or any other quality whatsoever.

"I am, Sir,

"Your real Friend and Servant."

London, Nov. 28. 1713.

[404] See the conclusion of the Answer to the Seventh Letter.

[405] Or mode of existence.

THE THIRD LETTER.

"Reverend Sir,"

"I do not very well understand your meaning, when you say that you think, in the order of my ideas I first conceive a being, (finite suppose,) to exist, and then conceive self-existence to be a property of that being. If you mean that I first suppose a finite being to exist, I know not why; affirming necessity of existence to be only a consequent of its existence; and that, when I have supposed it finite, I very safely conclude it is not infinite; I am utterly at a loss upon what expressions in my letter this conjecture can be founded. But if you mean that I first of all prove a being to exist from eternity, and then, from the reasons of things, prove that such a being must be eternally necessary, I freely own it. Neither do I conceive it to be irregular or absurd; for there is a great difference between the order in which things exist, and the order in which I prove to myself that they exist. Neither do I think my saying a necessary being exists somewhere, supposes it to be finite; it only supposes that this being exists in space, without determining whether here, or there, or everywhere.

"To my second objection, you say: That which exists necessarily, is needful to the existence of any other thing, as a sine qua non; in the sense space is necessary to every thing, which is proved (you say) by this consideration, that space is a property of the self-existent substance; and, being both necessary in itself, and needful to the existence of every thing else; consequently the substance of which it is a property must be so too. Space, I own, is in one sense a property of the self-existent substance; but, in the same sense, it is also a

property of all other substances. The only difference is in respect to the quantity. And since every part of space, as well as the whole, is necessary; every substance consequently must be self-existent, because it hath this self-existent property; Which since you will not admit for true, if it directly follows from your arguments, they cannot be conclusive.

"What you say under the first head, proves (I think,) to a very great probability, though not to me with the evidence of demonstration: But your arguments under the second I am not able to see the force of.

"I am so far from being pleased that I can form objections to your arguments, that, besides the satisfaction it would have given me in my own mind, I should have thought it an honour to have entered into your reasonings, and seen the force of them. I cannot desire to trespass any more upon your better employed time; so shall only add my hearty thanks for your trouble on my account, and that I am, with the greatest respect,

"Reverend Sir,

Your most obliged humble Servant."

Dec. 5. 1713.

Chapter 38

THE ANSWER TO THE THIRD LETTER.

"Sir,"

"Though, when I turn my thoughts every way, I fully persuade myself there is no defect in the argument itself, yet, in my manner of expression, I am satisfied there must be some want of clearness when there remains any difficulty to a person of your abilities and sagacity. I did not mean that your saying a necessary being exists somewhere, does necessarily suppose it to be finite, but that the manner of expression is apt to excite in the mind an idea of a finite being, at the same time that you are thinking of a necessary being, without accurately attending to the nature of that necessity by which it exists. Necessity absolute, and antecedent (in order of nature) to the existence of any subject, has nothing to limit it; but, if it operates at all, (as it must needs do,) it must operate (if I may so speak,) everywhere and at all times alike: Determination of a particular quantity, or particular time or place of existence of any thing, cannot arise but from somewhat external to the thing itself. For example; why there should exist just such a small determinate quantity of matter, neither more nor less, interspersed in the immense vacuities of space, no reason can be given; nor can there be any thing in nature which could have determined a thing so indifferent in itself, as is the measure of that quantity, but only the will of an intelligent and free agent. To suppose matter, or any other substance, necessarily-existing in a finite determinate quantity, in an inch-cube for instance, or in any certain number of cube-inches and no more, is exactly the same absurdity as supposing it to exist necessarily, and yet for a finite duration only; which every one sees to be a plain contradiction. The

argument is likewise the same in the question about the original of motion: Motion cannot be necessarily-existing, because, it being evident that all determinations of motion are equally possible in themselves, the original determination of the motion of any particular body this way rather than the contrary way, could not be necessary in itself, but was either caused by the will of an intelligent and free agent, or else was an effect produced and determined without any cause at all, which is an express contradiction; as I have shown in my Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God.

"To the second head of argument I answer: Space is a property (or mode) of the self-existent substance, but not of any other substances. All other substances are in space, and are penetrated by it, but the self-existent substance is not in space, nor penetrated by it, but is itself (if I may so speak) the substratum of space, the ground of the existence of space and duration itself. Which (space and duration) being evidently necessary, and yet themselves not substances, but properties or modes, show evidently that the substance, without which these modes could not subsist, is itself much more (if that were possible) necessary. And as space and duration are needful, (i. e. sine qua non,) to the existence of every thing else; so, consequently, is the substance to which these modes belong in that peculiar manner which I before mentioned.

