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A

DEMONSTRATION

OF THE

BEING AND ATTRIBUTES OF GOD,

MORE PARTICULARLY

IN ANSWER TO MR HOBBS, SPINOZA,

AND THEIR FOLLOWERS.

WHEREIN THE NOTION OF LIBERTY IS STATED, AND THE POSSIBILITY AND CERTAINTY OF IT PROVED, IN OPPOSITION TO NECESSITY AND FATE.

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF EIGHT SERMONS, PREACHED IN THE CATHEDRAL-CHURCH OF ST PAUL, IN THE YEAR 1704, AT THE LECTURE FOUNDED BY THE HONOURABLE ROBERT BOYLE, ESQ.

Rom. i. 20.â€œFor 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 are without excuse.

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING THE

OBLIGATIONS OF NATURAL RELIGION,

AND THE

TRUTH AND CERTAINTY

OF THE

CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

IN ANSWER TO MR HOBBS, SPINOZA, THE AUTHOR OF THE ORACLES OF REASON, AND OTHER DENIERS OF

NATURAL AND REVEALED RELIGION.

BEING SIXTEEN SERMONS PREACHED IN THE CATHEDRAL-CHURCH OF ST. PAUL,
IN THE YEARS 1704-5, AT THE LECTURE FOUNDED BY
THE HON. ROBERT BOYLE, ESQ.

WITH SUPPLEMENTARY MATTER.

By SAMUEL CLARKE, D.D.

Late Rector of St James#8217;s, Westminster.

A NEW EDITION.

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1823.

TO THE

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.

THE PREFACE.

THERE being already published many and good books to prove the Being and Attributes of God, I have chosen to contract what was requisite for me to say upon this subject, into as narrow a compass, and to express what I had to offer, in as few words as I could with perspicuity. For which reason I

have also confined myself to one only method or continued thread of arguing, which I have endeavoured should be as near to mathematical as the nature of such a discourse would allow; omitting some other arguments which I could not discern to be so evidently conclusive; because it seems not to be at any time for the real advantage of truth to use arguments in its behalf founded only on such hypotheses as the adversaries apprehend they cannot be compelled to grant: Yet I have not made it my business to oppose any of those arguments, because I think it is not the best way for any one to recommend his own performance by endeavouring to discover the imperfections of others who are engaged in the same design with himself, of promoting the interest of true religion and virtue. But every man ought to use such arguments only as appear to him to be clear and strong, and the readers must judge whether they truly prove the conclusion.

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A

DEMONSTRATION

OF THE

BEING AND ATTRIBUTES

OF

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MORE PARTICULARLY IN ANSWER TO MR HOBBS, SPINOZA, AND THEIR FOLLOWERS.

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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 cÅ“lumqueâ€”
Una dies dabit exitio, multosque per annos
Sustentata ruet moles, et machina mundi.
â€”Dictis dabit ipsa fidem res
Forsitan, et graviter terrarum motibus orbis
Omnia conquassari in parvo tempore cernes.
Lucret. lib. 5.

[2] Archbishop Tillotsonâ€™s Sermon on Job, xxviii. 28.

I. Proposition I. First then, it is absolutely and undeniably certain, that
Something must have existed from eternity. something has existed from all eternity.â€”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.â€”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.

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.

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 subtle 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 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 conatus 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 inertiae*), 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 inertiae 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 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. *prim^a partis.* And his follower Mr. Regis, *Mais peut^a 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.â€”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
substantiã| pertinet existere. Ibid. prop. 7.

[14] Prã|ter Deum nulla dari neque concipi potest substantia. Ibid. prop.
14.

[15] Ad naturam substantiã| pertinet existere. Prop. 7.

[16] Res, nullo alio modo, neque alio ordine, a Deo produci potuerunt quam
productã| sunt. Prop. 33. Ex necessitate Divinã| Naturã|, infinita
infinite
modis (hoc est, omnia quã| 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
productã| sunt. Prop. 33.

[21] Prã|ter 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] Agennáton to pan kai análethron. Anarchon kai ateleutáion. Kosmos autos
ex heautou aidios esti kai autotelás, kai diamenáon ton panta aiána. Aei ontos tou kesmou, anankaion kai ta merá autou sunuparchein. Legá de merá ouranon, gánn, &c. Ocell. Lucan. Peri tás ou pantos phuseás.

[27] To anarchon kai ateleutáton ou schámatos kai tás kiás seás pistoutai,
dioti agennátos ho kesmos kai apthartos háte gar tou schámatos idea, kuklos houtos de pantothen hisos kai homoiós, dioper anarchos kai ateleutááos, háte tás kinás seás, &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] Agennáton to pan.êex ou gar gegonen, ekeino práton tou pantos esti.êTo ge de pan genomenon sun pasi ginetai, kai touto ge de adunatonêEktos gar tou Pantos, ouden. Ocell. Ibid.

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

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

[31] Tas dunameis kai ta Organa kai tas horexeis upo Theou dedomenas, anthrápá, ouch hádonás heneka dedosthai sumbebáken, alla, &c. Idem, Peri tás tou pantos phuseás.

[32] Nous.

[33] Theon asámaton apepháns. Diog. in Vita Aristol.

[34] To práton kinoun, akináton. Aristot. Metaph.

