

A  
DISCOURSE  
Concerning the  
*Being and Attributes of GOD,*  
THE 6. 75  
*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 Preach'd at the Cathedral-Church of *St Paul*, in the Years 1704 and 1705, at the Lecture Founded by the Honourable *ROBERT BOTLE* Esq;

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By *SAMUEL CLARKE*, D. D. Rector of *St James's Westminster*.

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*The Fifth Edition, Corrected.*

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To which are added  
Several LETTERS to Dr *CLARKE* from a Gentleman in *Glocestershire*, relating to the first Volume; with the Drs *ANSWERS*.

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London, Printed by *W. Bitham*; for *JAMES KNAPTON*, at the *Crown* in *St Paul's Church-Yard*. 1719.

A  
DEMONSTRATION

OF THE  
Being and Attributes  
OF

G O D :

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 Pro-  
ved, in Opposition to *Necessity and Fate.*

Being the Substance of Eight *SERMONS*  
Preach'd at the Cathedral-Church of *St Paul,*  
in the Year 1704, at the Lecture Founded by  
the Honourable *ROBERT BOYLE* Esq;

---

By *SAMUEL CLARKE,* D. D. Rector  
of *St James's Westminster.*

---

*The Fifth Edition, Corrected.*

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Rom. 1. 20 *For the Invisible things of Him from the Crea-  
tion of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the  
things that are made; even his Eternal Power and God-  
head: So that they are without excuse,*

---

London; Printed by *W. Bohn,* for *JAMES KNAPTON,*  
at the *Crown* in *St Paul's Church Yard,* 1719.

---

T O T H E

Most Reverend Father in God

**T H O M A S**

Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*,  
and Primate of all *England* :

Sir *HENRY ASHURST*,  
Baronet ;

Sir *JOHN ROTHERAM*,  
Knight, Serjeant at Law ;

*JOHN EVELIN*, Esquire ;

Trustees appointed by the Ho-  
nourable *ROBERT BOYLE*,  
Esquire.

This Discourse is humbly Dedi-  
cated.

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T H E

P R E F A C E.

**T**Here 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 my self 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

A 4 evidently



## The Preface.

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 Hypothesis, 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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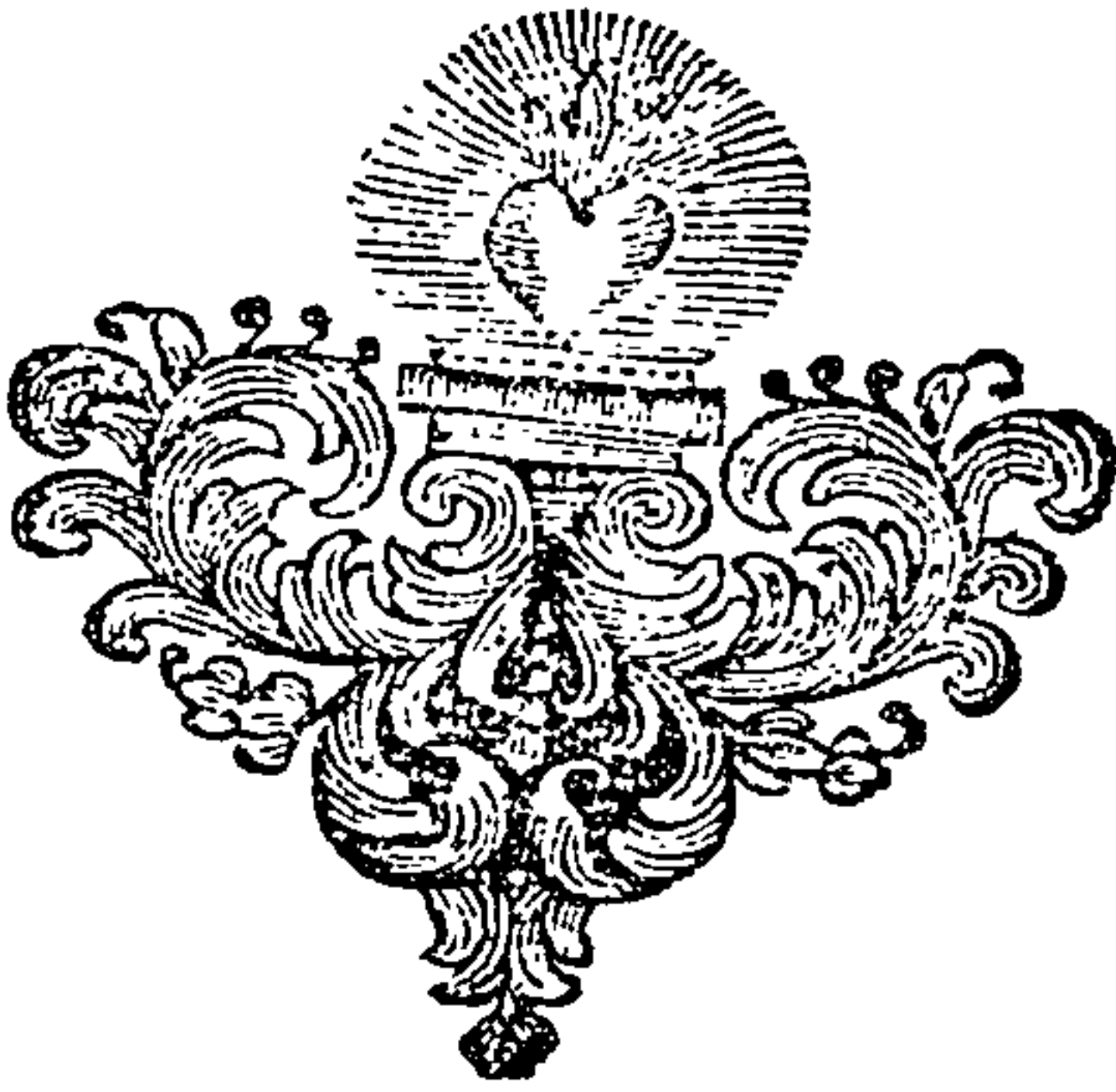
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A  
 DEMONSTRATION  
 OF THE  
 Being and Attributes  
 OF  
 GOD:

More particularly in Answer to  
 Mr *Hobbs*, *Spinoza*, and their Fol-  
 lowers.



ALL those who either are, or pre-<sup>The Intro-</sup>  
 tend to be *Atheists*; who either <sup>duction,</sup>  
 disbelieve the Being of God, or  
 would be thought to do so; or,  
 which is all one, who deny the  
 Principal Attributes of the Di-  
 vine Nature, and suppose God  
 to be an Unintelligent Being, which acts merely  
 by Necessity; that is, which, in any tolerable  
 B Propriety

## *A Demonstration of the*

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.

*Atheism arises from stupid Ignorance:*     Either, *First*, Because being extremely ignorant 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 Superiour to that of Beasts.

*Or from gross Corruption of Manners:*     Or, *Secondly*, Because being totally debauched and corrupted in their *Practise*, 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 enquiring 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

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 my self. 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. 'Tis 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 it cannot be proved to be true, yet at least 'tis a thing very desirable, and which any wise Man would wish to be true, for the great Benefit and Happiness of Men; that

*The Being of God very desirable.*

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 'tis manifestly for the Interest of Humane 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 'tis as comfortable and desirable to live in such an uncertain State of things,

and \* so continually liable to Ruin, 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 *Faults* and Inequality which they think they discover

\* *Maria ac Terras Cælumq;  
Una des dabit exitio, mul-  
ticipes per annos  
Sustentata ruet moles & ma-  
culosa Mundi.*

————— *Dictis dabit ipsa  
nitem res  
Fulfran, & graviter terra-  
rum incibus orbis  
Omnia conquassari in parvo  
tempore cernes.*

*I. cret. Lib. 5.*



# Being and Attributes of God.

discover in the Management of the *Moral* World; this is a plain Confession, that 'tis 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 Original 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 Mens being under his peculiar Conduct, Protection and Favour. Man of himself is infinitely insufficient for his own Happiness: \* *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 that he hopes for: He is apt to grieve for what he cannot help, and eagerly to desire what he is never likely to obtain, &c.* Under which evil Circumstances 'tis manifest there can be no sufficient Support, but in the

\* Arch-Bp. Tillotson's Sermon on Job 28. 13.



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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 were 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 'tis 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.

*Sc: Erg at  
Relig: 27.  
inexcusable*

*Secondly*, All such Persons as I am speaking of, 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 de-  
ride

ride at a venture 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!

*Thirdly*, Since the Persons I am discoursing to, cannot but own, that the Supposition of the Being of God, is in it self 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.

*Virtue and good Manners absolutely necessary.*

Thus 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,

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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 uncontestable 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 my self 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 intermix'd 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



## Being and Attributes of God.



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*.

I. First then, it is Absolutely and Undeniably certain, that *Something has Existed from all Eternity*. This is so evident and Undeniable a Proposition, that no Atheist in any Age has ever presumed to assert the contrary; and therefore there is little need of being particular in the proof of it. For since Something now Is; 'tis manifest that Something always Was: Otherwise the Things that Now Are, must have risen out of Nothing, absolutely and without Cause: Which is a plain Contradiction in Terms. For, to say a Thing is produced, and yet there is no Cause at all of that Production, is to say that Something is *Effected*, when it is *Effected by Nothing*; that is, at the same time when it is *not Effected at all*. Whatever Exists, has a Cause of its Existence, either in the Necessity of its

*Something must have Existed from Eternity.*



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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, are to be regarded, because equal in all Suppositions.*

The use I would make of this Observation, is This. That since all Questions concerning the Nature and Perfections of God, or concerning any Thing to which the Idea of Eternity or Infinity is joined; tho' we can indeed Demonstrate certain Propositions to be true, yet 'tis impossible for us to comprehend or frame any adæquate 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 Objections on the other side, which for want of adæquate Ideas of the *Manner of the Existence of the Things demonstrated*, are not easy

easy

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 too 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 Objections raised from our want of having adequate Ideas of the Things themselves; this ought not to be esteemed a real Difficulty. 'Tis directly and clearly Demonstrable, 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 adæquate Idea of Eternity; ought to be looked upon as of no real Solidity. Thus in other the like Instances: 'Tis 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 *Infinities* 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



ought to be esteemed vain and of no force. Again, 'tis in like manner Demonstrable, that Quantity is infinitely Divisible: All the Objections therefore raised, by supposing the *Sums total of all Infinites* 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 look'd 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 infinite Lines be *equal in length* or not, that is, whether they *End* together, when neither of them have *any End at all*.

*There must have existed from Eternity One Independent Being.*

II. *There has Existed from Eternity † Some One Unchangeable and Independent Being.* For since Something must needs have been from Eternity; as has

† 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*.

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 receiv'd 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 tho' all Atheism must in its Account of most things (as shall be shewn hereafter) terminate in it,

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; 'tis 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 'tis 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, 'tis manifest *the whole* cannot be necessary; Absolute Necessity of Existence, not being an outward *relative*, and accidental Determination; 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 *at all* of its Existence, neither *within itself* nor *from without*: that is, 'tis an express Contradiction and Impossibility; 'tis a supposing *Something* to be *caused*, (because it's granted in every one of its Stages of Succession, not to be necessarily and from itself;) and yet that in  
the



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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, 'tis 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.

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;

ror 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.

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

*The one Independent Being must be necessarily Existing.*

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deed in Time, to the Existence of the Being it self; 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 it self, 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 it self upon us, whether we will or no, even when we are indeavouring to suppose that no such Being Exists. For Example: When we are indeavouring to suppose that there is *no Being* in the Universe that exists Necessarily; we always find in our Minds, (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 are necessarily inherent, is a Contradiction in the very Terms. For 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 Attributes exist) removed out of the Universe; may, if he please, as easily remove the Relation of Equality between twice two and four.

From hence it follows,

1<sup>st</sup>. That *the only true Idea of a Self-existent or Necessarily Existing Being, is the Idea of a Being, the Supposition of whose Not-existing is an express*

page 12,  
 &c.

*The true  
 notion of  
 Self-Exi-  
 stence.*



*express Contradiction.* For since 'tis absolute-<sup>page 12 &</sup>  
ly impossible but there must be Somewhat <sup>15.</sup>  
Self-existent; that is, which exists by the  
Necessity of its own Nature; 'tis plain that  
*That necessity* cannot be a Necessity conse-  
quent upon any foregoing Supposition, (be-  
cause Nothing can be Antecedent to that  
which is Self-Existent, no not its own *Will*,  
so as to be the Cause of its own Existence,)  
but it must be a Necessity *absolutely* such in  
its own Nature. Now a Necessity, not *rela-*  
*tively* or *consequently*, but *absolutely* such in  
its own Nature; is nothing else but its be-  
ing a plain Impossibility or Implying a Con-  
tradiction to suppose the contrary. For in-  
stance; 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 Sig-  
nification 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 Contra-  
diction: I answer, 'tis the First and Sim-  
plest Idea we can possibly frame, or rather  
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 Uni-  
C verse



verse, supposes likewise a Contradiction, is evident from hence; (besides that these two Attributes do necessarily *follow* from Self-original 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 *Nothing*; that is, he will imagine Eternity and Imminity removed out of the Universe, and yet that at the same time they still continue there.

The Truth  
of the Car-  
tesians.

This Argument the *Cartesians*, who supposed the Idea of *Imminity* 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,

\* *Est implicans contradic-  
tionem, ut Mundus sit finitus:*  
i. e. It implies a Con-  
tradiction, for the World to  
be finite. *Cartes. Epist. 69,  
Prima Pars.*

And his Follower Mr *Regis*.  
*Quæstiones* (saith he *que  
je propose mal Sc. 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*. *Mat-  
ter*.) comes from Extension  
itself, as its Cause; For,  
what hinders me from be-  
lieving that if this Property  
comes not from my self, yet  
at least it may come from  
some Spirit [or Being] Su-  
perior to me, which pro-  
duces in me the Idea of Ex-  
tension, though Extension  
does not actually exist? Yet  
when

of asserting *Matter*\* to be a Ne-  
cessary Being; than been a-  
ble to remove out of their  
Minds the Idea of *Imminity*,  
as Existing Necessarily and  
inseparably from Eternity.  
Which Absurdity and inextric-  
able Perplexity of theirs, in  
respect of the Idea of *Immin-  
ity*, shows that they found  
That indeed to be Necessary  
and impossible to be removed;  
but, in respect of *Matter*, 'twas  
only a perverse applying an  
Idea to an Object whereto it no  
ways belongs. For, that it is in-  
deed absolutely impossible and  
contradictory to suppose *Mat-  
ter* necessarily-existing, shall  
be demonstrated presently.

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 my self, when I say that the Idea I have of Extension, supposes an Object actually existing, for it seems that I have Ideas, which do not suppose any Object: I have, for Example, the Idea of an Enchanted Castle; though no such thing really Exists. Yet when I consider the Difficulty still more attentively; I find there is this difference between the Idea of Extension, and that of an Enchanted Castle, that the first being natural, that is, independent on my Will, supposes an Object which is necessarily such as it represents; whereas the other being artificial, supposes indeed an Object, but it is not necessary that That Object be absolutely such as the Idea represents, because my Will can add to that Object, or diminish from it, as it pleases; as I have before said, and as shall be proved hereafter, when I come to treat of the Origin of Ideas. *Regis Metaphys. Lib. I. Par. 1. Cap. 3.*

2dly. 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 Original 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. 'Tis possible indeed a Man may in some Sense be *ignorant* of this first and plain Truth, by being utterly stupid, and

*Nothing so certain, as the Existence of a Supreme Independent Cause.*



## *A Demonstration of the*

not thinking at all: (For though it is absolutely impossible for him to imagine the contrary, yet he may possibly neglect to conceive this: Tho' 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.

*of the Idea  
of God, in  
cluding  
Self-Exi-  
stence.*

2dly. Hence we may observe, That *Our first Certainty of the Existence of God, does not arise 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 from hence, that 'tis demonstrable both Negatively, that neither can All Things 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.* I do not here say positively, that the Argument drawn from our including Self-Existence in the *Idea* of God, or our comprehending it in the *Definition* or *Notion* we frame of him; is wholly inconclusive and ineffectual, to prove his actual Existence. But that it is far from being a Clear and Obvious Demonstration, fitted to convince and put the Atheist to Silence; appears from the endless Disputes maintained by learned Men concerning it, without being able fully to understand or satisfy each other on either side of the Question.

tion. The Obscurity and *Defect* of that Argument, seems to lie in this; that it extends 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 *Nominal Idea, Definition, or Notion* which we frame *in our own Mind*, to the *Real Idea* of a 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 is properly 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 easy to be dispelled. 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 it self; by showing the manifest Contradiction contained in the contrary Supposition,



*A Demonstration of the*p. g. 12,  
Sec.

p. g. 15.

(as I have before done;) and at the same time the absolute Impossibility of destroying or removing some Ideas, as of Eternity, and Immenity, which therefore must needs be the 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 'tis strictly demonstrable, that there is Something in the Universe, actually existing without us, the Supposition of whose Not-existing plainly implies a Contradiction.