"I am, Sir,

"Your affectionate Friend and Servant."

Dec. 10, 1713.

THE FOURTH LETTER.

"Reverend Sir,"

"Whatever is the occasion of my not seeing the force of your reasonings, I cannot impute it to (what you do) the want of clearness in your expression. I am too well acquainted with myself to think my not understanding an argument a sufficient reason to conclude that it is either improperly expressed, or not conclusive, unless I can clearly show the defect of it. It is with the greatest satisfaction, I must tell you, that the more I reflect on your first argument the more I am convinced of the truth of it; and it now seems to me altogether unreasonable to suppose absolute necessity can have any relation to one part of space more than to another; and, if so, an absolutely-necessary being must exist everywhere.

"I wish I was as well satisfied in respect to the other. You say, all substances, except the self-existent one, are in space, and are penetrated by it: All substances, doubtless, whether body or spirit, exist in space; but when I say that a spirit exists in space, were I put upon telling my meaning, I know not how I could do it any other way than by saying such a particular quantity of space terminates the capacity of acting in finite spirits at one and the same time, so that they cannot act beyond that determined quantity. Not but that I think there is somewhat in the manner of existence of spirits in respect of space, that more directly answers to the manner of the existence of body; but what that is, or of the manner of their existence, I cannot possibly form an idea. And it seems (if possible) much more difficult to determine what relation the self-existent being hath to space: To say he exists in space, after the same manner that other substances do,

(somewhat like which I too rashly asserted in my last,) perhaps would be placing the Creator too much on a level with the creature; or, however, it is not plainly and evidently true: And to say the self-existent substance is the substratum of space, in the common sense of the word, is scarce intelligible, or at least is not evident. Now, though there may be an hundred relations distinct from either of these, yet how we should come by ideas of them I cannot conceive. We may indeed have ideas to the words, and not altogether depart from the common sense of them, when we say the self-existent substance is the substratum of space, or the ground of its existence: But I see no reason to think it true, because space seems to me to be as absolutely self-existent as it is possible any thing can be: So that, make what other supposition you please, yet we cannot help supposing immense space, because there must be either an infinity of being, or (if you will allow the expression) an infinite vacuity of being. Perhaps it may be objected to this, that though space is really necessary, yet the reason of its being necessary, is its being a property of the self-existent substance, and that it being so evidently necessary, and its dependence on the self-existent substance not so evident, we are ready to conclude it absolutely self-existent, as well as necessary; and that this is the reason why the idea of space forces itself on our minds, antecedent to, and exclusive of (as to the ground of its existence) all other things. Now this, though it is really an objection, yet it is no direct answer to what I have said, because it supposes the only thing to be proved, viz. that the reason why space is necessary is its being a property of a self-existent substance; and supposing it not to be evident that space is absolutely self-existent, yet, while it is doubtful, we cannot argue as though the contrary were certain and we were sure that space was only a property of the

self-existent substance. But now, if space be not absolutely independent, I do not see what we can conclude is so; for it is manifestly necessary itself, as well as antecedently needful to the existence of all other things, not excepting, (as I think) even the self-existent substance.

"All your consequences, I see, follow demonstrably from your supposition, and, were that evident, I believe it would serve to prove several other things as well as what you bring it for: Upon which account, I should be extremely pleased to see it proved by any one; for, as I design the search after truth as the business of my life, I shall not be ashamed to learn from any person, though at the same time I cannot but be sensible that instruction from some men is like the gift of a prince; it reflects an honour on the person on whom it lays an obligation.

"I am, Reverend Sir,

"Your obliged Servant."

Dec. 16. 1713.

Chapter 40

THE ANSWER TO THE FOURTH LETTER.

"Sir,"

"My being out of town most part of the month of January, and some other accidental avocations, hindered me from answering your letter sooner. The sum of the difficulties it contains, is (I think) this: That it is difficult to determine what relation the self-existent substance has to space. That, to say it is the substratum of space, in the common sense of the word, is scarce intelligible, or, at least, is not evident; that space seems to be as absolutely self-existent as it is possible any thing can be: And that its being a property of the self-existent substance, is supposing the thing that was to be proved. This is entering indeed into the very bottom of the matter, and I will endeavour to give you as brief and clear an answer as I can.