[35] Ei má estai para ta aistháta alla, ouk estai archá kai taxis, all' aei tás archás archá. Ibid

[36] Ho páttás kai patártoude tou pantos Ho gánn, ouranon, kai Theous, kai panta ta en ouraná kai ta en adou kai upo gás hehapanta ergasamenos. De Republ. lib. 10.

[37] Pasa ananká tonde kosmon, eikona tinos einai. Plato in Timá'o. 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 kosou einai, ouch h  s chron   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 volentis temporis habere, sed su   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 c  pisse, 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 ti9n   t  n gn  rim  n xenag  ss pros to z  teuonon; phasi gar hoti kath  per aition to s  ma t  s hekastou skias ginetai; homochronos det   s  mati h   skia, kai ouch homotimos; hout   d   kai hode ho kosmos parakolouth  ma esti t   Theou aitio9u ontos aut   tou einai, kai sunaidios esti t   The  , ouketi de kai homotimos. Zachari   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.

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.

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.â€”Tam fieri non potest, ut instans [temporis] coexistent rei successivã|, quam impossibile est punctum coexistere [coexistendi] lineã|.â€”Lusus merus non intellectorum verberum.â€”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.â€”And how that can be together, which must necessarily be imagined to be co-existent to successions, let them that can, conceive.â€”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.â€”Archbishop Tillotson, vol. 6. serm. 6.*

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, unalterably 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.

It is evident, Of the manner of our conceiving the immensity of God. 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 h[ab]e de locis suis, et movebuntur (ut ita dicam) de seipsis. Newton. Princip. Schol. ad definit. 8.

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 *hō* $\hat{\alpha}$ η ν) 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 substantiã; pertinet existere. Prop. 7. Prãter 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 substantiã; 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 productã; sunt.*“Prop. 33.

[47] *Ex necessitate divinã; naturã;, infinita infinitis modis (hoc est, omnia quã; sub intellectum infinitum cadere possunt,) seque debent.*“Prop. 16.

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.â€”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 atheistâ€™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:â€œIt 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 sensationis 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 ad hæret 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] Spinoza's 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.

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 appearsâ€”

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 than 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

unavoidable:

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 efficient, 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 divinã| naturã|, infinita infinitis modis sequi debentâ€"Ethic. par. I. prop. 16.

[55] Alii putant Deum esse causam liberam, propterea quod potest, ut putant, efficere ut ea quã| ex ejus natura sequi diximus; hoc est, quã| 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 ã|quales esse duobus rectis.â€"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 ã|terno et in ã|ternum sequitur ejus tres angulos ã|quari duobus rectis.â€"Ethic, par. 1, schol. ad prop. 17.

Omnia ex necessitate naturã| divinã| determinata sunt, non tantum ad existendum, sed etiam ad certo modo existendum et operandum; nullumque datur contingens.â€"Demonstrat. prop. 29. Si res alterius naturã| potuissent esse, vel alio modo ad operandum determinari, ut naturã| ordo alius esset: ergo Dei etiam natura alia posset esse quam jam est.â€"Prop. 33. demonstrat.

Quicquid incipimus in Dei potestate esse, id necessario est.â€"Prop.35. Deum non operari ex libertate voluntatis.â€"Corol. ad prop. 32. Res nullo alio modo, neque alio ordine, a Deo produci potuerant quam productã| sunt.â€"Prop. 33.

[56] Ex necessitate divinã| naturã|, infinita infinitis modis sequi debent.â€"Prop. 16.

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

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

[59] Nam dum cometã| moventur in orbibus valde eccentricis, undique; et quoquoaversum in omnes cã|li partes; utique nullo modo fieri potuit ut cã|co fato tribuendum sit; quod planetã| in orbibus concentricis motu consimili

ferantur eodem omnes.â€”Tam miram uniformitatem in planetarum systemate, necessario fatendum est intelligentia et consilio fuisse effectam.â€”Newton. Optic. page 345.

[60] Res nullo alio modo, neque alio ordine, a Deo produci potuerunt, quam productã| sunt.â€”Spinoza, ut supra.

[61] Idemque dici possit de uniformitate illa, quã| est in corporibus animalium, viz. necessario fatendum est intelligentia et consilio fuisse effectam.â€”Newton. Optic. page 346.

[62] Naturam finem nullum sibi præ|fixum habere; et omnes causas finales, nihil nisi humana esse figmenta.â€”Appendix ad prop. 36.

[63] Oculos ad videndum, dentes ad masticandum, herbas et animantia ad alimentum, solem ad illuminandum, mare ad alendum pisces, &c.â€”Ibid. Nullas unquam rationes circa res naturales a fine, quem Deus aut natura in iis faciendis sibi proposuit, desumemus.â€”Cartes. Princip. par. 1. Å§ 28.

[64] Ex necessitate divinã| naturã| infinita infinitis modis seque debent.â€”Ethic. par. 1. prop. 16.

[65] Unaquã|que volitio non potest existere, neque ad operandum determinari; nisi ab alia causa determinetur, et hæ|c rursus ab alia; et sic porro in infinitum.â€”Prop. 33. demonstr.

[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.â€”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.â€”Ethic. Par. 11. prop. 13. lemma 3.