*That the  
Material  
World can-  
not possibly  
be necessary-  
Existence  
being.*

page 15.

*athly.* From hence it follows, that *The material 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 it self: 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

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 Idea's; 'tis 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, that the World, and all Things that are therein, exist by a Necessity of Nature; he must affirm it to be a Con-  
tradiction to suppose that any Part of the

*The Form of the World is not necessary.*

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.

See his  
Motion.

If 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 Antient or Modern, have presumed directly to suppose it.

Mr Toland, Lett. III.

One late \* Author indeed has ventur'd to assert, and pretended to prove, that *Motion*, (that is, the *Conatus* to *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



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. But to proceed.

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, tho' at the same time some other Matter actually be at Rest.

If he only affirms bare *Matter* to be Necessary: Then, besides the extreme Folly of his attributing *Motion* and the *Form* of the World to *Chance*; (which Opinion I think all Atheists have now given up; and therefore I shall not think my self 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 it self, that *Matter* is *not a Necessary Being*. For Instance, thus. If *Matter* be supposed to exist Necessarily; then in that Necessary Existence, there is either included the Power of *Gravitation*, or not: If not, then in a World *merely Material*, and in which *no Intelligent Being* presides, there *never could have been any Motion*; because Motion, as has been already shown, and is now granted in the Question, is not necessary of *it self*: But if the Power of *Gravitation* be included in the pretended Necessary Existence of Matter; then, it following necessarily that there must be

Nor the bare Matter.

pag. 24.

be



be a *Vacuum*, (as the incomparable Sir *Isaac Newton* has abundantly demonstrated, that there must, if Gravitation be an Universal Quality or Affection of Matter;) it follows likewise, that *Matter* is not a Necessary Being: For if a *Vacuum* actually be, then it is plainly more than possible for Matter *not to Be*. If an Atheist will yet Assert, that Matter may be necessary, though not necessary to be *every where*: I answer; this is an express Contradiction. For *absolute Necessity*, is absolute Necessity *every where alike*: And if it be no Impossibility for Matter to be absent from *one Place*, 'tis no Impossibility (absolutely in the Nature of the Thing; For no Relative or Consequential Necessity, can have any Room in this Argument:) 'Tis 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's  
Opinion  
confuted.

*Spinoza*, the most celebrated Patron of Atheism in our Time, who taught that

\* Una substantia non potest produci ab alia substantia. *Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 6.*

Omnis substantia est necessario infinita. *Ibid. Prop. 8.*

Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet existere. *Ibid. Prop. 7.*

† Præter Deum nulla dari neq; concipi potest substantia. *Ibid. Prop. 14.*

\* there is no Difference of Substances, 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: 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 at first

first plainly asserted, that \*  
 All Substance is Necessarily-  
 existing; he would afterward  
 seem to explain it away, by  
 asserting, that the Reason why every thing  
 † exists necessarily 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 Necessa-  
 rily such as they are, because  
 Infinite Wisdom and Goodness could not pos-  
 sibly 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 express-  
 ly denies. 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 up-  
 on *himself* at least, and manifesting *himself* in  
 different manners, according to his own Will:  
 which

\* Ad naturam substantiæ  
 pertinet existere. Prop. 7.

† Res nullo alio modo,  
 neq; alio ordine a Deo pro-  
 duci potuerunt, quam pro-  
 ductæ sunt. Prop. 3.

Ex Necessitate Divinæ Na-  
 turæ, infinita infinitis mo-  
 dis (hec est, omnia quæ sub  
 intellectum infinitum cade-  
 re possunt) sequi debent.  
 Prop. 16.

\* *Locis su-  
 pra citatis.*

† Deum non operari ex libertate voluntatis. *Prop. 32. Corol. 1. & Scholium ad Prop. 17.*

means any thing at all consistent with himself, can be no

\* Una substantia non potest produci ab alia substantia. *Prop. 6.*

† Res nullo alio modo neq; alio ordine a Deo produci poterunt, quam productæ sunt. *Prop. 33.*

is ; every thing

|| Præter Deum nulla dari, neq; concipi potest substantia. *Prop. 14.*

\* Deum non operari ex Libertate voluntatis. *Prop. 32. Coroll. 1.*

† Nullo alio modo, neq; Ordine, &c.

which † *Spinoza* expressly denies. But his true Meaning therefore, however darkly and ambiguously he sometimes speaks, must be this ; and if he

other than this : That, since it is absolutely \* impossible for any thing to be created or produced by another ; and † 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 of the Divine Substance, not as a Modification caused in it by any \* Will or Good-Pleasure or Wisdom in the whole, but as of Absolute Necessity in it self, with respect to the † manner 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 'tis a Contradiction, (not to the Perfections of God ; For that's mere senseless Cant and Amusement in Him who maintains that there is but One Substance



stance in the Universe; But he must affirm that it is *in it self 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 'tis a Contradiction, to suppose the *Number, or Figure, or Order* of the Principal Parts of the World could possibly have been different from what they now are. He must say Motion is necessarily *of it self*; and consequently that 'tis 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* pag. 12. General Head of this Discourse: 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 it self 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 forementioned 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.

\* Corpus motum, vel quiescens, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alia corpore quod etiam ad motum vel quietem determinatum fuit ab alio, & illud iterum ab alio, & sic in infinitum. *Par. II. Prop. 13. Lemma 3.*

I have in this Attempt to show that *The Material World cannot possibly be the First and Original Being, Uncreated, Independent, and Self-existent;*



*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 thro' an Infinite *Succession* of Time. And this I have done for the two following Reasons.

*Of the O  
mission of  
causing the  
Existence of  
the World.*

1<sup>st</sup>. 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 and 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 Antient Philosophers that held the Eternity of the World, in whose Authority and Reasons our Modern Atheists do so mightily 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

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; 'Tis with the greatest Injustice and Unreasonableness in the World, that our 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 \*Mr. *Blunt* opposes to that of *Moses*;) in delivering his Opinion, speaks indeed like one

\* *Oracles of Reason; Letter to Mr. Gildon, p. 216.*

that



that believed the Material World to be Self-existent; asserting, † that it is utterly incapable either of Generation or Corruption, of Beginning or End; that it is of it self 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 re-

peat them; as when he proves\* 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 'tis impossible for every Thing to arise out of Nothing, or to fall into Nothing; As when he says † that the World must have been Eternal, because 'tis a Contradiction for the Universe to have had a Beginning; since if it had a Beginning, it must have been caused*

† Ἀγέννητον τὸ πᾶν καὶ ἀθάλαστον.

\* Ἀναρχὸν καὶ ἀτελευτήτων. Κόσμος αὐτὸς ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ αἰδίος ὅτι καὶ αὐτοτελής καὶ διαμρῶν ἢ πάντα αἰῶνα.

† Ἀεὶ ὄντι ὁ κόσμος, ἀναρχαῖον καὶ τὰ μέρη αὐτῶ συνυπάρχειν. Λέγω ἢ μέρη, κερκρον, γῆν, &c. Ocell. Lucan. Περὶ τῶ πάντος φύσεως.

\* Τὸ ἀναρχὸν καὶ ἀτελευτητὸν, τῶ σχήματι καὶ τῶ κινήσεως, πῶται διότι ἀγέννητον ὁ κόσμος καὶ ἀφθαρτον. ἢτε γὰρ τῶ σχήματι ἰδέα, κύκλον οὗτον ἢ πανταθεν ἴσος καὶ ὁμοῖος. διὸ ὅτι ἀναρχὸν καὶ ἀτελευτητον. ἢ τε τῶ κινήσεως, &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.*

† Ἀγέννητον τὸ πᾶν. — ἐξ ἧ γὰρ γεγονός, ἐκείνο πρῶτον τῶ πάντος ἔστι. — τὸ γὰρ ἢ πᾶν γενόμενον σὺν πᾶσι γίνεσθαι καὶ τῶτο γὰρ ἢ ἀδύνατον, — Ἐκτὸς γὰρ τῶ Παντός ἔστιν Ocell. Ibid.

by

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 'tis 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*,  
 the necessary Perfections of whose Nature are the Cause † of the Harmony and Beauty of the World, and particularly of Mens having || *Faculties, Organs of Sense, Appetites, &c,* fitted even to *Final Causes*.  
 Διουῆς ἕνεκα δεδωδαι συμβέβηκεν, ἀλλὰ &c. Idem Περὶ τῆς φύσεως.

\* Τὸ ἀεικίνητον, θεῖον μὲν, καὶ λόγον ἔχον καὶ ἔμφορον. Ocell. Luc. de Leg. fragm.

† Συνέχει τὸν κόσμον ἀρμονία. Ταύτης δ' αἰτία ὁ Θεός. Ibid.

|| Τὰς δυνάμεις καὶ τὰ ὄργανα καὶ τὰς ὀρεξείας ὑποθεῖσθαι δεδωμένας ἀνθρώποις, ἕχ &c. Idem Περὶ τῆς φύσεως.

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 every where expressly describes

\* Νοός.  
 † Θεὸν ἀσώματον ἐπιφανε.  
 Diog. in vita Aristot.  
 ἢ τὸ αἰετὸν κινῶν ἀκίνητον. Aristot. Metaph.  
 \* Εἰ μὴ ἔσαι ὄρα τὰ αἰετὰ ἄλλα, ἢ ἔσαι ἀρχὴ καὶ τάξις. ἀλλ' ἀεὶ τ' ἀρχῆς ἀρχὴ. Ibid.

God to be an \* *Intelligent Being*: † *Incorporeal*; || *The First Mover of all Things, Himself Immoveable*; and affirms, that \* *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 intirely *Independent*, *Co-existing* from *Eternity* with *God*, *Independently*, as a *Second Principle*: I have already shewn 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*.

Pag. 25.

*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 *Antient Philosophers*, who in all his *Writings* speaks so excellently and worthily \* as

\* Ὁ τοιοῦτος καὶ πατὴρ τῶ δε τῶ πα. 15.  
 Ὁ γῆν, ἄραρον καὶ Θεός, καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν ἄραρον καὶ τὰ ἐν ἀθε καὶ ὑπὸ γῆς ἀπαντα ἐργασάμεν. De Rerib. Lib 10.

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,

† 116

\* 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 †; but only on 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; || 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.

De mundo, & de his quos in mundo deos a Deo factos scribit Plato, apertissime dicit eos esse cæpisse, & 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.*

|| Καὶ εἰ βέβαι, παραδείγματι σέ τινι τῶν γνωρίμων ξενάγησῶ πρὸς τὸ ζητούμενον· φασὶ γὰρ ὅτι καθάπερ αἴτιον τὸ σῶμα τ' ἐκαστε σκιάς γίνεται ὁμόχρονον ὃ τῷ σώματι ἢ σπιά, καὶ ἔχ. ὁμότιμον. ἔτω δὴ καὶ ὅδε ὁ κόσμος παρακλήθημά ἐστι τῶ Θεῷ αἰτίε ὄντων αὐτῶ τῶ τῶ εἶναι, καὶ συναϊδιός ἐστι τῷ Θεῷ ἐκέτι δὲ καὶ ὁμότιμον. *Zacharie 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, & mundus atq; in illo Dii creati, & semper fuerunt; semper existente qui fecit; & tamen facti sunt. *Augustin. de Civitat. Dei. Lib. 10. Cap. 31.*

\* Πᾶσα ἀνάγκη τὸν κόσμον, εἰκόνα τινὸς εἶναι. Plato in Timæo. Which Words being very imperfect in our Copies of the Original, are thus rendred by Cicero. Si ergo generatus [est mundus;] ad id effectus est, quod ratione sapientiaq; comprehenditur, atq; immutabili æternitate continetur. Ex quo efficitur, ut sit necesse hunc quem cernimus mundum, simulachrum æternum esse alicujus æterni. *Cic. de Univers.*

† Νῦν πρὸς κόσμῳ ἔδ, ἔχ. αἰς χρόνῳ πρῶτον αὐτῶ ὄντα ἀλλ' ὅτι ὁ κόσμος παρὰ τὸν ἐστὶ, φύσει πρῶτον ἐκείνῳ καὶ αἰτίον τῶ. *P. o. tinus.*

Qui autem a Deo quidem factum fatentur, non tamen eum volunt Temporis habere; sed suæ Creationis initium; ut modo quodam vix intelligibili, Semper sit factus. *Augustin. de Civit. Dei. Lib. 11. Cap. 4.*

From all which, it plainly appears how little Reason our Modern Atheists have to boast either of the Authority or Reasons of those Antient 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 it self, Independent or Self-existing; but only that it was an Eternal Effect of an Eternal Cause, which is God; 'tis 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 fain make mere Matter and Necessity the Original and Eternal Cause of all Things.

2<sup>dly</sup>. 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 Subtle (and indeed unintelligible) Distinctions of the Schools; 'tis impossible by this Argument so to disprove the Possibility of the Eternity of the World, but that an Atheist



theist will understand it to prove equally against the Possibility of any Thing's being Eternal; and consequently that it proves nothing at all, but is only a Difficulty arising from our not being able to comprehend adequately the Notion of Eternity. That the Material World is not Self-Existent or Necessarily-Existing, but the Product of some distinct superior Agent, may, (as I have already shown) be strictly demonstrated by bare Reason against the most obstinate Atheist in the World: But the *Time when* the World was Created; or whether its Creation was, properly speaking, *in Time*; is not so easy to demonstrate strictly by bare Reason, (as appears from the Opinions of many of the Antient 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 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, 'tis 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 do to a Superficies, or as Moments do to Time; that is, none at all. So that to argue absolutely against the Possibility

178 22.

\* Cudworth's  
System. p.  
45.

bility 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.

The Ex-  
istence of the  
Self-Exi-  
stent Being,  
Incompre-  
hensible.

Page 14,

15, 16.

Page 22.

IV. *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 shewn) by strict and undeniable Demonstration. Also what it is not; that is, that the *Material* World is not it, as our *Modern* *Atheists* would have it; has been already *Demonstrated*. But what it is, I mean as to its *Substance* and *Essence*; this we are *Ininitely* unable to comprehend. Yet does not this 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*,

tion, 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 intirely 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 it self any adæquate 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 impene-



trable 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.

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

*Of Infinite  
Space.*

1<sup>st</sup>. *The Weakness of such, as have presumed to imagin 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 imagin 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 intirely 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 cer-

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 an abstract Idea of Immensity or Infinity; even as infinite Duration is of 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 Attributes 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 our selves in like manner deceived.

2dly. From hence appears, 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; least they should seem ignorant of any thing, they give us Terms of Art, and Words of Amusement; mere empty Sounds, which under pretense 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.

*The Vanity of the Schoolmen.*

V. *Though the Substance or Essence of the Self-Existent Being, is it self 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

*That the Self-existent Being may be Eternal.*

## A Demonstration of the

*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 shewn) to Exist by an Absolute Necessity in the Nature of the Thing it self. 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 it self. 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 to the manner of this Eternal Existence, 'tis 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

*Of the Manner of our Conceiving the Eternity of God.*



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 intirely 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 that 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 vita & tota simul & perfecta Possessio*: The entire and perfect Possession of an endless Life.

Others 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 School-men have indeed generally chosen to defend it; so on the other

With respect to Succession.

hand.

\* *Crucem ingenio figere ut rem capiat fugientem Captum. — Tam fieri non potest, ut instans [Temporis] coexistat rei successivæ, quam impossibile est punctum coexistere. [coextendi] lineæ.—*

—Lusus merus non intellectorum verborum, *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 imagin it in an Instant. We may as well conceive the *Immensity* of God to be a *Point*, as his *Eternity* to be an *Instant*.— And how that can be together, which must necessarily be imagined to be co-existent to Successions; let them that can, conceive. *Archbishop Tillotson, Vol. 7. Sermon. 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 School-men have much more of this Jargon and canting Language; I envy no Man the understanding these Phrases; but to me they seem to signifie nothing, but to have been Words invented by idle and conceited Men; which a great many ever since, lest they should seem to be ignorant, would seem to understand: But I wonder most, that Men, when they have amused and puzzled themselves and others with hard Words, should call this *Explaining* Things. *Archbishop Tillotson, Vol. 6. Sermon. 6.*

*That the Self-Existent Being must be Infinite and Omnipresent.*

VI. *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 it self*, (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 it

it self: Now this Necessity being Absolute in it self, and not depending on any Outward Cause; 'tis evident it must be *every where*, as well as *always*, unalterably the same: For a Necessity which is not every where 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 it self, 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 it self; and consequently, the Being cannot be self-Existent.

From hence it follows,

1<sup>st</sup>. 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 compleat Sense *Infinite*; because though it had no Limits, yet it might have within it self any assignable *Vacuities*. But now whatever is  
Self-



Self-Existent, must of Necessity Exist absolutely in every Place alike, and be equally present every where; 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,

\* *Quæ partium Spatii est immutabilis: Moveantur hæ de locis suis. & movebuntur (ut ita dicam) de seipsis. Newton. Princip. Schol. ad Definit. 8.*

which is *absolutely* indivisible and inseparable either really or \* mentally, may yet be *partially apprehended*;) 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

signifies Difference and Diversity in the manner of Existence ; which is inconsistent with Necessity.