"That the self-existent substance is the substratum of space, or space a property of the self-existent substance, are not perhaps very proper expressions, nor is it easy to find such: But what I mean is this: The idea of space (as also of time or duration,) is an abstract or partial idea, an idea of a certain quality or relation, which we evidently see to be necessarily-existing; and yet, which (not being itself a substance,) at the same time necessarily presupposes a substance, without which it could not exist; which substance, consequently, must be itself (much more, if possible,) necessarily-existing. I know not how to explain this so well as by the following similitude: A blind man, when he tries to frame to himself the idea of body, his idea is nothing but that of hardness. A man that had eyes, but no power of motion or sense of feeling at all, when he tried to frame to himself the idea of body, his idea would be nothing but that of colour. Now,

as, in these cases, hardness is not body, and colour is not body; but yet, to the understanding of these persons, those properties necessarily infer the being of a substance, of which substance itself the persons have no idea: So space to us is not itself substance, but it necessarily infers the being of a substance, which affects none of our present senses; and, being itself necessary, it follows that the substance which it infers, is (much more) necessary.

"I am, Sir,

"Your affectionate Friend and Servant."

Jan. 29, 1713.

THE FIFTH LETTER.

"Reverend Sir,"

"You have very comprehensively expressed in six or seven lines, all the difficulties of my letter, which I should have endeavoured to have made shorter, had I not been afraid an improper expression might possibly occasion a mistake of my meaning. I am very glad the debate is come into so narrow a compass; for I think now it entirely turns upon this, whether our ideas of space and duration are partial, so as to presuppose the existence of some other thing. Your similitude of the blind man is very apt, to explain your meaning, (which I think I fully understand;) but does not seem to come entirely up to the matter. For, what is the reason that the blind man concludes there must be somewhat external, to give him that idea of hardness? It is because he supposes it impossible for him to be thus affected, unless there were some cause of it; which cause, should it be removed, the effect would immediately cease too; and he would no more have the idea of hardness, but by remembrance. Now, to apply this to the instance of space and duration; since a man, from his having these ideas, very justly concludes that there must be somewhat external, which is the cause of them; consequently should this cause (whatever it is) be taken away, his ideas would be so too: Therefore, if what is supposed to be the cause be removed, and yet the idea remains, that supposed cause cannot be the real one. Now, granting the self-existent substance to be the substratum of these ideas, could we make the supposition of its ceasing to be, yet space and duration would still remain unaltered; which seems to show that the self-existent substance is not the substratum of space and duration. Nor would it be an answer to the difficulty, to say that

every property of the self-existent substance is as necessary as the substance itself, since that will only hold while the substance itself exists: For there is implied, in the idea of a property, an impossibility of subsisting without its substratum. I grant the supposition is absurd: But how otherwise can we know whether any thing be a property of such a substance, but by examining whether it would cease to be, if its supposed substance should do so: Notwithstanding what I have now said, I cannot say that I believe your argument not conclusive; for I must own my ignorance, that I am really at a lose about the nature of space and duration. But did it plainly appear that they were properties of a substance, we should have an easy way with the atheists; for it would at once prove demonstrably an eternal, necessary, self-existent being; that there is but one such, and that he is needful in order to the existence of all other things: Which makes me think that though it may be true, yet it is not obvious to every capacity; otherwise it would have been generally used as a fundamental argument to prove the being of God.

"I must add one thing more, that your argument for the omnipresence of God seemed always to me very probable. But being very desirous to have it appear demonstrably conclusive, I was sometimes forced to say what was not altogether my opinion; not that I did this for the sake of disputing, (for besides the particular disagreeableness of this to my own temper, I should surely have chosen another person to have trifled with;) but I did it to set off the objection to advantage, that it might be more fully answered. I heartily wish you as fair treatment from your opponents in print, as I have had from you; though I must own, I cannot see, in those that I have read, that unprejudiced search after truth which I would have hoped for.

"I am, Reverend Sir,

"Your most humble Servant."

Feb. 3, 1713.

Chapter 42

THE ANSWER TO THE FIFTH LETTER.

"Sir,"

"In a multitude of business, I mislaid your last letter; and could not answer it till it came again to my hands by chance. We seem to have pushed the matter in question between us, as far as it will go; and, upon the whole, I cannot but take notice, I have very seldom met with persons so reasonable and unprejudiced as yourself, in such debates as these.

"I think all I need say in answer to the reasoning in your letter is; that your granting the absurdity of the supposition you were endeavouring to make, is consequently granting the necessary truth of my argument. If space and duration remain, [406] even after they are supposed to be taken away; and be not (as it is plain they are not) themselves substances, then the substance, [407] on whose existence they depend will necessarily remain likewise, even after it is supposed to be taken away; which shows that supposition to be impossible and contradictory.