[68] Mens ad hoc vel illud volendum determinatur a causa, quã| etiam ab alia determinata est, et hæ|c iterum ab alia, et sic in infinitum.â€”Spinoza Ethic. par. II, prop. 48.

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.â€”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 indisposition, and so do indeed depend upon the organs of the body as to their present exercise, 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.â€”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 manâ€™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, notwithstanding 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 manâ€™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?â€”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 abundantia, 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's 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 certain 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 animi 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. Os non gar estin archon energeia ha s matika dlon hoti tautas aneu smatos 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.â€”Cicero Tuscul. Qu. 1.

[71] Quicumque 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.â€”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.â€”Spinoza Ethic. par. II. prop. 13. lemma 3.

[73] Unaquãque volitio non potest existere, neque ad operandum determinari, nisi ab alia causa determinetur, et hãc rursus ab alia, et sic porro in infinitum.â€”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.â€”Hobbesâ€™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, quã etiam ab alia determinata est, et hãc iterum ab alio, et sic in infinitum.â€”Spinoza, Ethic. par. II. prop. 48.

[74] Hinc sequitur, Deum non operari ex libertate voluntatis.â€”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 extrema prematur; illa cedente, premetur quoque pars quã versus interiora illi proxima est; et ita propagabitur pressio, sive motus ille, per partes organi omnes, usque ad intimam.â€”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, cã¹ 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.â€”Hobbes de Sensione et Motu Animalium.

[76] Phantasma est sentiendi actus.â€”Id. Ibid.

[77] Causa sensionis est externum corpus sive objectum quod premit organum

proprium; et premo, (mediantibus nervis et membranis,) continuum efficit

motum introrsum ad cerebrum et inde ad cor; unde nascitur cordis resistantia

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 hã|c, sive phantasma, est id quod vocamus

sensionem.â€“Leviathan. cap. 1.

[78] Quã| qualitates omnes nominari solent sensibiles, et sunt in ipso objecto nihil aliud præ|ter materiã| motum, quo objectum in organa sensuum diversimode operatur. Neque in nobis aliud sunt, quam diversi motus. Motus enim nihil generat præ|ter motum.â€“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 præ|dita esse sustinuerunt. Nec video, si natura sensationis 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.â€“Sensationi ergo, quã| vulgo ita

appellatur, necessario adhã|ret memoria aliqua, &c.â€“Hobbesâ€™ 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 sensationi adhã|ret proprie dictã|, ut ei aliqua insita sit perpetua phantasmatum varietas; ita ut aliud ab alio discerni possit. Si supponemus enim esse hominem, oculis quidem claris, cã|terisque videndi organis recte se habentibus compositum, nullo autem alio sensu præ|ditum, 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.â€“Attonitum esse, et fortasse aspectare eum, sed stupentem

dicerem, videre non dicerem. Adeo sentire semper idem, et non sentire, ad idem recidunt.â€“Id. Ibid.

[82] Motus nihil generat præ|ter motum.â€“Leviath. cap. 1.

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 *Ã priori*. The proof *Ã 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?â€"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?â€”the
 exquisite regularity of all the planets's motions, without epicycles,
 stations, retrogradations, or any other deviation or confusion
 whatsoever?â€”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?â€”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?â€”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?â€”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?â€”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?â€”the wonderful
 motions
 of the comets, which are now known to be as exact, regular, and
 periodical,
 as the motions of other planets?â€”lastly,â€”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?â€”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. xliiii, 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, naturã; judicia confirmat.*"Cic.

[84] *"lestem 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 applicatã; ad diametros veros, hoc est, reciproce ut distantiã; planetarum a sole, ductã; in radices diametrorum apparentium. Collocavit igitur Deus planetas in diversis distantiiis a sole, ut quilibet, pro gradu densitatis, calore solis majore vel minore fruatur.*"Newton. Princip. lib. 3, prop. 8.

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,â€”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 Godâ€™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 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. "KomidÄ" hara ho theos haploun kai alÄ"thes en te ergÄ kai en lugÄ. Kai oute allous exapata, oute kata phantasias, oute kata logous, oute kata sä"meiÄn pompas, outh hupar oud' onar. "Plato de Repub. lib. 2, sub finem.

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

THE UNCHANGEABLE OBLIGATIONS OF
NATURAL RELIGION

AND THE
TRUTH AND CERTAINTY
OF THE
CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

BEING EIGHT SERMONS PREACHED AT THE CATHEDRAL
CHURCH OF ST. PAUL, IN THE YEAR 1705, AT THE
LECTURE FOUNDED BY THE HONOURABLE
ROBERT BOYLE, ESQ.

BY SAMUEL CLARKE, DD.
LATE RECTOR OF ST. JAMES'S, WESTMINSTER.

TO THE
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.

THE PREFACE.

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, wÃ© 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,â€”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,)â€”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.â€”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.â€œHe says, I am sure this author cannot produce one, no not

one Cartesian, that ever made matter a necessarily-existing being,â€œthat ever

contradicted himself in words upon this subject,â€œthat ever was mightily, or

not mightily, or at all perplexed with what Mr Clarke calls his argument;â€œnay, 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.â€” 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] Noteâ€”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 Newtonâ€™s Principia, page 384 and 402. Edit. tertia.