'Tis evident therefore, that the Self-Existent Being must be Infinite in the *strictest* and most *complete* Sense. But now as to the particular *Manner* of his being Infinite or every where present, in opposition to the manner of Created Things being present in such or such finite places ; This it is as impossible for our finite Understandings to comprehend or explain ; as it is for us to form an adæquate 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 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,

*Of the Manner of our Conceiving the Immensity of God.*

Immensivity, as if it were really all but one Single Point.

*That the  
Self-Exis-  
tent Being  
can be but  
One.*

VII. *The Self-Existent Being, must of Necessity be but One.* This evidently follows from his being *Necessarily-Existent*. For Necessity Absolute in it self, is Simple and Uniform, without any possible Difference or Variety: And all Variety or Difference of Existence, must needs arise from some External Cause, and be dependent upon it. For to suppose *two* (or more) *different* Natures existing of themselves, necessarily, and independent from each other; implies this plain *contradiction*; that each of them being independent from the other, they may either of them be supposed to exist *alone*, so that it will be no contradiction to imagine the other not to exist; and consequently neither of them will be *Necessarily-Existing*. 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,  
of the Tri-  
unity.*

From hence it follows,  
1<sup>st</sup>. That the *Unity* of God, is a *true* and *real* not *figurative*, Unity. With which Prime Foundation of *Natural Religion*, how the *Trinitarian-Doctrine* of the *Trinity* perfectly agrees. I have elsewhere indeavoured to show particularly, in its proper place.

2<sup>dly</sup>.



2dly. 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 Natures should each be Necessarily-existing; it evidently follows, that 'tis absolutely impossible there should be Two Independent Self-existent Principles, such as *God and Matter*.

*The impossibility of two Independent Principles.*

*Pag. 43.*

3dly. 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, 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 'tis 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.*

*The Error of Spinoza.*

Una substantia non potest produci ab alia. *Ethic. Par. 1. Prop. 6.*

Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet existere. *Prop. 7.*

Præter Deum nulla dari, neq; concipi potest substantia. *Prop. 14.*

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;

† Per substantiam intelligo id, quod in se est, & 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 substantia pertinet Existere; hoc est ipsius essentia involvit necessario existentiam. *Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 7.*

† that it is *Something*, the *Idea* of which does not depend on, or pre-suppose, 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

45. Matter nor Spirit, nor any *Finite* Being whatsoever, (as has been before shown,) is in that Sense properly a *Substance*, but (*the e & v*) 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

\* Res nullo alio modo, nec alio ordine, a Deo productæ fuerunt, quam productæ sunt. *Prop. 33.*

but that \* every particular thing 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,

Why, because † *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:

† Ex necessitate divinæ naturæ infinita infinitis modis (hoc est, omnia quæ sub intellectum infinitum cadere possunt,) sequi debent. Prop. 16.

Which Supposition (*in the present Argument*) is the Question begged; And what he *afterwards* attempts to allege in proof of it, shall *afterwards* be considered in its proper place.

VIII. *The Self-existent and Original Cause of all things, must be an Intelligent Being.* In this Proposition lies the main Question between us and the Atheists. For that something must be Self-existent; and that That which is Self-existent, must necessarily be Eternal and Infinite and the Original Cause of all things; will not bear much Dispute. But all Atheists, whether they hold the World to be *of it self* 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 antient Atheists 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

*That the Self-existent Being must be Intelligent.*



## A Demonstration of the

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 ; cannot indeed be demonstrated strictly and properly *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.

*Proved  
from the  
Degrees of  
Perfection  
in Things,  
and the  
Order of  
Causes and  
Effects.*

And 1<sup>st</sup>. 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 it self 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 it self, yet cannot be so clearly demonstrated *a priori* :) But because it is impossible that any Effect should have any Perfection, which was not in the Cause ;

For

For if it had, then that Perfection would be caused by nothing; which is a plain Contradiction. Now an *Unintelligent* Being, 'tis evident, cannot be endued 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 Suppositions, 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*, (in which the main strength of Atheism lies,) is most absurd and impossible, shall be shown immediately: Which nevertheless if it could be supposed to be True, yet even in That Supposition it would still unavoidably follow, that the Self-existing Being must needs be Intelligent; as shall be proved in my 4th Argument upon this present Head. In the mean time, that it is most absurd and impossible to suppose Intelligence not to be any distinct Perfection, properly speaking, but merely a Composition, of Unintelligent Figure and Motion; will appear from what shall be said in the ensuing Argument.

From the  
Intellect  
and that  
from which  
the Senses

ably. 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 Superiour 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 own'd 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 endued 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 it self, 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,



*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 endued with Perception or Consciousness, can never possibly have arisen purely out of that which it self had no such Quality as Perception or Consciousness; because nothing can ever give to another any Perfection, which it hath not either actually in it self, or at least in a higher degree. This is very evident; because if any Thing could give another any Perfection which it has not it self, That Perfection would be caused absolutely by Nothing; which is a plain Contradiction. If any one here replies, (as Mr. Gildon has done \* in a Letter to Mr. Blount;) that Colours, Sounds, Taste, and the like, arise from Figure and Motion, which have no such Qualities in themselves; or that Figure, Divisibility, 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 or \* Intelligence may arise out of that which has no Intelligence it self: The Answer is very easie: First, that Colours, Sounds, Taste, 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 it self, which*

\* *Oracles of Asper, pag. 120. See also my Letter to Mr. Dodwel, with several Answers and Replies concerning the natural Immortality of the Soul.*

† *If with one of Cicero's Dialogists they would infer that the whole 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.*

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 make for his sake, (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 bare Figure and Motion, but also with the Quality of Intelligence and Perception ; and then, 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. And then, as to the *second* Part of the Objection ; that *Figure, Divisibility*, and other Qualities of Matter, are (as we our selves acknowledge) given it by 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 it self : The Answer is still easier ; That *Figure, Divisibility*, 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 Perfections which it has

not



not it self, yet the Effect may easily have many Imperfections, Deficiencies, or Negative Qualities, which are not in the Cause. Though therefore Figure, Divisibility, and the like, (which are mere Negations, as all *Limitations* are,) may be in the Effect, and not in the Cause; yet Intelligence, (which we 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.

And now, having 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 risen 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



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 transform'd 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 thinks 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 Blue and Yellow Powder makes a Green, That Green is still nothing but Blue and Yellow

inter-

intermixed as is plainly visibly by the help of Microscopes: 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 by Parts, or in different Place or Order. Mr *Hobbs* 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\* to recur to that prodigiously absurd Supposition, that all Matter, as Matter, is endued not only with Figure and a Capacity of Motion, but also with an actual Sense or Perception; and wants only the Organs and Memory of Animals, to express its Sensation.

*See my Letter to Mr Dodwell, with the Four Defenses of it.*

nisi ad retinendum motum impressum, habeant Organa, ut habent Animalia: ita tantum sentient, ut nunquam sensisse se recordentur. ——— Sensationi ergo, quæ vulgo appellatur, necessario adhæret memoria aliqua, &c. *Hobbs Physic. Chap. 25. Sect. 5.*

\* Scio fuisse Philosophos quosdam, eosdemque viros doctos, qui corpora omnia Sensu prædita esse iustiterunt: 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 etiam remoto objecto, apta

3dly, That the Self-Existent and Original Cause of all Things, is an Intelligent Being; appears abundantly from the excellent Variety,

*From the Beauty Order, and final Causes of Things.*



See Mr.  
Foule's  
natural Causes,  
and Mr.  
Ray's of the  
Wisdom of  
God in the  
Creation,  
and Mr.  
Derham's  
Physico-  
Theology.

riety, 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; 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,

The Sun brings  
Grass into Vegetation

very,



very, we may *by the* 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 now are 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 the Proof of the Second General Head of this Discourse,) to be absolutely Impossible and a Contradiction. pag. 12  
Cv.

*4thly*, 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 it self, 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 From the  
Original of  
Motion.

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*. 'Tis 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, 'tis manifest could never of it self begin to move: On the contrary, if Motion was Eternal; either it was eternally caused by some Eternal Intelligent Being; or it must of it self 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 it self 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

\* 1-8. 24.

seems ashamed here \* to speak out his Opinion, or rather plainly contradicts himself in the Question about the O-

\* Spinozæ Ethic. Part. I. Prop. 34. compared with Part. II. Prop. 13. Lemma 2

original of Motion. But if it be said 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 †

*Spinoza*, inconsistently enough, seems to assert; This I have before shown, (in the Proof of the \* *Second* General Proposition of this Discourse,) to be a plain Contradiction. It remains therefore, that Motion must of Necessity be Original-

‡ Corpus morum vel quietis, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad motum vel quietem determinatum fuit ab alio, & illud iterum ab alio, & sic in infinitum. Ethic. Part. II. Prop. 13. Lemma 3.

ly 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*. \* pag. 12  
Etc.

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*.



That the  
Self-exist-  
ent Being  
must be a  
Free Agent.

IX. 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 it self. The Truth of which, appears

This a ne-  
cessary Con-  
sequent of  
the forego-  
ing Proposi-  
tion.

1<sup>st</sup>, 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

\* Ex necessitate Divinæ naturæ, infinita infinitis, motus sequi debent. *Ethic. Par. I. P. 17. 18.*

\* from the Necessity of the Divine Nature, is mere Cant 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

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 antient *Hylozoicks* attributed them to all Matter ; that is, that a Stone, when it falls, has a Sensation and Consciousness ; but 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.

*See a very remarkable Passage of Mr Hobbs cited above, pag. 59.*

*Proved further from the Arbitrary Disposition of Things in the World ; with an Answer to Spinoza's Arguments for the Necessity of all Things.*

2dly, 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 Circum-

F

stance



stance 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.

\* Alii putant, Deum esse causam liberam, propterea quod potest, ut putant, efficere ut ea quæ ex eius natura sequi diximus, hoc est, quæ in eius potentate sunt, non fiat: sed hoc idem est ac si dicerent quod Deus potest efficere, ut ex natura trianguli non sequatur, eius tres angulos æquales esse duobus rectis — Ego me satis clare ostendisse spero, a summa Dei Potestate omnia necessario effici posse, vel semper eadem modo esse sequi; eodem modo ac ex natura trianguli ab æterno & in æternum sequitur, eius tres angulos æquari duobus rectis. *Ethic. Par. I. Schol. ad Prop. 1.*

Omnia ex necessitate naturæ divinæ determinata sunt, non tantum ad existentiam, sed etiam ad certo modo existendum & operandum; nullumq; datur Contingens. *De-monstrat. Prop. 29.*

Res alterius naturæ potuissent esse, vel alio modo ad operandum determinari; ut naturæ ordo alius esset: ergo Dei etiam natura alia posset esse quam jam est. *Prop. 33. Demonstrat.*

Quicquid concipimus in Dei Potestate esse, id necessario est. *Prop. 33.*

Deum non operari ex libertate Voluntatis: *Corol. ad Prop. 32.*

Res nullo alio modo, neq; alio ordine a Deo produci poterant, nisi productæ sunt. *Prop. 33.*

Ex necessitate divinæ naturæ, infinita infinitis modis sequi de-  
bent. *Prop. 16.*

The \* Consequence; 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 'tis; 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 † *from an Infinitely perfect Nature, infinite Things in infinite Manners, must*

*needs*



needs proceed; and (2.) \* 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.) † 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 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; which is 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

\* Si res alterius naturæ potuissent esse, vel alio modo ad operandum determinari: ut naturæ Ordo alius esset. Ergo Dei etiam natura alia posset esse quam jam est. Prop. 33. Demonstrat.

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

and *Varieties* of Things; therefore his Will and Nature is *Always* necessarily infinitely *various, unequal, and dissimilar to it self*. 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 *Affertion* it self, [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 it self 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 'tis a direct Demonstration that all things were made and ordered by a *Free* and a *Wise* Agent.

That

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* it self, and all its Quantities and Directions, with the Laws of *Gravitation*, are intirely 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* 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,

\* Nam dum Cometæ moventur in Orbibus valde eccentricis, undiq; & quoque-versum in omnes cæli partes; utiq; nullo modo fieri potuit, ut cæco fato tribuendum sit, quod Planetæ in orbibus concentricis Motu cœsimili ferantur eodem omnes. . . . Tam miram uniformitatem in Planetarum Systemate, necessario fatendum est Intelligentia & Consilio fuisse effectam. *Newton Optic. pag. 345.*



\* Res nullo aliomodo, neq; alio Ordine, a Deo produci poterunt. quam præductæ sunt. *Spinoza, ut supra.*

cessity, but Will. What absolute Necessity, for just such a Number of *Species* of *Animals* or *Plants*? or who without blushing dare affirm, 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 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

\* Idemq; dici possit de uniformitate illa, quæ est in corporibus Animalium: viz. necessario fatendum est. Intelligentia & Consilio fuisse effectam. *Newton Optic. pag. 346.*

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 'tis 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

makes it impossible for a Wise Being to resolve to Act Foolishly; or for a Nature infinitely Good, to Choose to do that which is Evil. *Of which I shall have Occasion to speak more hereafter, when I come to deduce the Moral Attributes of God.*

3dly. 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

*The same proved also from Final Causes.*

to † expose all Final Causes, as the Fictions of ignorant and superstitious Men: And to \* laugh 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 his Head,

† *Naturam finem nullum sibi præfixum habere; & omnes causas Finales, nihil nisi humana esse Figmenta. Appendix ad Prop. 36.*

\* *Oculos ad Videndum, dentes ad masticandum, herbas & animantia ad alimentum, Solem ad illuminandum, mare ad alendum pisces, &c. Ibid.*

*Nullas unquam rationes circa res naturales a Fine, quem Deus aut Natura in ijs faciendis sibi proposuit, desumemus. Cartes Princip. Par. I, § 28.*

consult *Galen de Uju 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 greater 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.



## A Demonstration of the

From the  
finiteness of  
Created  
Beings.

4thly. 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: 'Tis plain, every Effect of such an Infinite Uniform Nature, acting every where 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; That

\* Ex necessitate divinæ naturæ, infinita infinitis modis sequi debent. *Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 16.*

\* *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 miss 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.

And from  
the Impossibility of an  
Infinite  
Succession  
of Causes.

5thly. 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 any where; then there is no Agent; no Cause, Mover, Principle, or Beginning of *Motion* any where: 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 Cant, 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 shewn) 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 the 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. \* *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*, † 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.*

agere, quam dici potest ex libertate Motus & Quietis agere. *Coroll. ad Prop. 32.*

\* Unaquæq; Volitio non potest existere, neq; ad operandum determinari; nisi ab alia causa, determinetur, & hæc rursus ab alia & sic porro in infinitum. *Prop. 33. Demonstr.*

† Voluntas ad Dei naturam non magis pertinet, quam reliqua naturalia; sed ad ipsam eodem modo sese habet. ut motus & Quies.

Deus non magis dici potest ex Libertate Voluntatis

And

And what the Original of Motion and Rest is, he tells us in these Words:

\* Corpus motum vel quiescens, ad motum vel quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad motum vel quietem determinatum fuit ab alio; & illud iterum ab alio; & sic in infinitum. *Erbic. Par. II. Prop. 13. Lemm. 3.*

\* *Every Body in Motion, or at Rest, must have been determined to that Motion or Rest by some other Body, which must it self 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 it self, 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.

pag. 11,  
Etc.

*That Liberty is not in it self an Impossible and contradictory Notion.*

From what has been said upon this Head, it sufficiently appears, that *Liberty* is not in it self, 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

that which actually is; is certainly not impossible: and it has already been proved, that Liberty actually is; nay, 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, 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

† Mens ad hoc vel illud volendum determinatur a Causa, quæ etiam ab alia determinata est, & hæc iterum ab alia, & sic in infinitum. *Spinoza Ethic. Par. II. Prop. 48.*

(besides that in This sort of

Reasoning, these Men always ignorantly confound *Moral Motives* with *Physical Efficients*, between which Two things there is no manner of relation: Besides This, I say,) this very Argument really proves the direct contrary to what they intend. For since every thing must indeed have a Cause of its Being, either from without, or in the Necessity of its own Nature, and it is a plain Contradiction (as has already been demonstrated) to suppose an

infinite Series of dependent Effects, none of which are Necessary in Themselves or Self-Existent; therefore it is impossible but there must be in the Universe some Being, whose Existence is founded in the Necessity of its Own Nature, and who being acted upon by Nothing beyond it self, must of Necessity have *in it self* a Principle of Acting, or Power of beginning Motion, which is the Idea of Liberty. 'Tis true, this Argument proves only the Liberty of the First and Supreme Cause, and extends not indeed to any Crea-

pag. 12,  
Ccc,

ted



ted Being: But it evinces in General, (which is sufficient to my present purpose,) that Liberty is so far from being impossible and contradictory in it self, that on the contrary it is impossible but that it must really *Be* somewhere; and this being once established, it will be easie to shew hereafter, that it is a Power capable of being communicated to Created Beings; of which in its proper Place.