"As to your observation at the end of your letter, that the argument I have insisted on, if it were obvious to every capacity, should have more frequently been used as a fundamental argument for a proof of the being of God, the true cause why it has been seldom urged, is, I think, this; that the universal prevalency of Cartes's absurd notions, (teaching that matter [408] is necessarily infinite and necessarily eternal, and ascribing all things to mere mechanic laws of motion, exclusive of final causes, and of all will, and intelligence, and divine providence from the government of the world;) hath incredibly blinded the eyes of common reason, and prevented men from discerning

him in whom they live, and move, and have their being. The like has happened in some other instances. How universally have men, for many ages, believed that eternity has no duration at all, and infinity no amplitude? Something of the like kind has happened in the matter of transubstantiation and (I think) in the scholastic notion of the trinity, &c.

"I am, Sir,

"Your affectionate Friend and Servant."

April 8. 1713.

[406] Ut partium temporis ordo est immutabilis, sic etiam ordo partium spatii. Moveantur hæ de locis suis, et movebuntur (ut ita dicam) de seipsis.--Newton Princip. Mathemat. Schol. ad Definit. 8.

[407] Deus non est æternitas vel infinitas, sed æternus et infinitus; non est duratio vel spatium, sed durat et adest. Durat semper, et adest ubique; et, existendo semper et ubique, durationem et spatium, æternitatem et infinitatem, constituit. Cum unaquæque spatii particula sit semper, et unumquodque durationis indivisibile momentum, ubique; certè rerum omnium fabricator ac Dominus, non erit nunquam nusquam omnipræsens est, non per virtutem solam, sed etiam per substantiam; nam virtus sine substantia subsistere non potest. In ipso continentur et moventur universa, &c.--Newton. Princip. Mathemat. Schol. General. sub finem.

[408] Puto implicare contradictionem, ut mundus [meaning the material world] sit finitus.--Cartes. Epist. 69. partis primæ.

Chapter 43

THE ANSWER TO A SIXTH LETTER,

BEING PART OF A LETTER WRITTEN TO ANOTHER GENTLEMAN, WHO HAD PROPOSED SEVERAL

OF THE SAME OBJECTIONS WITH THE FOREGOING.

Sir,

You will give me leave, without any preface or apology, to propose directly the best answer I can to the objections you have offered.

There are but two ways by which the being, and all or any of the attributes of God can possibly be proved. The one, a priori, the other a posteriori.

The proof a posteriori [409] is level to all men's capacities; because there is an endless gradation of wise and useful phenomena of nature, from the most obvious to the most abstruse; which afford (at least a moral and reasonable) proof of the being of God, to the several capacities of all unprejudiced men, who have any probity of mind: And this is what (I suppose) God expects (as a moral governor,) that moral agents should be determined by.

The proof a priori is (I fully believe) strictly demonstrative, but (like numberless mathematical demonstrations,) capable of being understood by only a few attentive minds, because it is of use only against learned and metaphysical difficulties. And, therefore, it must never be expected that this should be made obvious to the generality of men, any more than astronomy or mathematics can be.

This being premised in general, I proceed to particulars.

Concerning the notion of self-existence I explain myself thus: Of every thing that is, there is a reason which now does, or once or always did, determine the existence rather than the non-existence of that thing. Of

that which derives not its being from any other thing, this reason, or ground of existence (whether we can attain to any idea of it or no,) must be in the thing itself: For though the bare proof, by ratiocination, that there cannot but exist such a being, does not indeed give us any distinct notion of self-existence, but only shows the certainty of the thing; yet when once a thing is known, by reasoning a posteriori, to be certain, it unavoidably follows that there is in nature a reason a priori, (whether we can discover it or no,) of the existence of that which we know cannot but exist. Since, therefore, in that which derives not its being from any other thing, the ground or reason why it exists rather than not exists, must be in the thing itself, and it is a plain contradiction to suppose its own will, by way of efficient cause, to be the reason of its existence, it remains that absolute necessity (the same necessity that is the cause of the unalterable proportion between 2 and 4,) be, by way of formal cause, the ground of that existence. And this necessity is indeed antecedent, though not in time, yet in the order of nature, to the existence of the being itself: Whereas, on the contrary, its own will is, in the order of nature, subsequent to the supposition of the existence of the being; and therefore cannot be the formal cause of that existence.

Nothing can be more absurd than to suppose that any thing (or any circumstance of any thing) is, and yet that there be absolutely no reason why it is, rather than not. It is easy to conceive that we may indeed be utterlyignorant of the reasons, or grounds, or causes of many things. But, that any thing is; and that there is a real reason in nature why it is, rather than is not; these two are as necessarily and essentially connected as any two correlates whatever, as height and depth, &c.