[89] Quâ€™ro an a Deo fieri potuisset ut mundus esset finitus?â€”Epist. ad Cartesium⁶⁸, partis primâ€™. 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.â€”Epist. 5. partis secundâ€™.

[90] Puto implicare contradictionem ut mundus sit finitus.â€”Cartes. Epist. 69, partis primâ€™. 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.â€”Epist. 6, partis secundâ€™.

[91] Remark, page 25.

[92] See Cudworthâ€™s System, page 721, &c.

[93] Præter Deum nulla dari neque concipi potest substantia.â€”Spinoza ethic.

par. prop. 14. Una substantia non potest produci ab alia substantia.â€”Prop.

6. Res nullo alio modo neque alio ordine a Deo produci potuerunt quam productæ sunt.â€”Prop. 33. Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet existere.â€”Prop. 7.

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

[95] Per corpus intelligimus quamcunque quantitatem longam, latam, et profundam, certa aliqua figura terminatum; quo nihil absurdus de Deo, ente scilicet absolute infinito, dici potest.â€”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, solum Deum esse causam liberam. Deus ex solis suæ naturæ legibus, et a nemine coactus, agit.

A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING

THE UNCHANGEABLE OBLIGATIONS OF
NATURAL RELIGION,

AND THE

TRUTH AND CERTAINTY OF THE
CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

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

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:â€œ

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:â€œ

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 most 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 reconcilable 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 whether 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,â€”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 divi natura necesse est

Immortali aivo summa cum pace fruatur.

Semota a nostris rebus, sejunctaque longe.

Nam privata dolore omni, privata periculis,

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 all' parechei; h'aste 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.â€”Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. 2.

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

[103] Eisi gar tines hi nomizousin heinai ta theia, kai toiauta o logos auta exephÄ“nen, agatha, kai dunamin echonta tÄ“n akrotatÄ“n, kai gnÄ“sin tÄ“n teleiotatÄ“n, tÄ“n mentoi anthropinÄ“n kataphronein, hÄ“s mikrÄ“n kai heutelÄ“n ontÄ“n, kai anaxiÄ“n tÄ“s heautÄ“n epimeleias.â€”Simplic. in Epictet.

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

[105] All' ouden tachġ“½ anisÄ“s eiÄ“ chalepon endeixasthai toutoge, hÄ“s epimeleis smikrÄ“n eisi theoi, ouk Ä“pion Ä“ tÄ“n megethei diapherontÄ“nâ€”Plato de Leg. lib.10. Ei de tou holou kosmou ho theos hou pimeleitai anankÄ“ kai tÄ“n merÄ“n auto8u pronoein; hÄ“sper kai hai technai poiouσι. Kai gar iatros tou holou sÄ“matos epimelÄ“thÄ“nai prothemenos, ouk an amelÄ“seie tÄ“n merÄ“n; oude stratÄ“gos oueu' oikonomos, Ä“ politikos anÄ“r tÄ“n gar merÄ“n ameloumenÄ“n, anankÄ“ cheironÄ“s to holon diatithesthai.â€”Simplic. in Epictet.

[106] Quasi ego id curem, quid ille aiat aut neget: Illud quÄ“ro, quid et consentaneum sit dicere, qui, &c.â€”Cic. de Finib. lib. 2.

[107] Job xxxv. 11.

[108] Phil. iv. 8.

[109] Kath' hÄ“mas gar hÄ“ autÄ“ aretÄ“ esti tÄ“n makariÄ“n pantÄ“n; hÄ“ste kai hÄ“ autÄ“ aretÄ“ anthrÄ“pou kai Theou.â€”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.â€”Lactan, lib.7.

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
menâ€™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 intensesness 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;â€”it is attempting to destroy that order by which the universe subsists;â€”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;â€”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,â€”to take away the demonstrable relations and properties of mathematical figures,â€”to make light darkness, and darkness light,â€”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;â€”his power and justice demand our fear;â€”his mercy and placableness encourage our hope;â€”his goodness necessarily excites our love;â€”his veracity and unchangeableness secure our trust in him;â€”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;â€”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;â€”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 Godâ€™s creation, to make themselves the alone unreasonable and disorderly part of the universe!â€”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 Godâ€™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 nearest 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 necessary 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 describing,) 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 written, 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 reason of things, did not then begin to be a law, when it was first written 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 wholesome, 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 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 than 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;)â€”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 manâ€™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 manâ€™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 Godâ€™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

menâ€™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 otherâ€™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 menâ€™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's 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. Â§ 4.

[112] Ex his sequitur injuriam nemini fieri posse, nisi ei quocum initur
pactum. De Cive, c. 3. Â§ 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.â€”Cumberl. de Leg. Nat. page 194.

[114] Nam stoliditas inveniri quã! inanior potest, quam mala esse nulla
contendere, et tanquam malos perdere et condemnare peccantes?â€”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.â€”Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.

[116] Ta de kala kai ta dikaia. peri Å¼n hã” politikã” skopeitai,
tosautã”n
echei diaphoran kai planã”n Å¼ste dokein nomã¼ einai, phusei de
mã”.â€”Aristot.
Ethic. lib. 1. cap. 1.