*Text the  
Self-ex-  
istent Be-  
ing, must  
Be self-ex-  
istent.  
Page 48.*

X. *The Self-Existent Being, the Supreme Cause of all Things, must of Necessity have infinite Power.* This Proposition is evident, and undeniable. For since nothing (as has been already proved) can possibly be Self-Existent, besides himself; and consequently all Things in the Universe were made by Him, and are entirely dependent upon Him; and all the Powers of all Things are derived from Him, and must therefore be perfectly Subject and Subordinate to Him: 'Tis 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 9. 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,*

vens, 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 26. 6. So likewise, *Isaiah* 40. 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 : 'Tis 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,

Of working  
Contradi-  
ctions.

1<sup>st</sup>. That infinite Power reaches to all Possi-  
ble things; but cannot be said to extend to  
the working any thing which implies a Con-  
tradiction: 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.

Or Natural  
and Moral  
Evils.

2<sup>dly</sup>. Infinite Power cannot be said to ex-  
tend to those things, which imply *Natural*  
Imperfection in the Being to whom such Pow-  
er is ascribed: As, that it should destroy its  
own Being, weaken it self, 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 Que-  
stion, by denying wholly the Difference of  
Moral Good and Evil; and therefore I shall  
omit the Consideration of them, 'till 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 a great measure consist.  
As



1<sup>st</sup>. That infinite Power includes a Power of Creating *Matter*. This has been constantly denied by all Atheists, both Antient 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 alledge 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*. 'Tis 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 somewhat 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

*Of the  
Power of  
Creating  
Matter.*

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. And indeed, if they would speak out the Truth, the Sum of what all Atheists, whether Antient or Modern, have ever said upon this Head, amounts to no more but this one foolish Argument: That Matter could not begin to exist, when *it was not*; because this is supposing it to Be, before it was: And that it could not begin to Exist, when *it was*; because this is supposing it not to Be, after it was. Which is just such an Argument, as That whereby a certain Philosopher demonstrated, that there can be no such thing as *Motion* at all; because a Body can neither move in the Place where *it is*, nor in the Place where *it is not*. The Arguments are exactly alike; And the same Answer will serve indifferently for them Both.

But further: The *Creation of Matter* is a thing not only *not impossible* in it self, but what moreover even by bare Reason is *demonstrated to be True*. For it is a Contradiction (as I have shewn above) to suppose Matter *necessarily Existing*.

112. 25.

Of the Possibility of Creating an Immaterial Cogitative Substance.

2dly. 'Tis Possible to Infinite Power, to Create an *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

cause 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* then, it is possible to infinite Power, to Create an *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 Mans 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; that 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; will also, I think, be granted by all Men. The only thing therefore, that remains to be proved, is this; 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 there-  
G fore



fore it neither has nor can have any Existence. By which same Argument (even supposing it to be *true*, which yet is indeed most *false*, that we have a clear Idea of the *Substance* of *Matter*, though we have none at all of any *Immaterial* Substance;) 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 or 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, I hope, an *Atheist* will not put the Issue of his Cause upon *Testimony*, whatever he does. 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

(As indeed of the *Substance* even of *Matter* it self, 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 thing as saying that *Duration* or that *Existence* 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* it self, in all *inanimate 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*; 'tis evident it cannot be caused by *Matter* acting upon the *Surfaces* of *Matter*, which is all *It* can do; but must 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 inmost *Substance* and *Essential Powers* 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.

of the  
Soul  
is  
not  
a  
body  
but  
an  
immaterial  
substance  
distinct  
from  
the  
body  
and  
capable  
of  
thought  
and  
reason  
without  
the  
aid  
of  
any  
material  
organ  
or  
instrument

From what has been said on this Head, it will be easy to answer all the Objections that have been brought by any Atheist against the Notion of *Human Souls* being *Immaterial Substances* distinct from *Body*. For since 'tis 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 intirely taken away. I shall not now 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: \* 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

Si immortalis natura  
est, non potest esse  
a corpore distincta  
sed est unum cum corpore  
et non potest esse  
sine corpore  
et non potest esse  
a corpore distincta  
sed est unum cum corpore  
et non potest esse  
sine corpore



tirely distinct Power, 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 pleas'd) have given *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 *Reflexion, 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 say, that these Senses of ours are *Necessarily* the only ways of Perception; how does that appear? And is it not infinitely more reasonable to suppose, that this is a \* mere Prejudice, arising from Custom, and an attending to bare Sense in opposition to

Naribus atq; manū, atq; oculis, atq; auribus, atq; Lingua; nec per se possunt sentire, nec esse. *Luciet. lib. 3.*

"Ὅσων γὰρ ἐστὶν ἀρχῶν ἢ ἐνέργεια σωματικῇ. δὴ λ. 57 ὅτι ταύτας ἀνευ σώματος ἀδύνατον ὑπέρχειν εἶναι ἐαδίσειν ἀνευ ποσῶν. *Aristot.*

\* *Luc. 57.*

\* *Has tamen imagines [mortuorum] Loqui volebant;*

cred. ferri nec sine lingua,  
 nec sine palato, nec sine lau-  
 cum aeream, pulmonum  
 vi & figura perest. Nihil  
 enim est, quod non sit  
 ad intellectum. Spiritus autem  
 sunt, quos et Senses, et  
 ad intellectum. Men etiam  
 in illis, et in State, videre  
 non potest. Ad Causas omnia  
 sunt causa. Magni sunt  
 in illis, et in rebus, et in  
 a sensibus. & cogitationem  
 a sensibus, et abducere.  
 Causa. Intellectus.

Reason? For suppose Men  
 had been created only with  
*Four* Senses, and had never  
 known the use of *Sight*; would  
 they not then have had the  
 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 im-

aginary Power; with absolutely *the same Reason*, as they now presume the Faculties of im-  
 material Beings to be so? that is, with *no Reason at all*. One would think, Men should  
 be ashamed therefore to be so Vain, as mere-  
 ly from their own Negative *Ignorance*, with-  
 out any appearance or pretense of any *Posi-  
 tive Argument*, to argue against the *Possibili-  
 ty* of the Being of Things, which (excepting  
 only that they cannot frame to themselves  
 an *Image* or *Notion* of them) there is a Con-  
 currence of all the Reasons in the World to per-  
 swade 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, to 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,

Secondly, It is possible to Infinite Power, to induce 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 it self a *Possible Thing*; and also be *Possible to be communicated*; Then a Creature may be induced with That Power. Now that the Power of Beginning Motion is in it self a *Possible Thing*, I have already proved, by showing that 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* it self 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 it self an Impossible Thing. I add; As a power of Beginning Motion, is not in it self an impossible Thing; because it must of Necessity Be in the Supreme Cause: So neither is it impossible to be *Communicated* to Created Beings. The Reason is plain: Because no Powers are Impossible to be Communicated, but only those which imply Self-existence and absolute Independency. That a Subordinate Being should be Self-existent

*Of ending  
Creatures  
with the  
Power of  
beginning  
Motion.*

*p. 12.  
&c.*



or absolutely Independent, is indeed a Contradiction; but 'tis 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, 'tis 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 Argument 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 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 rigidest Fatalist could possibly contrive to require, if he was to make a *Supposition* of a Man's being indued with that Power. There is no one Thing which 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 Man's having the least Power by any Principle within himself, to think any one Thought, or impell 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 it self as evidently and clearly a Contradiction,

as

as that two and two should make fifteen, 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 to venture boldly to assert one so intolerable an 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 of Reflecting 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*.

*Of the Possibility of induing a Creature with Freedom of Liberty of Will.*

pag. 64.

*Thirdly.* 'Tis possible to Infinite Power to endue 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 it self: And, because it implies no Contradiction to suppose it *communicated*; as being no harder to conceive, than the forementioned Power of *Beginning Motion*: And, because the Arguments



guments 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 Humane Life; and both *Spinoza* and Mr. *Hobbs*, and their Followers, have with great Noise and Confidence denied it: I shall therefore (not contenting my self with this,) endeavour to shew 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, it 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. *Hobbs*, have attempted to maintain this latter side of the Question, are all plainly reducible to these two.

1<sup>st</sup>. 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 consequent-  
ly

It 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 'tis manifest that Matter has not in it self a Power of Beginning Motion, or giving it self any manner of Determination whatsoever; therefore 'tis evident likewise, that 'tis impossible there should be any such thing as Freedom of Will.

*An Answer  
to Mr  
Hobbes  
and  
Spinoza's  
Arguments  
against the  
Possibility  
of Liberty.*

Now 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 not concluded 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.

*That the  
must  
be  
of  
an*

1st. every Effect cannot possibly be the Product of external Causes; but there must of necessity be somewhere a Beginning of Operation,

ration, 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 Heads 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. Hobs'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 \* 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, † whatever Body is moved, must be moved by some other Body, which it self likewise must be moved by some Third, and so on without End: That the || Will, in like manner, of any voluntary Agent*

rum ab alio, & sic in infinitum. *Spinoza Ethic. Par. II. Prop. 13. Lemma 3.*

pag. 12;  
 et 64.  
 pag. 27.

\* Quicumq; 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 vero causa necessaria est. *Hobbs Philosophia prima, cap. 9.*

† Corpus motum vel quiescens, ad motum vel Quietem determinari debuit ab alio corpore, quod etiam ad Motum vel Quietem determinatum fuit ab alio, & illud ite-

|| Unaqueque Volitio non potest Existere, neq; ad operandum determinari, nisi ab alia causa determinetur, & hæc rursus ab alia; & sic porro in infinitum. *Id. Ethic Par. I. Prop. 32. Demonstrat.*

I conceive, nothing taketh beginning from it self, but from the Action of some immediate Agent without it self. And that therefore, when first a Man had an Apperite or Will to some-thing



thing, to which, immedi-  
ately before, he had no Ap-  
petite or Will; the Cause of  
his Will, is not the Will it  
self, nor something else nor  
any other disposing. *Hobbs's  
Leviathan* Br. Bramhall,  
p. 280.

non enim nulla est absoluta  
libera voluntas: sed  
nemo ab alio vel illud volen-  
dam determinatur a causa,  
et a causa ab alia determi-  
natur. & hæc iterum ab  
alio, & sic in infinitum. *Spinoza  
Ethic. Par. II. Prop.  
48.*

\* See above, pag. 75.

- Hinc sequitur, Deum non  
operari ex libertate volunta-  
tis. *Ethic. Par. I. Coroll.  
ad Prop. 32.*

must of necessity be \*\* deter-  
mined by some external Cause,  
and not by any Power of deter-  
mining it self, inherent in it self:  
And that Eternal 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 Free-  
dom, extends equally to all  
other Beings (not excepting  
the Supreme) as well as to  
Men; and † *Spinoza* in ex-  
press Words confesses it.  
Wherefore consequently, what  
ever noise they make of the  
mighty Strength and Demon-

strative Force of their Arguments; all that  
they say, amounts at last to no more but this  
One most absurd Conclusion; that *there is no  
where, nor can possibly be, any Principle of Mo-  
tion or Beginning of Operation at all; but every  
Thing is caused necessarily, by an eternal Chain of  
Dependent Causes and Effects, without any Inde-  
pendent Original.* All their Arguments there-  
fore 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 Eterni-  
ty produced by Nothing*; which is the very  
same

pag. 1213  
and 64.

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 it self, but also *possible to be communicated* to Finite Beings, and *actually Is* in Man. p.ig. 87.

2dly. Thinking and Willing neither are, nor can be, Qualities or Affections of *Matter*; and consequently are not concluded under the Laws thereof. That 'tis possible there \*may be Immaterial Substances, the Notion not implying a Contradiction in it self; 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 the 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

That  
Thinking  
and Wil-  
ling, nei-  
ther are,  
nor can be  
Affections  
of Matter.  
\* pag. 81.  
pag. 57.  
pag. 55.

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 mean Time, 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. *Hobbs's* Own Explication of the Nature and Original of Sensation and

Consciousness. *The immediate Cause of Sensation, \* faith 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, † faith he, is the Sensation it self.* Again ; *the*

\* Ex quo intelligitur, Sensationis immediatam causam esse in eo, quod Sensationis Organum primum & tangit & premitt. Si enim organi pars extrema premittur ; illa cedente, premittur eadem ; pars enim veritas interiora illi proxima est : & ita propagatur pressio, sive Motus ill. per partes Organi ceteras, usque ad intimum. —

Quoniam autem motui ab objecto per media ad Organum partem intimum propagari, si adicatur actus Organi resistens sive reactio, per motum ipsius Organi internum naturalem ; sic propterea conatus ab objecto, conatus ab Organo contrarius. Ut cum conatus ille ad intima, ultimus actus sic conatus est in actu Sensationis ; tum demum ex ea reactione aliquandiu durante, ipsum existet *Phantasma* ; quod propter conatum versus extera semper videtur tanquam aliquid situm extra Organum: *Hobbs de Sensu & motu animali.*

† Phantasma est sentiendi Actus. *Id. ibid.*

*Cause*



*Cause of Sensation, || 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 Counter-pressure 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 it self*, 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. *Hobbs'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.

|| *Causa sensationis est Externum Corpus sive Objectum quod premit Organum proprium; & premendo, (mediantibus Nervis & Membranis,) continuum efficit Motum introsum ad Cerebrum & inde ad Cor; unde nascitur Cordis resistentia & contrapressio seu avulsionis, sive Conatus Cordis liberantis se a pressione per motum tendentem extrorsum; qui motus propterea apparet tanquam aliquid externum: Atque Apparitio hæc, sive Phantasma, est id quod vocamus Sensationem.*  
*Leviathan Cap. 1.*

\* Quæ qualitates Omne nominari solent sensibiles, & sunt in ipso objecto nihil aliud præter materiam motum, cuius Obiectum in Organa Sensuum diversimode operatur. Neq; in Animis aliud sentitur, quam diversum motus. Motus enim nihil generat præter motum. *Leviathan* cap. 1.

See Four  
Defences of  
a Letter to  
Mr Dod-  
well.

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 it self; is not Sensation, bare Figure and Motion? And are not all the forementioned Absurdities, unavoidable Consequences of his Opinion?

Mr *Hubbs*, (as I have elsewhere observed,) seems indeed not to have been altogether unaware of this insuperable Difficulty; But he industriously indeavours 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

\* Solo fuisse Philosophos eandem, eosdemq; viros doctos, qui corpora omnia sensu prædita esse sustinuerunt: Nec video, si natura Sensationis in reactione sola consistat, quomodo refutari possit. Sed etsi ex reactione etiam corporum aliorum, phantasma aliquod nasceretur; illud tamen remoto objecto statim cessaret: Nam nesi ad retinendum Motum impressum, etiam remoto objecto, apta habeant Organa, ut habeat Anima; ita tantum sentient, ut nunquam sensibile se recordentur. — Sensationi ergo, quæ vulgo ita appellatur, necessario adhzret memoria aliqua, &c. *Hubbs Phys. cap. 25. Sect. 5.*

pressed, \* that all Sensible Qualities, such as Colour, Sound, and the like, are in the Objects themselves nothing but Motion; And, because Motion can produce + Nothing but Motion, (as likewise 'tis 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 it self; is not Sensation, bare Figure and Motion? And are not all the forementioned Absurdities, unavoidable Consequences of his Opinion? Mr *Hubbs*, (as I have elsewhere observed,) seems indeed not to have been altogether unaware of this insuperable Difficulty; But he industriously indeavours 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, \* 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: 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 Hobbs mentions as possible: But he does it with such Hesitancy, Diffidence and Sparingness, as shows plainly that he meant it only as a last Refuge, or rather 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 it self, of Thought being mere Motion: For what can be more ridiculous than to imagin 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 divisible parts, (that is, of parts which

† Itaq; & Sensioni adhæret proprie dictæ, ut ei aliqua infinitas perpetua phantasmarum varietas; ita ut aliud ab alio discerni possit. Si supponemus enim esse hominem, oculis quidem claris, cæterisq; videndi Organis recte se habentibus compositum, nullo autem alio sensu præditum, eumq; ad eandem rem eodem semper colore & specie sine ulla vel minima varietate apparentem obversum esse; mihi certe, quicquid dicam talii non Videre videretur. --- Attonitum esse. & fortasse Aspectare eum, sed stupentem dicerem, videre non dicerem: Adeo Sentire semper idem, & Non Sentire, ad idem recidunt. Id. ibid.



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 'tis 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 forementioned 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,) 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 be-  
fore

fore 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 *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 even supposing (in these Mens 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

pag. 57.  
and 97.

*That if Thinking and Willing were Qualities of Matter, yet nevertheless Liberty might be possible.*  
pag. 55, 57, and 97.

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.

A shameful  
Fallacy of  
Mr Hobbs  
and his  
Followers

Mr *Hobbs* 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 Wiling, 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 devest Matter again of all its Unkown Properties, and make it mere Solidity, endued 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 endued 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 *Hobbs* himself \* confesses) Figure and Motion can never produce any thing but Figure and Motion; and consequently (as hath been \* before demonstrated) they can never

\* Metaphisic  
hæ general  
præter Mo-  
rum. Levi-  
ath Cap I

\* 12. 17.  
& 97.

pro-



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 something 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 is 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 *Hobbs's* Arguments against the Possibility

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 break 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 Providence*.