The scholastic way of proving the existence of the self-existent being, from the absolute perfection of his nature, is husteron troteron; for all or any perfections presuppose existence, which is petitio principii. But bare necessity of existence does not presuppose, but infer existence. That which exists by absolute necessity of nature will always (whether you will or no) be supposed or included in any possible idea of things, even where you never so expressly endeavour to exclude it; just as the proportion between 2 and 4 remains included in the very terms wherein any man would endeavour expressly to deny it.

To exist at all, and to exist everywhere, are one and the very same thing, where the cause or ground of the existence is not either confined to, or operates only in, some particular place. For 2 and 4 to have at all a certain proportion to each other, and to have that same proportion everywhere, is the very same thing; and the like is true of every thing that is necessary in itself. To suppose (as you suggest) that the self-existent being may be limited by its own nature, is presupposing a nature, or limiting quality: Whereas, in this case, here must nothing be presupposed; no nature, no quality whatsoever, but what arises (and consequently everywhere alike) from a necessity absolute in itself, and antecedent (in the order of our ideas) to any nature, place, quality, time, or thing whatsoever.

When I say that necessity, absolutely such in itself, has no relation to time or place; my meaning is, that it has no relation to, or dependence upon, any particular time or place, or any thing in any particular time or place; but that it is the same in all time, and in all place. What you mean by time and place being finite, I understand not: The schoolmen's notion of time's depending on the motions or existence of the material world, is as senseless as the supposing it to depend on the turning or not turning of an hour-glass. The same also is

true of place.

Infinite space is infinite extension; and eternity is infinite duration. They are the two first, and most obvious, and simple ideas that every man has in his mind. Time and place are the sine qua non of all other things, and of all other ideas. To suppose either of them finite, is an express contradiction in the idea itself. No man does or can possibly imagine either of them to be finite; but only, either by non-attention, or by choice, he attends perhaps to part of his idea, and forbears attending to the remainder. All the difficulty that has ever arisen about this matter, is nothing but dust thrown by men's using words (or rather sounds only) in their philosophy, instead of ideas. And the arguments drawn from the jargon of the schoolmen, will equally prove every axiom in Euclid to be uncertain and unintelligible. They who remove the idea of infinity, (or of a being whose attribute infinity is,) by supposing space to be nothing but a relation between two bodies, are guilty of the absurdity of supposing that which is nothing to have real qualities. For the space which is between two bodies is always unalterably just what it was; and has the very same dimensions, quantity, and figure, whether these, or any other bodies be there, or anywhere else, or not at all; just as time or duration is the same, [410] whether you turn your hour-glass, or no; or whether the sun moves, or stands still; or whether there was or was not any sun, or any material world at all.

The schoolmen's distinctions about spirits existing in ubi, and not in loco, are mere empty sounds, without any manner of signification.

To set bounds to space, is to suppose it bounded by something which itself takes up space, and that is a contradiction: Or else that it is bounded by nothing, and then the idea of that nothing will still be space, which is another contradiction. Beings which exist in time, and

in space, (as every finite thing must needs do,) presuppose time and space: But that being, whose existence makes duration and space, must be infinite and eternal, because duration and space can have no bounds. Not that duration and space are the formal cause of that existence, but, that necessary attributes do necessarily and inseparably infer or show to us a necessary substance; of which substance itself we have no image, because it is the object of none of our senses: But we perceive its existence by its effects, and the necessity of that existence by the necessity of certain attributes, and by other arguments of reason and inference. To suppose space removed, destroyed, or taken away, amounts to the absurd supposition of removing a thing away from itself: That is, if in your imagination you annihilate the whole of infinite space, the whole infinite space will still remain: and if you annihilate any part of it, that part will still necessarily remain, as appears by the unmoved situation of the rest: And to suppose it divided or divisible, amounts to the same contradiction.

The objection of immensity being inconsistent with spirituality and simplicity, arises merely from the jargon of the schoolmen, who (in order to help out transubstantiation,) have used themselves to speak of this and of many other things in phrases which had no meaning or ideas belonging to them: By denying the real immensity and the real eternal duration of God, they, in true consequence, (though it is reasonable to suppose they saw not that consequence,) denied his being. The immensity of space, (it being throughout absolutely uniform and essentially indivisible,) is no more inconsistent with simplicity than the uniform successive flowing of the parts of duration (as you most rightly observe,) are inconsistent with simplicity. There is no difficulty at all in this point, but a mere prejudice, and false notion of simplicity.