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

[118] Quis est enim, aut quis unquam fuit, aut avaritia tam ardente aut
tam
effrã;natis 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?â€”Cic. de Finib. lib. 3.

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

[120] Joh. vii. 46.

[121] Joh. xviii. 88.

[122] Ou gar hoson ousias aretÄ`s apesphalmenoi tunchanousin hoi polloi, tosouton kai tou krinein tous allous hoi ponÄ`roi kai achrÄ`stos theinn de ti

kai eustochon esti kai toisi kakois hÄ`ste pampolloi kai tÄ`n sphodra kakÄ`n, eu tois logois kai dexais diarountai tous ameinous tÄ`n anthrÄ`pÄ`n kai tous cheirous.â€”Plato de Leg. lib. 12.

[123] Quis Pullum Numitorem, Fregellanum Proditorem, quanquam reipublicÄ` nostrÄ` profuit, non odit?â€”Cic. de Finib. lib 5.

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

[125] Ei gar noun eichomen, allo ti edei hÄ`mas poiein kai koinÄ` kai idia, Ä` umnein to theion, kai euphÄ`mein, kai epexerchesthai tas chari9tas; Ouk edei kai skaptontas kai aountas kai esthiontas adein ton humnon ton eis ton theon; Megas ho theos, hoti hÄ`min pareschen organa tauta di hÄ`n tÄ`n gÄ`n ergasometha; Megas ho theos, hoti cheiras dedÄ`ken, &c.â€”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 cÄ`pisset; sui nemo ipse tam similis esset, quam omnes sunt omnium;â€”et coleretur jus Ä`que ab omnibus.â€”Cic. de Leg. lib. 1.

[127] Hoc exigit ipsa naturÄ` ratio, quÄ` est lex divina et humana, cui parere qui velit, nunquam committet ut alienum appetat, et id, quod alteri detraxerit, sibi assumat.â€”Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.

[128] Deinous gar an pareichen erÄ`tas, eiti toiouton eautÄ`s enarges eidÄ`lon pareicheto, &c.â€”Plat. in PhÄ`d. QuÄ` si oculis cerneretur, mirabiles amores,

ut ait Plato, excitaret sui.â€”Cic. de Offic. lib. 1. Oculorum est in nobis sensus acerrimus, quibus sapientiam non cernimus; quã m illa ardentis amores excitaret sui, si videretur!â€”Id. de fin. 1. 2.

[129] Hautã” men oun hã” dikaiosunã”, aretã” men esti teleia; kai outh' Hesperos outh' Heã”os houtã” thaumaston.â€”Ethic. lib. 5. c. 3.

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

[131] Kai to parapan zã”n, megiston men kakon, ton xumpanta chronon athanaton onta, kai kektã”menon panta ta legomena agatha, plã”n dikaiosunã”s te kai aretã”s apasã”s.â€”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 prã”stat bonum.â€”Cumberland. de Leg. Naturã”, page 10. Pari sane ratione [ac in arithmetiis operationibus] doctrinã” moralis veritas fundatur in immutabili cohã”rentia inter felicitatem summam quam hominum vires assequi valent, et actus benevolentiiã” universalis.â€”Id. ibid. page 23. Eadem est mensura boni malique, quã” mensura est veri falsique in propositionibus pronuntiantibus de efficacia motum ad rerum aliarum conservationem, et corruptionem facientium.â€”Id. page 30.

[133] Angusta admodum est circa nostra tantummodo commoda, lã”titiã” matria; sed eadem erit amplissima, si aliorum omnium felicitas cordi nobis sit. Quippe hã”c ad illam eandem habebit proportionem, quam habet immensa beatitudo Dei, totiusque humani generis, ad curtam illam fictã” felicitatis supellectilem, quam uni homini, eique invidio et malevolo, fortunã” bona possint suppeditare.â€”Id. ibid. page 214.

[134] In omni honesto, nihil est tam illustre, nec quod latius pateat, quam conjunctio inter homines hominum, et quasi quã”dam societas et communicatio utilitatum, et ipsa charitas generis humani; quã” nata a primo satu, quo a procreatoribus nati diliguntur,â€”â€”serpit sensim foras, cognationibus primum,â€”â€”deinde totius complexu gentis humanã”.â€”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.â€”Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

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

[137] Hominem esse quasi partem quandam civitatis et universi generis humani, eumque esse conjunctum cum hominibus humana quadam societate.â€”Cic. Quã'st. Academ. lib. 1.

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

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

[140] Ex quo efficitur, hominem naturã! obedientem, homini nocere non posse.â€”Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.

[141] Oute óïïora antadikein dei, houte kakãs poiein oudena anthrãpãn, oudg'½ an hotioun paschhã"upo autãn.â€”Plato in Critone.

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

[143] En tine phroura esmen hoi anthrãpoi, kai ou deidã" heauton ek tautã"s luein, oud' apodidaskein.â€”â€”Theous heinai hã"mãn tous epimeloumenous. kai hã"mas tous anthrãpous en tou ktã"matãn tois theois einai.â€”â€”Oukoun kai su an, tou sautou ktã"matãn eiti auto heauto apoktinnuoi, mã" sã"mã"nantos sou hoti boulei auto tethnanai, chalepanoi9s an autã, kai. ei tina echois timãrian, timãroi o en. â€”Plato in Phã'd.