As to the 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*. For the *last Judgment of*  
the

*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* which is in Men, and which exerts it self *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 the Opposers of Liberty understand *Necessity*. For *Moral Necessity*, is evidently consistent with the most perfect *Natural Liberty*. For instance: A Man intirely free from all Pain of Body and Disorder of Mind, judges it unreasonable for him to Hurt or Destroy himself; and, being under no Temptation or External Violence, he *cannot possibly* Act contrary to this Judgment; not because he wants a *Natural* or *Physical Power* so to do, but because it is absurd and mischievous, and *morally impossible* for him to Choose to do it. Which also is the very same Reason, why the most perfect rational Creatures, superiour to Men,  
*cannot*



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 it self to Choose to Act Foolishly and Unreasonably. Here therefore seems at last truly to lie the Fundamental Error both of those who oppose and 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 any where a *first Principle of Motion* at all; which has been abundantly answered \* already.

\* pag 87.  
The Cer-  
tainty of  
Divine  
Fore-know-  
ledge not  
inconsistent  
with the  
Liberty of  
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ions.

The *other* Argument which I said has also frequently been urged against the Possibility of *Liberty*, is the *certainty of the Divine Providence*. But this also is entirely beside the Question. For if there be no *Other* Arguments, by which it can be proved antecedently, that all Actions are *Necessary*; 'tis certain

certain it can never be made to appear to follow from *Præscience 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 *Præscience*, separated from *Other Arguments*, is altogether beside 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, if upon other Accounts there be no Impossibility for th Actions of Men to be free, *the bare certainty of the Divine Fore-knowledge* 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 (1<sup>st</sup>.) the *certainty of Fore-knowledge* does not cause the *certainty of Things*, but is it self founded on the reality of their Existence. Whatever now Is, 'tis *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

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 Præscience 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 'tis manifest 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 Fore-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*. 'Tis true; The *Manner* how God can foresee Future Things, without a Chain of Necessary Causes; is impossible for us to explain *distinctly*. Tho' 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, will still with *greater probability* foresee what Another, whose Disposition

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*is not the  
same as fore-knowledge*



tion 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 Mens future Actions: So it is very reasonable to apprehend, that *God*, without influencing Mens Wills by his Power, yet by his Foresight cannot but have as much *Certainer* a knowledge of future free Events, than either Men or Angels can possibly have ; as the *Perfection* of *His* Nature is greater than that of *Theirs*. The *Distinct Manner* how he foresees these things, is indeed *impossible* for *Us* to explain. But so also are Numberless other Things, which yet no Man doubts of the Truth of. And if there were any Strength in This Argument ; it would prove, not against *Liberty*, but against *Præscience* it self. 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, and 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 tho' 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

245. 74.

not 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 it self 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 in any ways Inconsistent with Liberty; how great Difficulty soever there may be, in comprehending the *manner* of such Fore-knowledge. For if Liberty be in it self possible; The bare *Fore-sight* 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 tho' 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

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 fore-seen *Yesterday*; was there not nevertheless the same *certainty of Event*, as if it had been fore-seen? That is; would it not, notwithstanding the *supposed* Freedom, have been as *certain a Truth Yesterday* and from Eternity, that this Action was in *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 'tis evident it implies no other Certainty, but only That Certainty of Event which the Thing would equally have without being Fore-known, 'tis 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 Antient and great Question, [Πόθεν τὸ κακόν;] 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,

*Of the Origin of Evil.*



*A Demonstration of the*

Beings, making it possible for them to abuse That 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 *Vices*. 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 it self; 'tis plain, the want of any certain Faculty or Perfection in any kind of Creatures, which never belong'd 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 'tis 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, 'tis a *Punishment*; and then 'tis a Necessary

cessary 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 'twas 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 entred into the World, without any Diminution to the Infinite Goodness of the Creator and Governour thereof.

IX. *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 they 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 having infinite *Power*, can never be controuled or prevented from doing what he so knows to be Fittest. From all which, it manifestly follows, that every Effect of the Supreme Cause,

*That the Supreme Cause and Author of all Things, must of Necessity be infinitely Wise.*

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must be the Product of Infinite Wisdom. More particularly : The Supreme Being, because he is *Infinite*, must be every where present : And because he is an Infinite *Mind* or *Intelligence* ; therefore where-ever he Is, his Knowledge Is, which is inseparable from his Being, and must therefore be infinite likewise : And where-ever his Infinite Knowledge is, it must necessarily have a *full and perfect* Prospect of all Things, and nothing can be conceal'd 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 it self, and all their Powers and Faculties *from Him* ; 'tis 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 only Self-Existent, and having Alone *given* to all Things all the Powers and Faculties they are indued with ; 'tis 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 Depend-



pendencies of Things; all their possible Relations one to another, and Dispositions or Fittesses 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 it self,) that the Supreme Cause is moreover *All-Powerful*; so that He can no more be prevented by Force or Opposition, than he can be hindred 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, *Ininitely Wise*; and that the World, and all Things therein, must be and are Effects of Infinite Wisdom. This is Demonstration *a priori*. The Proof *a 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 inlarge upon this Argument; because it has often already been accurately and strongly urged, to the everlasting Shame and Confusion of Atheists, by the ablest and learnedest Writers both of Anti-

pag 758

See Galen  
*de Ufu Partium*, Tully

*de natura Deorum*, Boyle of *Final Causes*, Mr Ray of *the Wisdom of God in the Creation*, Mr Derham's *Physico Theology*, &c.

Opinio-  
nem Com-  
munitatis  
habentem  
non esse  
certam  
maxime.

ent and Modern Times. 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. If *Galen* so many Ages ago, could find in the Construction and Constitution of the parts of a Humane 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 Physick, 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 Governour 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 Infancy of Natural Philosophy, the generality of Men contemned and despised them as of no force; How would they have been ashamed,

med, 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 \* void of all Understanding; What would He have said, if he had known the *Modern* Discoveries in Astronomy? The *Immense Greatness* of the World; (I mean of 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 it self, according to their System, was greater than *Archimedes's* Sphere? The *Exquisite Regularity* of all the Planets Motions, without Epicycles, Stations, Retrogradations, or any other Deviation or Confusion whatsoever? The *inexpressible Nicety* of the Adjustment of the Primary Velocity and Original Direction of the *Annual* Motion of the Planets, with their distance from the Central Body and their force of Gravitation towards it? The *wonderful Proportion* of the *Diurnal* Motion of the Earth and other Planets about

\* Caelestem ergo admirabilem ordinem incredibilemque constantiam, ex qua conservatio & salus omnium omnis oritur, qui vacare mente putat, is ipse mentis expertus habendus est. *De Natura Deorum, lib. 2.*



their own Centers, for the Distinction of Light and Darkneſs; without that monſtrouſly diſproportionate Whirling of the whole Heavens, which the Antient Aſtronomers were forced to ſuppoſe? The *exact*

\* Planetarum diſtantes  
 ſunt, ut radices diametrorum  
 apparentium applicate ad  
 diametros veras, hoc eſt,  
 reciproce ut diſtantes  
 Planetarum a ſole, ducte in  
 radices diametrorum  
 apparentium. Collocavit  
 igitur Deus Planetas  
 ad varias diſtantiis a  
 ſole, ut per ſe per gradu  
 diſtantiæ colore Solis major  
 et minor præſtetur. Ne-  
 ton. Princip. Lib. 3. Prop. 8.

*Accommodating* the \* *Densities* of the Planets, 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 to 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 is to *ours*? The *Admirable Order, Number and Uſefulneſs*, of the ſeveral *Moons*, (as I may very properly call them,) never dreamt of by Antiquity, but now by the Help of Telescopes *clearly and diſtinctly ſeen* to move about their reſpective Planets; and whoſe Motions are ſo exactly known, that their very Eclipſes are as certainly calculated and foretold, as thoſe of our own Moon? The *ſtrange Adjustment* of *our Moon's Motion about its own Center* 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? Laſtly, the Motions of the *Comets*, which are Now known to be as exact, regular, and periodical, as the Moti-

ions of Other Planets? What, I say, would Tully, that great Master of Reason, have thought and said; if these and other newly discovered Instances of the Unexpressible 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 Topick; 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, *ch. 43, 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.*

XII. 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 Governour 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

*The Supreme Author of all Things, must be infinitely Good, Just and True.*

## *A Demonstration of the*

plication 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 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 'tis 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 ly* is the true Ground and Foundation of all Morality;) unless their *Will* be corrupted by particular *Interest or Affection*, or swayed by some unreasonableness and prevailing Lust. The Supreme Cause therefore, and Author of all Things; since (as  
has



has already been proved) he must of Necessity have Infinite Knowledge, and the Perfection of *Wisdom*; so that 'tis 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, 'tis impossible his *Will* should be influenced by any wrong *Affection*; and having no Dependence, 'tis impossible his *Power* should be limited by any Superior Strength; 'Tis 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

pag. 113.

pag. 105.

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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 all positive *Appointment*; 'tis evident, that He who *knows Perfectly* this Rule of Equity, and necessarily *Judges of Things as they are*; who has compleat *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 *Byass*, nor *awed* by any *Power*; must of necessity do always that which is *Right*; without *Iniquity*, and without *Partiality*; without *Prejudice*, and without *Respect of Persons*. Lastly; That the Supreme Cause and Author of all things, must be *True and Faithful*, in all his *Declarations*

itions 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 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 any wise to deceive Others. In a Word: All E-

\* \* Ουκ ἔστιν ἔϊεκα ἄν θεός ψεύδοιτο.— Κομίδῃ ἄρα ὁ θεός ἄπλεν καὶ ἀληθὲς ἐν τε ἔργῳ καὶ ἐν λόγῳ. Καὶ ἥτε αὐτὸς μεδίσαται, ἔτε ἄλλες ἐξαποτά, ἔτε κατὰ φαντασίας, ἔτε κατὰ λόγους, ἔτε κατὰ σημείων ποιησῶς, ἔτ' ὕπαρ ἐδ' ὄναρ. Plato de Repub. Lib. 2. sub finem.

vil 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 Re-

spect



spect to this *present* World only, which *Plutarch* and other Heathen Writers have judiciously made,) the Objection it self is entirely wide of the Question. For concerning the Justice and Goodness of God, (as of any Governour 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,

The Necessity of God's Moral Attributes, considered as necessary.

\*Page 150.

Page 64.

1<sup>st</sup>. 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 it self, 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

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 they 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

*A Demonstration of the*

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 Devest himself of the Other; And as much a Contradition, to suppose him Choosing to Do any thing inconsistent with his Justice, Goodness and Truth; as to suppose him devested 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 it self 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 saying 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 humbly 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



ful 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. 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 it self: 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 is in *Nature* for absolute Necessity to fail of producing its necessary Effect. There was indeed no *Necessity in Nature*, that God should at first Create such Beings as he has Created, or indeed any Beings at all; because He is in Himself infinitely Happy, and All-sufficient: There was also no *Necessity in Nature* that he should preserve and continue Things in Being, after they were created; because he would be as Self-sufficient without their Continuance, as he was before their Creation: But it was Fit, and Wise, and Good, that Infinite Wisdom

*Of the Necessity of God's doing always what is Best and Fittest in the whole.*

dom should manifest, and Infinite Goodness communicate it self; 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 be: 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 Fitnesses 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.

*God is  
perfectly  
free  
and  
infinite*

2dly. 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 'tis manifest Infinite Power cannot extend to Natural Contradictions, which imply a Destruction of that very Power by which they must be supposed

supposed to be brought ; 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 : 'Tis 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. 'Tis 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. From hence it follows that Liberty, properly speaking, is not in it self 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 commonly taught, that Liberty is a great Imperfection ; because it is the Occasion of all Sin and Misery : But, if we will speak properly, 'tis not Liberty that exposes us to Misery, but only the Abuse of Liberty.

*That Liberty is not in it self an Imperfection, but a Perfection.*



## *A Demonstration of the*

'Tis 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 it self miserable, as Man is: And, by the same Argument, Reason and Knowledge, and every other Perfection, nay even Existence it self, 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 it self, 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 a Liberty, as can never by any Ignorance, Deceit or Corruption, be byassed or diverted from Choosing, what is the Proper Object of Free Choice, the greatest Good.

That the highest Intellectual Perfections of Rational Creatures do not exclude Liberty.

5thly. 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

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*, From what has 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 forementioned 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 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; an acting contrary to their own Reason and Knowledge; an attempting to destroy that Order by which the Universe subsists; and also, by consequence, an offering the highest affront imaginable to the Creator of all Things, who himself governs all his Actions by these Rules, and

*That the Grounds of all Moral Obligations are eternal and necessary, and depend not on any Laws.*

## *A Demonstration of the*

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 'tis 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 it self, 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 given 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 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; 'tis manifest they were good, antecedent to their being confirmed by Laws: Otherwise, if they were not good antecedent to all Laws; 'tis 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



**A**ND now, from what has been said up-<sup>The Con-  
clusion</sup> on 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 not *Reason* on their side, (to which they would pretend to be strict Adherers,) but merely vain Confidence, and great Blindness and Prejudice; when they would have it be thought, that in the Fabrick of the World, God has left himself wholly without Witnesses; 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 Athcists 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 Errour, but may also be used with much greater Advantage on the behalf of Truth.

2. From what has been said on this Argument, we may see how it comes to pass, that though nothing is so certain and undeni-

able 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 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 bends 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. 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

settled, by the subtle 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, 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.

*F I N I S.*



A  
DISCOURSE

Concerning the  
Unchangeable Obligations

OF  
NATURAL RELIGION,

AND THE

Truth and Certainty

OF THE

*Christian Revelation.*

Being Eight SERMONS Preach'd at the Cathedral Church of *St. Paul*, in the Year 1705, at the Lecture Founded by the Honourable ROBERT BOTLE Esq;

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By SAMUEL CLARKE, D. D. Rector of  
*St. James's Westminster.*

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*The Fifth Edition, Corrected.*

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Isa. 5, 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. 1, 22. *Professing themselves to be Wise, they became Fools.*

I Cor. 7, 10. *But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.*

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T O T H E

Most Reverend Father in God

T H O M A S

Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury* ;  
and Primate of all *England* :

Sir *HENRY ASHURST*,  
Baronet ;

Sir *JOHN ROTHERAM*,  
Knight, Serjeant at Law ;

*JOHN EVELIN*, Esquire ;

Trustees appointed by the Ho-  
nourable *ROBERT BOYLE*,  
Esquire.

This Discourse is humbly De-  
dicated.

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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**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 my self 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 Vertue; 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



## The Preface.

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 Provisions 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

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of the Cause, or offered any considerable Reasons in opposition to what I had laid down; I should have thought my self 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, and what the Essence of Matter is; we cannot possibly demonstrate them at all, to be two different Essences.

† Note, that in this whole Question, the Word *Essence* is not to be taken in the proper Metaphysical Sense of the Word, as signifying *That by which a thing is what it is*: For in that Sense, the Attributes of God do constitute his

Essence; and Solidity or Impenetrability is the Essence of Matter: But Essence is all along to be understood, as signifying the same with Substance.

To which I answer. 'Tis plain we know not the Essences of Things by Intuition;

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dition: 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 manifest 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

\* See  
Dissert.  
§ 49.



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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 make by Reasoning thus from their demonstrable Properties; and will chuse rather to draw fond Consequences from such Hypotheses and Fictions, founded upon no Proof at all, than to make use of such Philosophy as is grounded only upon clear Reason or good Experiments; I know no help for it, but he must be permitted to enjoy his Opinion quietly.

The rest of the Book is All either an indecent and unreasonable reviling of the learned Mr Lock; 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,

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*is ; (that is, if the Cartesian Hypothesis concerning the Essences of Spiritual and Material Substance, be not granted to be true ;) there is no way left, by which it can be proved at all, that the Essence of God and Matter is not one and the same. To which I have already given an answer ; viz, that from the demonstrable Attributes of God, and from the known Properties of Matter, 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 : And that he who will not allow this, to be sufficient Proof in the present case ; but chooses rather to take up with a mere Hypothesis or Fiction concerning the Essences of Things ; I think needs not be disputed with.*

*Pag. 12, The Author of the Remarks asserts, that Des-Cartes and his Followers have Mathematically proved, that the Essence of Matter consists in Length, Breadth, and Depth. And upon this confident Assertion, his whole Book depends in every part. To this therefore I answer, that That Hypothesis is really so far from being Mathematically proved to be True, that on the contrary He cannot but know, (if he knows any thing of these Matters,)*

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Matters,) that the greatest Mathematicians in 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. † See Sir Isaac Newton's Principia, pag. 383 & 311.

And not to take the least notice of This throughout his whole Book, argues either great Infincerity, or great Ignorance.

I had said (Demonstrat. pag. 18.) 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 an express Contradiction so to do. This is great Infincerity.