As to spirituality; the individual consciousness of the one immense being is as truly one as the present moment of time is individually one, in all places at once: And the one can no more properly be said to be an ell or a mile of consciousness, (which is the sum of your objection,) than the other can be said to be an ell or a mile of time.

This suggestion seems to deserve particular consideration.

To the objection, that the supposing God to be really and substantially omnipresent, is supposing him to be the soul of the world, I answer: This is a great mistake. For the word soul signifies a part of a whole, whereof body is the other part; and they, being united, mutually affect each other as parts of the same whole. But God is present to every part of the universe, not as a soul, but as a governor; so as to act upon every thing in what manner he pleases, himself being acted upon by nothing.

What you suggest about space having no parts, because it is infinite, is a mere quibble indeed, and has nothing in it. The meaning of parts, (in questions of this nature,) is separable, compounded, un-united parts, such as are the parts of matter; which, for that reason, is always a compound, not a simple substance. No matter is one substance, but a heap of substances: And that I take to be the reason why matter is a subject incapable of thought; not because it is extended, but because its parts are distinct substances, un-united, and independent on each other; which (I believe) is not the case of other substances.

The kinds of substance may perhaps be more and more different from each other, than we, (at present,) for want of more senses, are aware of. Matter and spirit is no other division than matter and not matter; just as if one should divide the species of animals into horses and not horses.

As to the question, why absolute necessity will not admit of the

existence of two distinct independent beings, as well as of different attributes and properties in one independent being, I answer; absolute necessity, in which there is nowhere any variation, cannot be the ground of existence of a number of finite beings, however agreeing and harmonious, because that (viz. number, or finiteness,) is itself a manifest difformity or inequality. But it may be the ground or existence of one uniform infinite being: The different attributes of which one uniform being are not a variety of parts, or an un-uniformness, (if I may so speak) of the necessity by which it exists, but they are all and each of them attributes of the whole, attributes of the one simple infinite being; just as the powers of hearing and seeing are not inequalities or difformities in the soul of man; but each of them powers of the whole soul.

As to the last argument you refer to, my meaning therein is this; that it is a contradiction to suppose two (or more) necessarily-existing beings, because each of them, by the supposition, being independent, and sufficient to itself, though the other were supposed not to exist, they thereby each of them mutually destroy the supposed necessity of the other's existence, and, consequently, neither of them indeed will be necessary or independent. For instance; if matter, or spirit, or any other substance, could as possibly be conceived to exist without that in which they all exist, as that in which they all exist can be conceived to exist without them, then there would be necessary-existence on neither part.

As to the question concerning the possible plurality of infinites; it is certainly true that the infinity of space neither excludes finite bodies nor finite spirits, nor infinite body, nor infinite spirit. But it excludes every thing of the same kind, whether finite or infinite; which is all that my argument requires. There can be but one infinite

space, and but one infinite time, and but one infinite spirit, (taking spirit to mean a particular positive distinct substance, and not the mere negative non-matter, of which there may be innumerable kinds;) and if matter could be infinite, there could likewise be but one infinite body, and so on. For one infinite, in all dimensions, exhausts always the whole possibility of that kind, though it excludes not others.

The ubi of spirits being their perception only; and the omnipresence of God being his infinite knowledge only, are mere words, without any sense at all: And, by the like confusion, any thing may be said to be any thing, and we have in us no principles of knowledge at all, nor any use either of words or ideas.

"I am, Sir,

"Your assured Friend and Servant," &c.

[409] Rom. i. 20. The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead.

[410] Eadem est duratio seu perseverantia existentiæ rerum; sive motus sint celeres, sive tardi, sive nulli.--Newton. Princip. Mathem. schol. ad Definit. 8.

Chapter 44

THE ANSWER TO A SEVENTH LETTER,

CONCERNING THE ARGUMENT a priori.

"To the Reverend Dr***

"Your objection against arguing at all a priori, concerning the existence and perfections of the first cause, is what many learned men have indeed stuck at. And it being evident that nothing can be prior to the first cause, they have therefore thought it sufficient to say that the first cause exists "absolutely without cause;" and that therefore there can be no such thing, as reasoning or arguing about it a priori at all. But if you attend carefully you will find this way of speaking to be by no means satisfactory. For though it is indeed most evident, that no thing, no being, can be prior to that being which is the first cause and original of all things, yet there must be in nature a ground or reason, a permanent ground or reason of the existence of the first cause: Otherwise its existence would be owing to, and depend upon mere chance. And all that could be said upon this head would amount to this only; that it exists, because it exists; that it therefore does and always did exist, because it does and always did exist: Which the followers of Spinoza will, with equal strength of reason, affirm concerning every substance that exists at all.