[144] Vetat enim dominans ille in nobis Deus, injussu hinc nos suo demigrare. Cum verã² causam justam Deus ipse dederit, ne ille medius fidius vir sapiens, lã'tus 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.â€”Cic. Tusc. Quã'st. lib. 1.

[145] Illud breve vitã! reliquum nec avide appetendum sensibus, nec sine causa deserendum est; vetatque Pythagoras injussu imperatoris, id est, Dei, de prã'sidio et statione vitã! decedere.â€”Cic. de Senect.

[146] Nisi enim Deus is, cujus hoc templum est omne quod conspicias, istis te
corporis custodiis liberaverit; huc tibi aditus patere non
potest.â€”â€”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.â€”Cic. Somn. Scipion.

[147] Ekdexasthe ton theon; hotan ekei nos sã"mã"nã" kai upolusã" umas
tautã"s
tã"s upã"resias tot' hupoluesthe pros auton; epi de tou parintos
anaschesthe
enoikountes tautã"n tã"n chã"ran, eis hã"n ekeinos umas etaxen. Meinate,
mã"
alogistã"s apelthã"te.â€”Arrian, lib. 1.

[148] Hoi men ara nikã"s heneka palã"s kai dromã"n kai tã"n toioutã"n,
etolmã"san
apechesthai.â€”â€”Hoi de hã"meteroi paides, adunatã"sousi karterein, polu
kallionos ena_a nikã"s.â€”Plato de Legib. lib. 8.

[149] Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio naturã| congruens, diffusa in
omnes,
constans, sempiterna, quã| vocet ad officium jubendo; vetando, a fraude
deterreat.â€”â€”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.â€”Cic. de Repub. lib. 3. fragment.

â€”â€”agrapta kasphalã" theã"n Nomima;â€”â€”
Ou gar ti nunge kachthes, all' aei pote
Zã" tauta, koï"dei; oiden ex hotou' phanã".
Toutã"n egã" ouk hemellon, andros oudenos
Phronã"ma deisas', en theoi si tã"n dikã"n
Dusein.â€”

Sophocl. Antigone. 464.

[150] Lex quã| seculis omnibus ante nata est, quam scripta lex ulla, aut
quam
omnino civitas constituta.â€”Cic. de Leg. lib. 1.

[151] Legem neque hominum ingeniis excogitatam, neque scitum aliquod esse
populorum, sed ã|ternum quiddam, quod universum mundum regat.â€”Cic. de
Leg.
lib. 2.

[152] Nec si, regnante Tarquinio, nulla erat Romã| scripta lex de stupris,
idcirco non contra illam legem sempiternam Sextus Tarquinius vim Lucretiã|
attulit. Erat enim ratio profecta a rerum natura, et ad recte faciendum
impellens, et a delicto avocans; quã| non tum denique incipit lex esse,
cum
scripta est, sed tum cum orta esset; orta autem simul est cum mente
divina.â€”Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.

[153] In iudicio de bonitate harum rerum, quæque omnes ubique conveniunt, 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 hæc leges justæ haberentur? — Cic. de Leg. lib. 1.

[159] Quod si populorum jussis, si principum decretis, si sententiis iudicum, 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 sanciant ut quæ mala pernicioseque sunt, habeantur pro bonis ac salutaribus, aut cur, cum jus ex injuriæ 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 horámenon, hou dioti horámenon ge esti, dia toupo horatai; alla tounantion, dioti horatai, apo touto hurámenon. [Note, "These words are by Ficinus ridiculously translated videtur and visum est.] Oukoun kai to hosion, dioti hosion esti, phileitai hupo tån theån; all' ouk hoti phileitas, dia touto hosion esti. Plato in Euthyphr.

[163] Kath' hãmas gar hã autã aretã esti tån makariån pantån; hãste kai hã autã aretã anthrãpou kai Theou. Origen. Advers. Celsum. lib. 4.

[164] Dictamina divini intellectus sanciantur 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 conquiri, 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. Contrã autem, Hobbiana resolutio dominii divini in potentiam ejus irresistibilem adeo apertã 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 patrocinareretur.â€"Id. page 344. Nos e contrario, fontem indicavimus,
e
quo demonstrari potest, justitiam universalem, omnemque adeo virtutem
moralem, quã| in rectore requiritur, in Deo prã| cã|teris refulgere, eadem
planã" methodo, qua homines ad eas excolendas obligari ostendemus.â€"Id.
page347.

[165] Dignã| itaque sunt, quã| propter intrinsecam sibi perfectionem
appetantur, etiam si nulla esset naturã| lex, quã| illas
imperaret.â€"Cumberland
de Leg. Nat. page 281.

[166]

Anã"r dikaios estin, ouch ho mã" adikã"n,
All' hostis adikein hounamenos mã" bouletai.
Oud' hos ta aikra lambanein apescheto,
All' hos ta megala karterei mã" lambanã"n,
Hechein dunamenos, kai kratein azã"miã"s.
Oud' hos ge tauta p8anta diatã"rei monon,
All' hostis adolon gnã"sian t' echã"n phusin,
Î"Einai dikaios, k' ou dokein heinai thelei.
Philemonis Fragmenta.