I had charged the Cartesians (Demonstrat. pag. 18) with being unavoidably reduced to the Absurdity of making Matter a necessarily-existing Being. In citing this Passage, (Remark. pag. 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

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## The Preface.

*intirely different Things. This likewise is great Infincerity.*

*I had said (Demonstrat. pag. 18) that the Idea of Immensity was an Idea that no way belonged to Matter. Instead of this, he cites me asserting senselessly (Remark. pag. 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. pag. 15. He says; I am sure this Author cannot produce One, no not One Cartesian, that ever made Matter a necessarily-existing Being; that ever contradicted himself in Words, upon this Subject; that ever was mightily, or not mightily, or at all perplexed with what Mr Clarke calls his Argument; nay, that ever heard of that Thing he calls his Argument. Why are they thus misrepresented and imposed upon? To this I answer: It had been sufficient to make good my charge, to have shown, that from the Cartesian Hypothesis it followed by unavoidable consequence, that Matter must be a necessarily-existing Being; though the Cartesians themselves had*  
*not*

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not seen that Consequence. Yet I cited moreover a Passage out of Regis; wherein 'tis 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, namely 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 \* 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: † That, according to his Hypothesis, it does indeed imply a Contradiction to suppose the World to be

\* Quæro an a Deo fieri potuisset ut mundus esset finitus. *Epist. ad Cartesium 68, Partis prime.*

Nondum illud possum concoquere, eam esse inter res corporeas connexionem, ut nec mundum Deus creare potuerit nisi infinitum, nec ullum corpus in nihilum redigere, quin eo ipso teneatur aliud paris quantitatis statim creare. *Epist. 5, Partis secundæ.*

† Puto implicare Contradictionem ut Mundus sit finitus. *Cartesij. Epist. 59. Partis primæ.*

Mihi autem non videtur de ulla unquam re esse

*finite*

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dicendum, ipsam a Deo fieri non posse: Cum enim Omnis Ratio Veri & Boni ab eius Omnipotentia dependeat; nequidem dicere autem, Deum facere non posse ut Mens sit sine Valle, vel ut Unum & Duo non sunt Tria; sed tantum dico, talia implicare contradictionem in meo conceptu; quod idem etiam de Spatio, quod sit plane vacuum &c. Epist. 6. Partis secundae.

*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 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, a \* depriving us of*

\* Remark  
pag. 25.



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of the Means of proving the Existence of the one only true God ?

*The Remarker* humbly desires his Reader (pag. 16) to be perswaded, that he is of no particular Sect in Matters of Philosophy, but only of the Party of Truth where-ever he meets with it. Yet the same Man had declared before (pag. 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, (Demonstrat. pag. 20 ;) Our first Certainty of the Existence of God arises not from this ? that, in the Idea we frame of him in our own 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

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*of the Definition of the Word, than proved to be a real Attribute of the Being it self. Instead of this, the Remarker (pag. 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 Words, &c. And he is very facetious (pag. 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. pag. 18, 20, &c.) of not understanding the Cartesian Argument drawn from the Idea of God. I confess my self very ready to submit to this Charge; And I can shew him much more Learned Writers than either of Us, who have likewise not understood that Argument. If He does understand it, he will do the World a very acceptable piece of Service to make it out.*

+ See Cudworth's System, pag. 21, &c.

What

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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 (pag. 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.

† Demon-  
strat. pag.

25, &c.

\* Demon-  
strat. pag.

36, 51,  
61.

He charges me (pag. 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



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represented 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, (Demonstrat. pag. 26, 27 and 28,) as any thing can be. Here the Remarker asserts (pag. 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 † All who have in any degree considered the Di-

vine 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,  
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† Præter Deum nulla dari neq; concipi potest substantia. Spinoz. Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 14.

Una Substantia non potest produci ab alia Substantia. Prop. 6.

Res nullo alio modo neq; alio ordine a Deo produci potuerunt, quam productæ sunt. Prop. 33.

Ad naturam substantiæ pertinet Existere. Prop. 7.

† Omnes qui naturam divinam aliquo modo contemplati sunt, Deum esse Corporeum negant. Ethic. Par. I. Prop. 15. Schol.

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by denying God to be Corporeal, meant only fallaciously to deny his being any particular Piece of Matter, any \* 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, 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, 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?

\* Per Corpus intelligimus quancumq; quantitatem, longam, latam, & profundam, certa aliqua figura terminatam; quo nihil absurdius de Deo, ente scilicet absolute infinito, dici potest. Ibid.

// Substantiam Corpoream quæ non nisi infinita concipi potest, nulla ratione natura divina indignam esse dici potest.

\* Schol. ad Prop. 15. Part. I.

He charges me (pag. 32) with arguing only against the Accessories of Atheism, and leaving the Essential Hypothesis

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pothesis in its full force; nay, with confirming and establishing (pag. 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



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which this Writer is so fond, to be favourable to the Atheists 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 (pag. 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 'tis possible for any thing to be expressed: For he asserts plainly, 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

\* A summa Dei potentia  
Omnia necessario effluxisse.

Omni ex Necessitate Divinae  
Naturae determinata sunt &c.

Quicquid concipimus in  
Dei potestate esse, id ne-  
cessario est.

Res nullo alio modo, neque  
alio ordine, a Deo produci  
potuerunt, quam productæ  
sunt.

Deum non operari ex Li-  
bertate Voluntatis.

See more passages to the  
same purpose, cited (Demon-  
strat. pag. 66.)

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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

† Sequitur, solum Deum esse causam Liberam.

Deus ex solis suæ naturæ legibus, & a nemine coactus agit.

says, that † God alone is a Free Cause ; and that God acts by the Laws of his own Nature, without being forced by Any ;

'Tis 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, 'tis plain indeed that [the τὸ πᾶν] the whole Universe (the God of Spinoza) cannot be subject to ; because it is supposed to contain All things, within it self. 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 (pag. 34) that I am guilty my self, of what I groundlessly imputed to Spinoza ; viz. of making God a mere Necessary Agent : Namely, by affirming that  
the re

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*there is a Necessary Difference betwixt 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. pag. 10,) How an Eternal Duration can now be actually Past, is a thing utterly as impossible for our narrow Understand-*



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derstandings to comprehend, as any thing, that *Is not* an express Contradiction, can be imagined to be; And yet, to say that *Nothing has existed from Eternity*, is to assert something still far more unintelligible, namely something that is really an express Contradiction. Instead of this, the Remarker (pag. 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, (pag. 41.) he says that in my Sermons there is not one Argument offered, to prove against Spinoza, that God is a Spirit. I persuaded my self, that 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 my self or the Reader, with giving any further Answer.

† See De-  
monstrat.  
pag. 22 and  
63.

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A  
DISCOURSE

Concerning the

Unalterable Obligations

OF

NATURAL RELIGION,

AND THE

Truth and Certainty

OF THE

*Christian Revelation.*

**H**AVING in a former Discourse endeavoured to lay firmly the first Foundations of Religion, in the certainty of the Existence and of the Attributes of God; by proving severally and distinctly:

*That Something must needs have existed from Eternity: And how great soever the Difficulties are, which perplex the Conceptions and Apprehensions we attempt to frame of an eternal Duration; yet they neither ought nor can raise in any Man's*

M Mind

*The Introduction.*

## *The Evidence of Natural*

Mind any Doubt or Scruple concerning the truth of the Assertion it self, 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 every where 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*



*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 enduing 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 Governour and Judge of the World.

It remains now, in order to compleat 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 pretense and cover of Infidelity, to excuse their Vices and Debaucheries; which they are so strongly inclin'd 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, and self-condemned in the practise of them. It remains therefore (I say) in order to finish the Design I propos'd to my self, 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 demonstrat'd the Being and Attributes of God, to prove distinctly the following Propositions.

I. *That the same necessary and eternal different Relations, that different Things bear one to another; and the same consequent Fitness or Unfitness of the Application of different Things or different Relations one to another, with regard to which the Will of God always and necessarily does determine it self 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 Publick in their respective Stations: That is, these eternal and necessary differences of Things, make*  
it

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 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 practise most effectually and indispensably inforces 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 displeas'd* 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 Governour 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

eternal Rules of Justice, Equity and Goodness, does indeed of it self tend by direct and natural consequence to make all Creatures happy; and the contrary practise, 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 in event manifestly perverted, and Virtue and Goodness are visibly prevented in great measure from obtaining their proper and due Effects in establishing Mens Happiness proportionable to their behaviour and practise; Therefore 'tis absolutely impossible, that the whole view and intention, the original and the final Design, of Gods 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 manifestly fitted up and accommodated; 'tis absolutely impossible (I say) that the whole of Gods 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 the continuing an eternal succession of new Generations in the present Form and State of Things, there must at some time or other be such a Revolution and Renovation of Things, such a *future State* of existence of the same Persons, as that by an exact distribution of Rewards and Punishments therein, all the present Disorders and Inequalities may be set right; and that the whole Scheme of Providence, which to us who judge of it by only one small Portion of it, seems now so inexplicable and much confused; may appear at its consummation, to be a Design worthy of Infinite Wisdom, Justice and Goodness.

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, but 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



by evil Education; so strong and violent the unreasonable *Lusts, Appetites* and *Desires* of Sense; and so great the *Blindness*, introduced by *superstitious Opinions, vitious 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 *practise* 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 practise 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 considerable great and universal Success; Because they have been but very *few,* that have in earnest set themselves about this excellent Work; and they that have indeed sincerely done it, have themselves been intirely *ignorant* of some Doctrines, and very *doubtful* and *uncertain* of others, absolutely

## *The Evidence of Natural*

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 inforce and inculcate upon Men's Minds with so strong an impression, as to influence and govern the general Practise 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 sometime or other vouchsafe it unto them.

VIII. *That* there is *no other Religion* now in the World, but the Christian, that has any just pretense, 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*

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 Practises of any of those Philosophers; ought to be embraced and practiced by all rational and considering Deists, who will act consistently, and steddily 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 inforces the practice of these Duties; are such as are most suitable to the excellent Wisdom of God, and most answerable*



## *The Evidences of Natural*

answerable to the natural Expectations of Men.

XII. *That* the peculiar *Manner and Circumstances* with which it enjoyns 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 Truth:.) are, though indeed many of them not discoverable by bare Reason unassisted with Revelation, yet when discovered by Revelation, apparently most *agreeable* to sound unprejudiced *Reason*; have every one of them a natural *tendency*, and a direct and powerful *influence*, to *reform* Mens 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 antient 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 it self highly credible and probable; and abundantly recommends it self 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

fort 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, before I enter upon the particular Proof of these several Propositions, justly be allowed to premise, that having *Of the several sorts of Deists.*  
*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

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 mixt 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 the *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*, if *Any*, such *Deists* as will truly stand to all the Principles of unprejudiced Reason, and sincerely both in profession and practise, 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



of Reason and Obligations of Natural Religion, will unavoidably lead a Man to Christianity; if he has due opportunities of examining things, and will steddily pursue the Consequences of his own Principles: And all others, who pretend to be Deists without coming up to this, can have no fixt 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.

I. 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 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 although to imagine that God at the Creation of

*Of the first sort of Deists. And of Providence.*

\* Omnis enim per se Divum natura necesse est Immortali ævo summa cum pace fruatur, Semota a nostris rebus, se-junctaq; longe. Nam privata dolore omni, privata periculis, Ipsa suis pollens opibus, nihil indiga nostri, Nec bene promeritis capitur, nec tangitur ira.

*Lucret. lib. 1.*

Τὸ μακρόν ἢ ἀφθαρτόν, ἕτε αὐτὸ πρῶτον ἔχει, ἕτε ἄλλα παρ-  
εἶχει ὡς ἕτε ὄργανῶν, ἕτε χεῖρσι συνέχευται. *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 Intelligencia Supramundana: Which is the very Case of Epicurus and Lucretius.

the

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 produc'd Effects worthy to proceed from the Direction and Government of infinite Wisdom: Though this, I say, may possibly by very nice and abstract reasoning be reconcileable with a firm Belief both of the Being and Attributes of God, and also with a consistent Notion even of *Providence* it self; 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 it self, so the late improvements in Mathematicks 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 Superiour to Matter, *continually* exerting on it a certain Force or Power according to such certain and determinate Laws; 'tis  
now.

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* it self, 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 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 it self 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, or of some subordinate Instruments appointed by Him to direct and preside respectively over certain parts thereof,

N thereof,



thereof, does either way equally give us a very noble Idea of *Providence*. Those Men indeed, who, merely through a certain vanity of Philosphizing, 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 it self to form a World at adventures; Those Men, I say, who, merely through a vanity of Philosphizing, have been tempted to embrace that Opinion, without attending whither it would lead them; ought not, indeed, to be directly charged with all the Consequences of it: But 'tis certain, that many under that cover, have really been Atheists; and the Opinion it self (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 *fore-know* what at all times and in all places 'tis 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 'tis impossible but

\* he must actually direct and appoint every particular thing and circumstance that is in the World or ever shall be, excepting only what  
by

\* Quo confessio, confitentium est eorum confisio mundum administrari. Cic. de nat. Deor. lib. 2.

By his own good 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, yet in *reality* and in *truth* they deny him.

† Epicurum verbum: reli-  
quisse Deos, re sustulisse.  
Cic. de nat. Deor. lib. 2.

If, to avoid this, they will own God's Government and Providence over the *great-  
er and more considerable* parts of the World, but deny his Inspection and Regard to *humane Affairs here upon Earth*, as being

*Humane  
Affairs, not  
beneath the  
regard of  
Providence*

\* too *minute and small* for the Supreme Governour of all things to concern himself in; 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, † *all things as any*, and the \* *minuteest* things as the *greatest*: So that if he has no regard nor concern, for these things; his Attributes must, as before, be denied; and consequently

\* Ἐισὶ γὰρ πρὸς οἱ νομίζου-  
σιν εἶναι τὰ θεῖα, καὶ πιαῦτα  
διὰπερὶ ὁ λόγος αὐτὰ ἐξέ-  
φηνεν, ἀγαθὰ, καὶ δυνάμιν ἔ-  
χοντα τῶν ἀκροτάτῶν, καὶ  
γνώσιν τῶν τελειοτάτῶν τῶν  
μάλιστα ἀνθρώπων καταφρο-  
νεῖν, ὡς μικρῶν καὶ ἔυτελῶν  
όντων, καὶ ἀϊαζίων τῶν ἑαυτῶν  
ἐπιμελείας. Simplic. in E-  
pictet.

† Deorum providentia  
mundus administratur; ii-  
demq; consulunt rebus hu-  
manis; neq; solum univer-  
sis, verum etiam Singulis.  
Cic. de Divinat. lib. 1

\* Ἄλλ' ἔδειν τάχ' ἀν' ἔπος  
εἶναι χαλεπὸν ἐνθεξάσθαι τῶν  
ἡμῶν

πότε τις ἐπιμελείς σμικρῶν  
ἐπιθεοῖ δὲ ἢ τῶν ἢ τῶν με-  
γαλοῖ διακρίνεται. *Plato*  
*de Leg. l. vi. c. 10.*

Ἐὶ δὲ τὸ ὅλον κόσμον ὁ θεὸς  
ἐπιμελεῖται, ἀνάγκη καὶ τῶν  
μερῶν αὐτῶν περιεῖν; ὡς περ  
καὶ αὐτὰ τελευτᾷ περὶ σφαιρῶν. καὶ γὰρ  
ἰαίεσι τοῦ ὅλου περὶ σφαιρῶν ἐπι-  
μελεῖται τὸ ὅλον περὶ σφαιρῶν, καὶ  
αὐτὰ ἐπιμελεῖται τῶν μερῶν ὅθεν  
εὐαγγέλιος. ὅθεν οὐκοῦν σφαιρῶν ἢ  
περὶ σφαιρῶν αὐτῶν τῶν με-  
ρῶν ἐπιμελεῖται ὡς πρὸς ἀνάγκη  
καὶ ὅθεν περὶ ὅλον διακρίνεται.  
*Δ. Περὶ τῆς ἐπιμετείας.*

his Being. But besides: *Hu-  
mane Affairs* are by no means  
the minutest and most in-  
considerable part of the Crea-  
tion: For, (not to consider  
*Now That Excellency of Hu-  
mane Nature*, which *Chri-  
stianity* discovers to us;) let  
a Deist suppose the Universe  
as large as the widest Hy-  
pothesis of Astronomy will  
give him leave to imagine;  
or let him suppose it as im-  
mense as he himself pleases,

and filled with as great numbers of ra-  
tional 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 *Sy-  
stem*; And *Mankind* manifestly the only  
considerable Inhabitants on this *Globe* of  
*Earth*. *Man* therefore has manifestly a bet-  
ter claim to the particular regard and con-  
cern 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 an 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; *Man-  
kind*, even separate from the consideration  
of that Excellency of *Humane Nature*  
which



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. 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 produc'd 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 Humane Laws. But how handsomly 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

*Of the second sort of Deists.*

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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

\* Quasi ego id curem, quid ille sicut aut reget: Illud quaro, quid ei consentaneum sit dicere, qui &c. Cic. de Finib. lib. 2.