"If the idea of an eternal and infinite nothing were a possible idea, and not contradictory in itself; the existence of the first cause would not be necessary: [411] And if the existence of the first cause was not necessary, it would be no contradiction to suppose it either not to have existed in time past, or to cease to exist at any time to come. The existence therefore of the first cause is necessary; necessary absolutely and in itself. And therefore that necessity is, a priori,

and in the order of nature, the ground or reason of its existence. For that which exists necessarily, or in the idea of which existence and necessity are inseparably and necessarily connected, must either therefore be necessary, because it exists, or else it must therefore exist because its existence is necessary. If it was therefore necessary, because it existed, then, for the same reason, every thing that exists would exist necessarily; and either every thing or nothing would be the first cause. On the contrary, if the first cause does therefore exist, because its existence is necessary, then necessity is the ground or reason or foundation of that existence; and the existence does not infer, (that is a priori, or in the order of nature and consequence, antecede) the necessity of existing; but the necessity of existing does on the contrary infer, (that is, a priori, or in the order of nature, antecede) the supposition of the existence; which is what I proposed to prove.

"The argument a posteriori is indeed by far the most generally useful argument; most easy to be understood, and in some degree suited to all capacities; and therefore it ought always to be distinctly insisted upon. But forasmuch as atheistical writers have sometimes opposed the being and attributes of God by such metaphysical reasonings as can no otherwise be obviated than by arguing a priori; therefore this manner of arguing also, is useful, and necessary in its proper place.

The eternity of God can no otherwise be proved, than by considering, a priori, the nature of a necessary or self-existent cause. The temporary phenomena of nature prove indeed demonstrably, a posteriori, that there is, and has been from the beginning of those phenomena, a being of power and wisdom sufficient to produce and preserve those phenomena. But that this first cause has existed from eternity, and shall exist to eternity, cannot be proved from those temporary phenomena; but must be

demonstrated from the intrinsic nature of necessary-existence. If the first cause exists "absolutely without any ground or reason of existence;" it might as possibly in times past, without any reason, have not existed; and may as possibly in times to come, without any reason, cease to exist. Can it be proved, a posteriori, that the first cause of all things will exist to-morrow? Or can it be proved any otherwise, than by showing that necessity is a certain ground of future as well as of present existence? And if so, then the ground, or reason, upon which the first cause now does, and hereafter always will, and cannot but exist, is the very same ground or reason upon which he always did exist: And, consequently, it cannot with truth be affirmed that the first cause exists "absolutely without any ground or reason of existence." It is true, indeed, there is no antecedent reason why necessity is necessity. It is in itself essentially immediate; and it is absurd to suppose that it can be perceived otherwise than immediately and intuitively. Yet, I think, it is not an absurd question to ask, why that which is now a necessary being must equally in all past time have been, and in all future time continue to be, a necessary being? And the answer to that question will express fully all that I mean, by affirming the necessity to be the ground or reason of the existence. When atheistical writers affirm that the material universe, and every existing substance in particular, was eternal "absolutely without any ground or reason of existence;" can this assertion be confuted by him who shall himself affirm that God was eternal absolutely without any ground or reason of existence? Or can it be any other way confuted at all, than by showing that something must be necessarily-existent, (else nothing would ever have existed;) and that that which is necessarily-existent, cannot possibly be either finite or moveable, or at any time capable of any alterations, limitations,

variations, inequalities, or diversifications whatsoever, either in whole, or in part, or in different parts, either of space or time?

In like manner, the infinity or immensity or omnipresence of God, can no otherwise be proved than by considering, a priori, the nature of a necessary or self-existent cause. The finite phenomena of nature prove indeed demonstrably, a posteriori, that there is a being which has extent of power and wisdom sufficient to produce and preserve all these phenomena. But that this author of nature is himself absolutely immense or infinite, cannot be proved from these finite phenomena, but must be demonstrated from the intrinsic nature of necessary existence. If the first cause exists "absolutely without any ground or reason of existence," it may as possibly be finite as infinite; it may as possibly be limited as be immense. It may as possibly, in other places, without any reason, not exist, as it does, without any reason, exist in those places where the phenomena of nature prove that it does exist. Can it be proved, a posteriori, that that governing wisdom and power, which the phenomena of nature in this material world demonstrate to be present here, must therefore be immense, infinite, or omnipresent? Must be present likewise in those boundless spaces, where we know of no phenomena or effects to prove its existence? Or can the immensity and omnipresence of the first cause be at all proved any other way than by showing that necessity of existence is capable of no limitation; but must for the same reason be the ground of immense or omnipresent existence, as it is the ground or foundation of any existence at all?