[167] Honestum intelligimus, quod tale est, ut, detractã¢ omni utilitate,
sine ullis prã|miis fructibusque, per seipsum possit jure laudari.â€"Cic
de
Finib. lib. 2. Atque hã|c omnia propter se solum, ut nihil adjungatur
emolumentum, petenda sunt.â€"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.â€"Id. de Finib. lib. 3.

[168] Jus et omne honestum, sua sponte est expetendum. Etenim omnes viri
boni, ipsam ã|quitatem et jus ipsum amant.â€"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.â€"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.â€"Id. de Offic. lib. 3. Si nemo sciturus, nemo ne suspicaturus
quidem sit, quum aliquid divitiarum, potentiã|, dominationis, libidinis
causa
feceris; si id Diis hominibusque futurum sit semper ignotum, sisne
facturus?â€"Id. ibid.

[170] Itaque si vir bonus habeat hanc vim, ut, si digitis concrepauerit,
possit in locupletum testamenta nomen ejus irrepere, hac vi non utatur, ne
si exploratum quidem habeat id omnino neminem unquam
suspicaturum.â€"â€"Hoc qui
admiratur, is se, quis sit vir bonus, nescire fatetur.â€"Idem. de Offic.
lib.
3.

[171] Kan ei mā" dunaton eiĀ" tauta lanthanein kai theous kai anthrĀpous, homĀs doteon heinai, tou loeou heneka hina autĀ" dikaiosunĀ" pros adikian autĀ"n kriteiĀ".â€"Plato de Republ. lib. 10.

[172] Est autem unus dies bene et ex preceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati anteponendus.â€"Cic. Tusc. QuĀst. 1. 5.

[173] QuĀro si duo sint, quorum alter optimus vir, Āquissimus, 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; postremĀ² 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 copiĀ conferantur, vir denique optimus omnium Āstimatione, et dignissimus omni fortuna judicetur; Quis tandem erit tam demens qui dubitet utrum se esse malit?â€"Idem. de Republ. lib. 3, fragment.

[174] CĀ¹ m omnis ratio veri et boni ab ejus OmnipotentiaĀ dependeat.â€"Cartes. Epist. 6, partis secundĀ.

[175] Ab Āqualitate naturĀ oritur unicuique ea, quĀ cupit, acquirendi spes.â€"Leviath. c. 13.

[176] Natura dedit unicuique jus in omnia. Hoc est; in statu merĀ naturali, sive antequam homines ullis pactis sese invicem obstrinxissent, unicuique licebat facere quĀcunque et in quoscunque libebat; et possidere, uti, frui omnibus, quĀ volebat et poterat.â€"De Cive, c. 1. Ā§ 10.

[177] Si impossibile sit singulis, omnes et omnia sibimet subjicere; ratio quĀ hunc finem proponit singulis, qui uni tantum contingere potest, sĀpius quam millies proponeret impossibile, et semel tantum possibile.â€"Cumberl. de Leg. Nat. page 217.

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

[179] Omnium adversus omnes, perpetuĀ suspiciones,â€"â€"Bellum omnium in omnes.â€"De Cive, c. 1. Ā§ 12.

[180] Spes unicuique securitatis conservationisque suĀ in eo sita est, ut viribus artibusque propriis proximum suum, vel palam vel ex insidiis, prĀ occupare possit.â€"Ibid. c. 5. Ā§ 1.

[181] Securitatis viam meliorem habet nemo anticipatione.â€”Leviath.c. 13.

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

[183] Unicuique licebat facere quã|cunque libebat.â€”De Cive, c. 1. Â§ 10.

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

[185] Ex his sequitur, injuriam nemini fieri posse, nisi ei quocum initur pactum.â€”â€”Siquis alicui noceat, quocum nihil pactus est, damnum ei infert, non injuriam.â€”â€”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.â€”De Cive, c. 3, Â§ 4.

[186] Prima et fundamentalis lex naturã| est, quã|rendam esse pacem, ubi haberi potest, &c.â€”De Cive, c. 2. Â§ 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 prã|ceperit, id pro bono, quod vetuerit, id pro malo habendum esse.â€”De Cive, c. 12. Â§ 1. Quod actio justa vel injusta sit, a jure imperantis provenit. Reges legitimi quã| imperant, justa faciunt imperando; quã| vetant, vetando faciunt injusta.â€”De Cive, c. 12. Â§ 1. [In which section it is worth observing, how he ridiculously interprets those words of Solomon, â€œDabis servo tuo cor docile ut possit discernere inter bonum et malum,â€” 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.â€”De Cive, c. 14. sec. 10.

[191] Sequitur ergo, legibus illis, non occides, non mã|chabere, non furabere, parentes honorabis; nihil aliud prã|cepisse Christum, quam ut cives et subditi suis principibus et summis imperatoribus in quã|stionibus omnibus circa meum, tuum, suum, alienum, absolute obedirent.â€”De Cive, c. 17. Â§ 10.

[192] Si quã|ratur an obediendum civitati sit, si imperetur Deum colere sub imagine, coram iis quid id fieri honorificum esse putant, certã” faciendum est.â€”De Cive, cap. 15. Â§ 18.

[193] Universaliter et in omnibus obedire obligamur.â€”De Cive, c. 14. Â§ 10.