Practise; yet in the present Case 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 *Practise* appears answerable to it.

Profane and debauched Deists, not capable of being argued with.

For concerning *these two* sorts of Deists, it is observable, that as their Opinions can terminate consistently in nothing but *down-right Atheism*; so their *Practise and Behaviour* is exactly 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 de-  
spise

spise also the Wisdom of all *Humane 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 *Humane* 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 esteem'd more excellent than a *Beast*. They pretend commonly in their Discourse and Writings, to expose the Abuses and Corruptions of Religion; but (as it is too manifest in some of their modern 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 vitious Inclinations of Others as void of shame as Themselves. They discover clearly, that they have no sense at all of the dignity of *Humane Nature*, nor of the Superiority and Excellency of their Reason above even the meanest of the Brutes. They will sometime 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 don't believe any Thing to be wise, any thing decent, any thing comely or praise-worthy at all. They seem not to have any esteem or value, for those distinguishing Powers and Faculties; by including them wherewith, God has taught them more than the Beasts of the Field, and made them wiser than the Fowls of Heaven. 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;* 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

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 casie 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. 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 Humane Souls*, they believe that Men perish intirely 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

*Of the  
third sort  
of Deists.*

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 Governour 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 distribution 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 \* the same in God, as in our Idea's; then we mean nothing, when we say that God is necessarily Just and Good; and for the same Reason it may as

\* Καὶ ἡ ἀρετὴ ὡς καὶ ἡ ἀδικία  
ἀρετὴν ὅτι καὶ ἀδικίαν πάν-  
των ὡς καὶ ἡ ἀρετὴ ἀρετὴν  
ἀδικίαν ὡς ἀδικίαν. Orig. contr.  
L. 3. lit. 4.

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 acknowledg'd 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. The last sort of *Deists* are those, who <sup>Of the</sup> if they did indeed believe what they <sup>fourth sort</sup> *pre-* <sup>of Deists.</sup> *tend*, 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 Governour 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

would desire they should in like circumstances deal with him; *That* therefore, he is obliged to obey and submit to his Superiours in all just and right things, for the preservation of Society, and the peace and benefit of the Publick; 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 kind, easie 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 intirely 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 and 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 practise of unreasonable and unjust things; Lastly, *That* accordingly as Men regard or neglect these Obligations,  
 so

so they are proportionably acceptable or displeasing unto God; who being Supreme Governour 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, *pretend 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 or none *such Deists* as these, among our 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*; 'tis impossible but they must be sensible of the want of a Revelation; 'tis impossible but they must earnestly desire God would be pleased,



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pleased, by some immediate discovery of his Will, to make these things more *clear* and *plain*, more *easie* and *obvious*, more *certain* and *evident* to all Capacities; 'tis impossible but they must wish, God would be pleased particularly, to signify expressly the acceptableness of Repentance, and his willingness to forgive returning Sinners; 'tis 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 due examination appear to be true; They must be infinitely far from ridiculing and despising any thing that pretends to be a Divine Revelation, before they have sincerely and thoroughly examined it to the bottom: They must needs be beforehand very much disposed in its favour; and be very willing to be convinced, that what tends to the advancing and perfecting the Obligations 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*,

anity, 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. 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 pretense of Deism, 'tis plain they are generally *Ridiculers* of all that is truly excellent even in natural Religion it self. Could we see a *Deist*, whose Mind was heartily possess'd 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 practise of Righteousness, Justice,

*That there is now no consistent Scheme of Deism in the World.*

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 no such Deists as these, among the Infidels of our Days. This indeed is what they sometime pretend, and seem to desire should be thought to be their Case: But alas, their trivial and vain Cavils; their mocking and ridiculing, without and before examination; their directing the whole stress of their Objections, against particular Customs, or particular and perhaps uncertain Opinions, or explications of Opinions, without at all considering the main Body of Religion; their loose, vain and frothy Discourses: and above all, their vicious and immoral Lives; show plainly and undeniably, that they are not really *Deists*, but mere *Atheists*; and consequently not capable to judge of the Truth of Christianity.



anity. 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 \* 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 forc'd to terminate in absolute *Atheism*. He that cannot prevail with himself to obey the *Christian Doctrine*, and imbrace 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, steddiness 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 de-

\* Ita fit, ut si ab illa rerum Summa, quam superius comprehendimus, aberraveris; omnis ratio intereat, & ad nihilum omnia revertantur. *Lactant. lib. 7.*

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send 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 differences* 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 it self. 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 practise, 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

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 fixt and certain set of Principles to adhere to; I thought I could no way better prevent their Evil 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.

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 determinate it self, 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 Publick, in their respective*



*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 those Rules.*

The several Parts of this Proposition may be proved distinctly, in the following manner.

*That there are eternal and necessary differences of things.*

I. 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 *Arithmetick*, or *Uniformity or Diffornity* 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*

*ture 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 *Mechanicks*, 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*, rather 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 it self, that the *Supreme Author and Creator* of the *Universe*, should govern, order, and direct all things to certain constant and *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 it self, that the All-powerful Governour 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 than 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 *Mens* dealing and conversing one with another; it is undeniably more *Fit*, absolutely and in the Nature of the thing it self, 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



and cheat and defraud, or spoil by violence, all others without restraint. Lastly, it is without dispute more *Fit* and reasonable in it self, 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, tho' I have never made 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 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 endued 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 *Arithmetick*, 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 per-

*The absurdity of those who deny the eternal and necessary differences of things.*

swaded to believe, that it could ever really enter into the Heart of any Intelligent Man, to deny all natural difference betwixt *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 *strait* 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 *Hobbs* and some few others, who have presumed, contrary to the plainest and most obvious reason of Mankind, to assert, and not without some Subtilty indeavoured 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 absolutely *irresistible Power*; and all *Duty towards Men*, merely from *positive Compact*; And have founded their whole Scheme of Politicks upon that Opinion. Wherein as they have contradicted the judgment of all the *Wise*st and *sobere*st 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 :) if there be *naturally and absolutely* in things themselves, no difference betwixt *Good* and *Evil*, *Just* and *Unjust*; then in  
the

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 'tis necessary for his own Preservation, but also arbitrarily and without any \* provocation at all, 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 *Hobbs* 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 practise must needs be, that it would terminate in the destruction of all Mankind. Which being undeniably a great and unsufferable Evil; Mr *Hobbs* 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 others 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 it self, 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

\* See *Hobbs*  
de Cive. c.  
3. S. 4.



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. *Hobbs's* first Supposition,

\* Ex his sequitur injuriam nemini fieri posse, nisi ei quocumque iuratum. De Civ. c. 2. §. 4. where see more to the same purpose.

of \* there being no natural and absolute difference betwixt Good and Evil, Just and Unjust, antecedent to positive Compact. And in like manner All others, who

upon any pretense whatsoever, teach that Good and Evil depend originally on the Constitution of *positive Laws*, whether *Divine* or *Humane*; 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 there

† Manifestum est rationem nullam esse Lege prohibenti noxas tales, nisi agnoscent tales Actus, etiam antecedentes ad ullam Legem, nulla esse. Cumberl. de Leg. Nat. pag. 104.

\* Nam stoliditas inveniri quæ major potest, quam nulla esse nulla contendere, & rationem malos perdere & condemnare peccantes? Arnet. advers. Gentes. Lib. 2

† any reason be given, why any Laws should ever be made at all: But all Laws equally, will be either \* arbitrary and tyrannical, 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

in their own Nature absolutely indifferent, those are chosen by wise Governours to be made obligatory by Law, the practise of which they judge will tend to the publick benefit of the Community. But this is an exprefs Contradiction in the very Terms. For if the practise of certain things tends to the publick benefit of the World, and the contrary would tend to the publick 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 publick Benefit must

\* 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

\* Qui autem *Civium* rationem dicunt habendam, *Externorum* negant; dirimunt hi communem generis humani societatem; qua sublata, justitia funditus tollitur. *Cic. de Offic. Lib. 3.*

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

haps 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 publick 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 publick 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.

An Answer  
to the Ob-  
jection  
drawn  
from the  
Variety of  
the Op-  
inions of  
learned  
Men, and  
the Laws  
of different  
Nations,  
concerning  
right and  
wrong.

The 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 *Hobbs's* false Reasonings I shall hereafter consider by themselves;) is the *difficulty* there may sometimes be, to define exactly  
the



the bounds of right and wrong ; the variety  
\* of Opinions, that have ob-  
tained even among under-  
standing and learned Men  
concerning certain Questi-  
ons of just and unjust,  
especially in political Mat-

\* τὰ ὅ καλὰ καὶ τὰ δίκαια  
ὡς ἂν ἡ πολιτικὴ σκοπεῖ-  
ται, τοσαύτην ἔχει διαφορὰν  
καὶ πλάτην, ὥς εἰ δοκεῖν νόμοι  
εἶναι, φύσει ὅ μὴ. *Aristot. E-  
thic. lib. 1. cap. 1.*

ters ; and the many contrary Laws that  
have been made in divers Ages and in  
different Countries, concerning these Mat-  
ters. But, as in *Painting*, though two ve-  
ry different Colours, by diluting each o-  
ther very slowly and gradually, may from  
the highest intenseness in either extreme,  
terminate in the midst insensibly, and  
so run one into the other, that it shall  
not be possible even for a skilful Eye to  
determine exactly where the one ends, and  
the other begins, and yet the Colours dif-  
fer 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 per-  
haps be very difficult in some nice and per-  
plexed Cases (which yet are very far from  
occurring frequently,) to define exactly the  
bounds of Right and Wrong, Just and Un-  
just ; 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 *Dark-  
ness*. The *Spartan Law* perhaps, which  
\* permitted their Youth to

*Steal* ; may, as absurd as

\* κλέπτειν νενημῆτο τὰς  
ἐλαθέρας παῖδας ὅ, τῶ τῶ

δύναίτο. *Plutarch. Apophthegmata Laconica.*

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 things, would have thought that such a Law could have authorized or excused, much less have justified such Actions, and have made them become good: Because it is plainly not in Mens Power to make *Falshood* 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 betwixt them must be also essential and unalterable in all even the smallest and nicest and most intricate Cases, though it be not so easie 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

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 *Hobbs* 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. 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

*That the Will of God always determines itself to all according to the eternal reason of things.*

needs



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*; 'tis manifest *His* Divine Will cannot but always and necessarily determine it self 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.

*That all rational Creatures are obliged to govern themselves in all their Actions by the same eternal rule of Reason.*

3. And now, that the same *Reason of Things* with regard to which the Will of God always and necessarily *Does* determine it self 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 Practise*, that any *Intelligent* Creatures, whom God has made so far like unto himself, as to endue them with those excellent Faculties of *Reason* and *Will*,

*Will*, whereby they are enabled to *distinguish* Good from Evil, and to chuse 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 perversly* 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* or *wilful Passions and 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; 'tis impossible but those same Proportions and Fittnesses of things, which have so much Weight and so much Excellency and Beauty in them, that the All-powerful Creator and Governour 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 all his own Actions in the Government of the World, and does nothing by mere Will and Arbitrariness; 'tis 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.

From the  
 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 with-hold; 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 wilfully 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



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 practise 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 Lufts, 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; 'Tis 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; 'Tis attempting to destroy that Order, by which the Universe subsists; 'Tis offering the highest affront imaginable to the Creator of all things, who made things to be what they are, and governs every thing himself according to the Laws of their several Natures. In a word; All wilful wickedness and perversion of Right, is the very same Insolence and Absurdity in *Moral Matters*; as it would be in *Natural things*, for a Man to pretend to alter the certain Proportions of Numbers, to take away the Demonstrable Relations and Properties of Mathematical Figures, to make Light, Darkneſs and Darkneſs Light or to call Sweet Bitter and Bitter Sweet.

And from  
the Sense,  
that all  
even wicked  
Men  
avoidably  
have, of  
their being  
under such  
an Obliga-  
tion.

Further: 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

is instructed in Mathematicks, can forbear giving his Assent to every Geometrical Demonstration, of which he understands but 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 *Practise*, through the prevalence of Brutish Lufts, 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 superiour 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 it self, only a *secondary and additional* Obligation, or *Inforcement* 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 any Creatures are, the more cheerfully and steddily 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 hitherto describing, 'tis evident *Ought* as indispensably to govern Mens Actions, as it *Cannot* but necessarily determine their Assent.

And from  
the judg-  
ment of  
Mens Con-  
sciences up-  
on their  
own just  
Actions.

Now that the Case is truly thus; that the eternal 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. 2. 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 shew the work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conscience also bearing witness, and their Thoughts the mean while accusing, or else excusing one another.*

It 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 ex-

*Of that natural knowledge which Plato thought to be reminiscence.*

press in his Answers just and adæquate 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 *Præ-existence*. And some others both *Antient* and *Moderns*, have concluded that the *Ideas* of all first and simple Truths, either natural or moral, are *Innate* and originally *impressed* or *stamp'd* 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 propos'd.

The most  
profound  
Men, not  
utterly in-  
ferrible of  
the differ-  
ence of  
Good and  
Evil.

Some Men indeed, who, by means of a very evil and vitious Education, or through a long Habit of Wickedness and Debauchery, have extremely corrupted the Principles of their Nature, and have long accu-



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 profligate of all Mankind; however industriously they endeavour to conceal and deny their self-condemnation; yet 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 he would choose, 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 *Hobbs's* State of Nature, and of Mr *Hobbs's* own Principles; but

\* Quis est enim, aut quis unquam fuit, aut avaritia tam ardenti, aut tam effrenatis cupiditatibus, ut eandem illam rem, quam adipisci scelere quovis velit, non multis partibus malit ad sese, etiam omni impunitate proposita, sine facinore, quam illo modo pervenire? *Cic. de Finib. lib. 3.*

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 *Hobbs's* own Scheme, of Mens 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.

*Mens natural Sense of eternal moral Obligations, proved from the Judgment they all pass upon the Actions of Others.*

But 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 *Others* 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 Mens 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

ference 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 of *Virtue*, † can

yet hardly ever forbear to give it its true Character and Commendation in *Others*.

† Placet suapte natura, adeoq; gratiosa virtus est, ut insitum etiam sic malis probare meliores. Senec. de benef. l. 4.

And this Observation holds true, not only in the generality of *Vicious Men*, but very frequently even in the worse 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 that *he spake as never Man spake*: And the *Roman Governour*, 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*. Even in this case, Men cannot chuse 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

Joh. 7, 46.

Joh 18. 38.



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,

\* Οὐ γὰρ ὕβρου ἐστὶν ἀρετῆς ἀπεσεσθαι μόνον τυγχάνουσιν οἱ πολλοὶ, πλεόντων καὶ τὰ κρείττω καὶ ἀλλὰ καὶ πονηρῶν καὶ ἀφροσύνην δεινὴν δὲ πρὸς θεοῦ καὶ πᾶσι κακοῖς, ὡς ἐσθμυτολλοὶ καὶ τῶν σφόδρα κακῶν, ἐν τοῖς λόγοις καὶ δόξαις ἐκαστῶν τῶν ἀμείνων οἷον ἀνδραγαθῶν καὶ τῶν χείρων. *Plato de Leg. lib. 12.*

that \* even the worst of Men seldom or never make so wrong Judgments 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 practise, 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,

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 it self* 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 'tis manifest 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; yet \* 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 our selves 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 betwixt good and evil? When

\* *Quis Pullum Numitorum, Fregellanum proditorem, quanquam Reipublicæ nostræ profuit non odit? Cic. de Finib. lib. 5.*

it

it comes to be these Mens own Case, to be oppressed by Violence, or over-reached 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 Violaters 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. The Matter of Fact; is not very true: But if it was, 'tis certain there are more Nations and People 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,

sup-



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 is 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 of importance, that they have need also to have them frequently inculcated, and strongly enforced upon them. Which is very true: And is (as as shall hereafter be particularly made to appear) one good Argument for the reasonableness of expecting a *Revelation*.

4. 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 Mens 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

*Of the  
Principal  
Moral  
Obligations  
in particu-  
lar.*

turally flow, or may without difficulty be derived.