Again; the unity of God, (which, I think has always been allowed to be a principle of natural religion, otherwise St Paul could not justly have blamed the heathen as inexcusable, in that they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, and that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God: The unity of God, I say,) can no otherwise be

demonstrated, than by considering, a priori, the nature of a necessary or self-existent cause. The phenomena of nature which come within the reach of our observation, prove indeed demonstrably that there is a supreme author and director of that nature, or of those phenomena, whereof we have any knowledge. But that this supreme author and governor of nature, or of these phenomena, is likewise the supreme author and governor of universal nature; cannot be entirely proved by our partial and imperfect knowledge of a few phenomena in that small part of the universe which comes within the reach of our senses; but must be demonstrated from the intrinsic nature of necessary existence. If the first cause exists "absolutely without any ground or reason of existence," it is altogether as possible, and as probable, and as reasonable, to suppose that there may, without any reason, exist numberless finite independent coexistent first causes (either of like nature and substance to each other, or of different nature and substance from each other,) in different parts of the immense universe; as that there should, without any reason, exist one only infinite, immense, omnipresent, first cause, author and governor of the whole. That there is, and cannot but be one, and one only, such first cause, author and governor of the universe; is (I conceive) capable of strict demonstration, including that part of the argument which is deduced a priori The subject of the question is no trifle. If any sober-minded man is persuaded, he can find any flaw in that demonstration, or cares not to examine it, lest any of its consequences should prove inconsistent with some other notions he may perhaps through prejudice have imbibed, I should be very thankful to him to show how the unity of God (the first principle of natural religion) can at all be proved by reason a posteriori only.

Some such considerations as these, (I suppose) they were, or others of

the like nature, which moved Mr Limborch to write thus to Mr Locke: "Argumentum desiderat vir magnificus, quo probetur ens, cujus existentia est necessaria, tantum posse esse unum, et quidem ut id argumentum à necessitate existentia desumatur, et a priori (ut in scholis loquuntur,) non a posteriori concludat; hoc est, ex natura necessariæ existentiæ probatur eam pluribus non posse esse communem." To which Mr Locke replies; "Les theologiens, les philosophes, et Descartes luy-meme, supposent l'unité de Dieu, sans la prouver." After which, having suggested his own thoughts, he thus concludes. "C'est la, selon moy, une preuve a priori, que l'Etre eternel independent n'est qu'un."

"To argue, therefore, a priori concerning the existence and attributes of the first cause, is no absurdity. For though no thing, no being, can indeed be a priori to the first cause; yet arguments may, and must be drawn from the nature and consequences of that necessity, by which the first cause exists. Mathematical necessary truths are usually demonstrated a prioriand yet nothing is prior to truths eternally necessary. To confine, therefore, the use of term, argumentations above such things only as have other things prior to them in time, is on y quibbling about the signification of words.

"To the objection, that an attribute cannot be the ground or reason of the existence of the substance itself, which is always on the contrary the support of the attributes, I answer; that, in strictness of speech, necessity of existence is not an attribute, in the sense that attributes are properly so styled; but it is, [sui generis,] the ground or foundation of existence, both of the substance and of all the attributes. Thus, in other instances, immensity is not an attribute, in the sense that wisdom, power, and the like, are strictly so called; but it is [sui generis,] a mode of existence both of the substance and of

all the attributes. In like manner; eternity, is not an attribute or property in the sense that other attributes, inhering in the substance, and supported by it are properly so called; but it is [sui generis,] the duration of existence, both of the substance and of all the attributes. Attributes or properties, strictly so called, cannot be predicated one of another. Wisdom cannot properly be said to be powerful; or power to be wise. But immensity is a mode of existence, both of the divine substance and of all the attributes. Eternity is the duration of existence, both of the divine substance, and of all the attributes. And necessity is the ground, or reason, or foundation of existence both of the divine substance, and of all the attributes.

"I am, Sir,

"Your very humble Servant, &c."

FINIS.

[411] Nothing, is that of which every thing can truly be denied and no thing can truly be affirmed. So that the idea of nothing, (if I may so speak,) is absolutely the negation of all ideas. The idea therefore either of a finite or infinite nothing is a contradiction in terms.)

(For necessity of being, and possibility of not being, are contradictory ideas.

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