Doctrina alia, quã| obedientiã| civili repugnat, est, quicquid faciat civis

quicumque contra conscientiam suam, peccatum esse.â€“Leviath. c. 29.

Opinio

eorum qui docent, peccare subditos, quoties mandata principum suorum, quã| sibi injusta videntur esse, exsequuntur; et erronea est, et inter eas numeranda, quã| obedientiã| civili adversantur.â€“De Cive, c. 12, sec. 2.

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

[195] Quã| si tanta potentia est stultorum sententiis atque jussis, ut eorum

suffragiis rerum natura vertatur cur non sanciant, ut quã| mala perniciosaque

sunt, habeantur pro bonis ac salutaribus?â€“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 honorificã| de Deo sentiendum sit neque an sit amandus,

timendus, colendus, dubitari potest. Sunt enim hã|c religionum per omnes gentes communia.â€“De Homine, cap. 14.

[200] Si is qui summum habet imperium, seipsum, imperantem dico, interficere

alicui imperet, non tenetur. Neque parentem, &c. cã¹ m filius mori quam vivere infamis atque exosus malit. Et alii casus sunt, cum mandata facta inhonesta sunt, &c.â€“De Cive, c. 6. sec. 13.

[201] Lex naturalis est pactis standum esse, sive fidem observandam esse.â€“De

Cive, c. 3. sec. 1.

[202] Lex naturalis omnes leges civiles jubet observari.â€“Ibid. c.14. sec.

10.

[203] Legem civilem, quã| non sit lata in contumeliam Dei (cujus respectu ipsã| civitates non sunt sui juris, nec dicuntur leges ferre, &c.)â€“De Cive,

c. 14. sec. 10. Pacti violatio, &c.â€“See de Cive, c. 3. sec 3.

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

[205] Est similitudo quã|dam 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 prã| 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.â€”Est itaque injuria, absurditas, quãdam in
conversatione, sicut absurditas, injuria quãdam est in disputatione.â€”De
Cive, c. 3. sec. 3.

[206] Ex his sequitur, injuriam nemini fieri posse, nisi ei quocum initur
pactum.â€”De Cive, c. 3. sec. 4. [Which whole section highly deserves to
be
read and well considered, as containing the secret of Mr Hobbesâ€™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, quã; legum naturalium vim tollunt
aut
minuunt; quoniam his fundatur et regiminis civilis auctoritas ac
securitas,
et legum a civitatibus latarum vigor.â€”Cumberland de Leg. Nat. page 303.
Etiam extra regimen civile, a malis omnigenis simul consideratis tutior
erit, qui actibus externis leges naturã; constantissime observabet; quam
qui,
juxta doctrinam Hobbianam, vi aut insidiis alios omnes conando
prã; occupare,
securitatem sibi quã; siverit.â€”Id. p. 304.

[208] Voluntas lâ;dendi omnibus inest in statu naturã;.â€”De Cive, c. 1.
sec. 4.

[209] In statu naturali, unicuique licebat facere quã; cunque et in
quoscunque
libebat.â€”Ibid. sec. 10.

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

[211] Tade de dikaia oud' heinai top9arapan phusei;â€”â€”gignomena
techã"ã" kai
toi` nomois, all' ou dã" tinã" phusei.â€”â€”Phaskontã"n heinai to
dikaiotaton, ho,
ti tis an nika biazomenos. aben aseba te kai staseis; hosã"n lâ"bã"n
anbrã"pã"n
neain domosia polesi te kai idiois oikois.â€”Plato de Leg. lib. 10.

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

[213] Homines inter se de honoribus et dignitatibus perpetuo contendunt,
sed
animalia illa [apes et formicã;] non item. Itaque inter homines invidia,

odium, bellum, &c.â€“Leviath. c. 17.

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

[215] Animantia quã| rationem non habent, nullum defectum vident vel videre se putant, in administratione suarum rerum publicarum. Sed in multitudine hominum, plurimi sunt qui prã| cã|teris sapere existimantes, conantur res novare; Et diversi novatores innovant diversis modis; id quod est distractio et bellum civile.â€“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.â€“Leviath. c. 17.

[217] Animalia bruta, quamdiu bene sibi est, cã|teris non invident: Homo autem tum maxime molestus est, quando otio opibusque maximã abundat.â€“Ibid.

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

[219] Regni divini naturalis jus derivatur ab eo, quod divinã| potentiã| resistere impossibile est.â€“Leviath. c. 31. In regno naturali, regnandi et puniendi eos qui leges suas violant, jus Deo est a sola potentia irresistibili.â€“De Cive, c. 15. sec. 5. Iis quorum potentiã| resisti non potest, et per consequens Deo omnipotenti, jus dominandi ab ipsa potentia derivatur.â€“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 potentiã| habet.â€“Spinoz. de Monarch. cap. 2. [See also Tractat. Theolog. politic. cap. 16.]

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

[222] See Hobbes, de Cive, c. 3. Â§ 4.

[223] Quod si jus regnandi habeat Deus ab omnipotentia sua, manifestum est obligationem ad prã|standum ipsi obedientiam, incumbere hominibus propter imbecillitatem. [To explain which, he adds in his note,]â€“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.â€“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.â€”Cic de Nat. Deor. lib. 1.

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 him Job 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 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 Go