*Of Piety,  
or Mens  
Duty to-  
wards  
God.*

*First* 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 it self 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 Governour of all Things: That we employ our whole Beings, and all our Powers and Faculties, in his Service, and for his Glory; that is, in encouraging the practise 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 inable 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 com-  
mands

mands 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 Governour* of all Things, obliges us to pay him all possible *Honour and Veneration; Adoration and Worship*; And his *Unity* requires, that it be paid to *Him alone*: His *Power and Justice*, demand our *Fear*: His *Mercy and Placableness*, encourage our *Hope*: His *Goodness*, necessarily excites our *Love*: His *Veracity and Unchangeableness*, secure our *Trust* in him: The sense of our having *received our Being and all our Powers from him*, makes it infinitely reasonable that we should *employ our whole Beings and all our Faculties in his Service*: The *Consciousness* of our continual *Dependence* upon him, both for our *Preservation* and the *Supply* of every thing we want; obliges us to constant *Prayer*: And *every good thing we enjoy*, the *Air we breath, 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. 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

\* Quem vero Astrorum Ordines, quem dierum noctiumque vicissitudines, quem mensium temperatio, quemque ea quæ gignantur nobis ad fruendum, non *Gratum* esse cogant; hunc Hominem omnino numerare qui decet? *Cic de Legib. lib. 2.*

Ἐ, ἂν ἴδῃς τὴν κοίτην, ἀλλὰ  
Noon-



τι ἔδει ἡμᾶς ποιεῖν καὶ κοινῇ καὶ  
 ὁδῷ, ἢ ὑμνεῖν τὸ θεῖον, καὶ εὐ-  
 φρασεῖν, καὶ ἐπιξέρονται τὰς  
 χεῖρας· καὶ ἔδει καὶ σκῆπτρον  
 καὶ ἀργύρας καὶ ἐδίοντας  
 ἀδελφῶν ἢ ὑμῶν ἢ εἰς τὸ θεῖον.  
 Μέγας ὁ θεός, ὅτι ἡμῶν πα-  
 ρέχεν ὄργανα ταῦτα δι' ὧν τὴν  
 γῆν ἐργασόμεθα; Μέγας ὁ  
 θεός, ὅτι χεῖρας δέδωκεν, &c.  
 Arrian. lib. 1. cap. 16.

Noon-day; And 'tis the  
 greatest Absurdity and Per-  
 verseness in the World,  
 for Creatures indued with  
*Reason*, to attempt to break  
 through and transgress this  
 necessary Order and De-  
 pendency of things. All  
*Inanimate* and all *Irratio-*  
*nal* 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 ex-  
 alted in dignity above the rest of God's  
 Creation, to make themselves the alone  
*Unreasonable* and disorderly part of the  
 Universe! That a *Tree* planted in a fruit-  
 ful Soil, and watered continually with the  
 Dew of Heaven, and cherished constantly  
 with the kindly warmth and benign in-  
 fluence of the Sun-beams, should yet never  
 bring forth either *Leaves* or *Fruit*; is not  
 half so irregular and contrary to Nature,  
 as that a *Rational Being*, created after the  
 Image of God, and conscious of God's do-  
 ing every thing for him, that becomes the  
*Relation* of an infinitely good and bounti-  
 ful *Creator to his Creatures*; should yet ne-  
 ver on his part make any return of those  
 Duties, which arise necessarily from the  
*Relation of a Creature to his Creator*.

Secondly;

Secondly; 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 Righteousness, or the Duty of Men one towards another.

As to the former, viz. *Equity*: The Reason which obliges every Man in Practice, 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, tho' two and three are equal to five, yet five are not equal to two and three.

Of Justice and Equity.

Wherefore \* were not Men strangely and most unnaturally corrupted, by per-

\* Nihil est unum uni tam simili, tam par, quam Omnes inter non metiptos inverse

mus. Quod si depravatio consuetudinum, si opinionum vanitas, non imbecillitatem animorum torqueret, & flecteret quocunq; capisset; sui nemo ipse tam similis esset, quam omnes sunt omnium. — & coleretur Jus aque ab omnibus. *Cic. de leg. lib. 1.*

verse 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 impos-

\* Hoc exigit ipsa Naturæ ratio, quæ est lex divina & humana; cui parere qui velit, nunquam committeret ut alienum appetat, & id, quod alteri detraxerit, sibi assumat. *Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.*

sible, 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 de-

prived 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 *Superiours* and *Inferiours* 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

con-



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 *publick 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 *Governours* 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 Practise 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, it could be represented visibly to mortal Eyes, would raise in us an inexpressible Love and Admiration of it:

\* Δεινὸς γὰρ ἂν παρῆχεν ἔρωτας, εἴπαι τοῖσιν αὐτῆς ἐναργὲς εἰδωλὸν παρῆχέτο, &c. Plat. in Phædr.

Quæ si oculis cerneretur,

mirabiles amores, ut ait *Plato*, excitaret sui. *Cic. de Offic. l. 1.*

Oculorum est in nobis sensus acerrimus, quibus sapientiam non cerimus; Quam illa ardentis amores excitaret sui, si videretur! *Id. de nat. l. 2.*

\* Ἄυτη μὲν ἐστὶν ἡ δὴ καλεῖται αἰσθησιμότης, ἀρετὴ μὲν οὐκ ἐστὶν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπιθυμία. *Lib. lib. 5. c. 3.*

and harmonious, nor the brightness of the Sun and Stars so ornamental to the visible fabrick of the World, as the universal practise 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,

\* Non enim mihi est vita mea utilior, quam animi talis affectio, neminem ut violentam commodi mei gratia. *Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.*

† Καὶ παραρτήσαντες τὴν ψυχὴν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀπάτης, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀδικίας, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀπειρίας, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνομιᾶς, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀκαταστάτου, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀκαταστάτου, καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀκαταστάτου. *Plato de Leg. Lib. 2.*

that \* neither Life it self, nor † 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 practise of this universal Justice and Equity. On the contrary: *Injustice and Iniquity, Violence, Fraud and Oppression;* the universal confusion of right

*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 it self, is so truly beautiful and lovely, that, as \* *Aristotle* 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 fabrick of the World, as the universal practise 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,

that \* neither Life it self, nor † 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 practise of this universal Justice and Equity. On the contrary: *Injustice and Iniquity, Violence, Fraud and Oppression;* the universal confusion of right

right and wrong, and the general neglect and contempt of all the Duties arising from Mens several Relations one to another; is the greatest and most unnatural corruption of God's Creation, that 'tis 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 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 extream cold and darkness; 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 univer-  
sal mutual  
Benevo-  
lence.

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 it self 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

\* Universaliter autem verum est, quod non certius *fluxus puncti* Lineam producit, aut *additio numerorum* Summam, quam quod *Benevolentia* effectum prestat bonum. Cumberland de Leg. Naturæ, pag. 17.

Pari sane ratione [ac in

means; as \* in Mathematicks the *flowing of a Point*, is, to produce a *Line*; or in Arithmetick, the *Addition of Numbers*, to produce a *Summ*; or in Phisicks, *certain kinds of Motions*, to preserve certain *Bodies*,

dies, 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 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 Af-

fection

*Arithmetice operationibus.* }  
 Doctrinæ Moralis veritas fundatur in immutabili concordantia inter *Felicitatem* *Summam* quam hominum vires assequi valent, & *Adus benevolentiae universalis*. *Id. ibid. pag. 23.*

Eadem est mensura *Boni* *Malique*, quæ mensura est *veri falsiq;* in propositionibus pronuntiantibus de efficacia *Morum* ad rerum aliarum *conservationem* & *corruptionem* facientium. *Id. pag. 30.*

\* Angusta admodum est circa nostra tantummodo commoda, *Lætitia* materia; sed eadem erit amplissima, si aliorum omnium *Felicitas* cordi nobis sit. Quippe hæc ad illam, eandem habebit proportionem, quam habet immensa *Beatitudo* Dei, totiusq; *humani generis*, ad curam illam *summæ felicitatis* impellibilem, quam uni homini, e. q. invidio & malevolis, fortunæ bonæ possunt suppedicare, *Id. ibid. pag. 24.*

fection 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 dependencies, by multiplying Affinities; and to enlarge their Friendships, by mutual good Offices; and to establish Societies, by a communication of Arts and Labour: Till

\* In omni honesto, nihil est tam lustre, nec quod latius pateat, quam conjunctio inter homines hominum, & quasi eorum societas & communicatio utilitatum, & ipsa Caritas generis humani, quæ nata a primo factu, quo a procreatoribus nati diliguntur, ——— serpit sensim ferat, cognationibus primum ——— deinde totius complexæ gentis humanæ. Cic. de Finib. lib. 5.

\* by degrees the Affection of *single Persons*, becomes a Friendship of *Families*; and this enlarges it self to a 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 others 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



possible means to establish this Society in any tolerable and durable manner; and in this respect \* all Men stand upon the same level, and have the same natural wants and desires, and are in the same need of each others help, and are equally capable of enjoying the benefit and advantage of Society; 'Tis evident every Man is bound by the Law of his Nature, as he is also prompted by the † Inclination of his uncorrupted Affections, to \* 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 || born to promote the publick good and welfare of all his Fellow-creatures; and consequently obliged, as the necessary and only effectual means to that End, to † embrace them All with universal Love and Benevolence; So that he \* cannot, without acting contrary to the Reason of his own mind, and transgressing the plain and known Law of his Being, do

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

† Impellimur autem Natura, ut prodesse velimus quamplurimis. *Cic. de Finib. lib. 3.*

\* Hominem esse quasi partem quandam civitatis & universi generis humani, eumq; esse conjunctam cum hominibus Humana quadam Societate. *Cic. Quæst. Academic. lib. 1.*

|| Homines hominum causa sunt generati, ut ipsi inter se alii aliis prodesse possint. *Cic. de Offic. lib. 1.*

Ad tuendos conservandosq; homines hominem naturam esse. *Cic. de Finib. lib. 3.*

† Omnes inter se naturali quadam indulgentia & benevolentia contineri. *Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.*

\* Ex quo efficitur, hominem naturæ obedientem, homini nocere non posse. *Cic. de Offic. lib. 3.*

willingly

willingly any hurt and michief to any

|| Οὐ τὴ ἀεὶ ἀνταδικεῖν δεῖ,  
 ἅτε κακῶς ποιεῖν ἕνεκα ἀν-  
 δρώπων· ἕδ' αὖ ὅπῃ πείνη  
 ἔσ' αὐτῶν. Plato in Cri-  
 tane.

Man; no, || not even to those who have first injured him; but ought, for the publick benefit, to endeavour to appease with gentleness, rather than ex- aspearte with retaliations; and finally, to comprehend all in one Word, (which is the top and compleat Perfection of this great Duty,) ought to † Love all others as himself.

aspearte with retaliations; and finally, to comprehend all in one Word, (which is the top and compleat Perfection of this great Duty,) ought to † Love all others as himself.

† Tum illud effici, quod quibusdam incredibile vi- deatur, sic autem necessari- am, ut nihilo sese plus quam alterum diligat. Cic. de Le- gib. lib. 1.

This is the Argumenta- tion of that great Master, Cicero; whose knowledge and understanding of the true state of Things, and of

the original Obligations of humane Na- ture, was as much greater than Mr Hobbs's; as his helps and advantages to attain that knowledge, were less.

Of Sobrie- ty, or Mens Duty to- wards them- selves; and of the Unlaw- fulness of Self-mur- der.

Thirdly, with respect to our Selves, 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 per- form his Duty in all other Instances: That is; he ought to bridle his Appetites, with Tem- perance; to govern his Passions, with Modera- tion; 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 Be- ing as long as he is able, is evident; be- cause what he is not himself the Author and

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 *Stoicks* of old, and the *Deists* of late, have in their ranting Discourses, and some few of them in their rash Practise, 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 \* *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 shou'd, contrary to our direction, and to escape

\* Ἐν πινι οὐδένα ἔσμεν οἱ ἀνθρώποι, καὶ εὖ δεῖ δὴ ἑαυτὸν ἐκείνου ταύτης λύειν, εὐδ' ἀπειθεῖν. — Θεὸς ἔδ' ἡμῶν τοὺς ἐπιμελεμένους καὶ ἡμᾶς τὰς ἀνθρώπων, ἐν ᾗ κτημάτων τοῖς θεοῖς ἔδ'. — Οὐκ ἔστι καὶ σὺ ἂν ᾗ σαυτὸν κτημάτων εἶπαι αὐτὸ ἑαυτὸ ἀπεκλινοῦσαι, μὴ σημήναντός σε ὅτι βέλει αὐτὸ τεθνήσκειν, χαλεπῶν οἱ ἀν' αὐτῶν, καὶ εἴ τινα ἔχῃς πτωχεῖαν, πτωχεῖο ἂν. *Plato* in *Phaed.*



out of our Service, kill himself; think we had just reason to be very angry, and, if it was in our Power, punish him for it? So

\* Verat enim dominans ille in nobis Deus, injussu hinc nos suo demigrare. Cum vero causam justam Deus ipse dederit, nã ille medius fidius vir sapiens, lætus ex his tenebris in lucem illam excesserit; nec tamen illa vincula carceris ruperit; leges enim verant, sed tanquam a magistratu, aut ab aliqua potestate legitima, sic a Deo evocatus, atq; emissus exierit. Cic. *Tusc. Quest. lib. 1.*

\* Illud breve vitæ reliquum nec avide appetendum feribus, nec sine causa deserendum est; Veratq; Pythagoras, injussu Imperatoris, id est, Dei, de præsidio & statione Dei, de præsidio & statione vitæ decedere. Cic. *de Senect.*

† Nisi enim Deus is, cuius hoc Templum est omne quod conspicias, istis te corporis

likewise Cicero: God, says \* he, the Supreme Governour of all things, forbids us to depart hence without his Order: And though, when the divine Providence does it self 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 hast, 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, 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, whose Temple and Palace this whole World

is,

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; least you be found Deserters of the Station appointed you by God. And, to mention no more; That excellent Author, *Arrian*: Wait, saith \* he, 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 mean time, have Patience and tarry in the place where he has appointed you: Wait and do not hurry your selves away wilfully and unreasonably. The Objections, which the Author of the *Defense of Self-murder* prefixed to the *Oracles of Reason*, has attempted to advance against this Argument; are so very weak and childish, that 'tis 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 Commanders Order, is because he entred into the Service

custodiis liberaverit; hoc tibi aditus patere non potest. — Quare & tibi & vni omnibus retinendus est animus in custodia corporis; nec iniussu eius, a quo ille est nobis datus, ex hominum vita migrandum est; ne munus inhumanum assignatum a Deo detegibile videamur. Cic. *Sonn. Scipion.*

\* Ἐκδέξαθε τὸ θεῶν ὅτι ἐκεῖν σπουδῆς ὁ πλοῦτος ὑμῶν ταύτης τὴν ὑπερησίου, τίτ' ὑπολύεθε πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐπι ὅτι παρόντων ἀνάχεται ἐνοικούντες ταύτων τὴν γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡν ἐκεῖν ὑμᾶς ἐταξεν. Μείνετε, μὴ ἀλογίως ἀπέλθῃτε. *Arrian. lib. 1.*

by

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 publick 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 publickly 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



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 \* 'tis 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 dilligence, 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 solicitous to change his State *for the future*, as thereby to neglect his *present Duty*.

\* Οἱ μὲν ἀρεῶν νίκης ἕνεκα πάλης καὶ δρόμων καὶ τῶν τοιούτων, ἐτόλμησαν ἀπεχέσθαι.— Οἱ ὅ ἡμέτεροι παῖδες, ἀδυνατήσουσι καρτερεῖν, πολὺ χαλίου. Ὁ ἕνεκα νίκης; Πλάτο de Leg. li. 8.

From these three great and general Branches, all the smaller and more particular

R

particular

particular Instance of Moral Obligations may (as I said) easily be deduced.

*The Law of Nature eternal, unchangeable, and ab- solutely im- mutable.*

5. And now this, (This eternal Rule of Equity, which we have been hitherto describing,) is that *right Reason*, which makes the principal Distinction betwixt *Man* and *Beasts*. This is the *Law of Nature*, which (as *Cicero* excellently ex-

\* Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna, quæ vocet ad officium iubendo; vetando, a fraude deterreat. ———

Huic legi nec obrogari fas est, neq; derogari ex hac aliquid licet, neq; tota abrogari potest. Nec vero aut per Senatum, aut per populum solvi hac lege possumus. *Cic. de Repub. lib. 3. fragment.*

† Lex quæ seculis omnibus ante nata est, quam scripta lex ulla, aut quam omnino civitas constituta. *Cic. de Leg. lib. 1.*

Legem, neq; hominum ingenii excogitaram, neq; factum aliquod esse populorum, sed æternum quoddam, quod univ. rsam mundum regat. *Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.*

\* Nec si regnante *Tarquinio*, nulla erat *Rome* scripta lex de stupris, idcirco non contra illam legem sempiternam *Sextus Tarquinius* vim *Lucretiæ* attulit. Erat enim ratio protecta a rerum natura, & ad recte faciendum impellens, & a delicto avocans: quæ non tum deniq; incipit lex esse, cum scripta est, sed tum cum orta est: orta autem simul est cum mente divina. *Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.*

presses it) is \* 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 † was in force, before ever any Law was written, or the Foundation of any City or Commonwealth was laid: Which || 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 Perfection or Attributes of God himself; So 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 any whit the more excusable, or that his Sin against the eternal Rule of Equity was at all the less heinous. This is that Law of Nature, † to which the Reason of all Men every where 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 \* no more disproves the natural Assent of all Mens unprejudiced Reason to the Rule of Right and Equity, than the difference of most Mens Countenances in general, or the deformity of some few Monsters in particular, proves

† In judicio de bonitate harum rerum, æque omnes ubiq; conveniunt, ac omnia Animalia in motu Cordis & Arteriarum pulsu, aut omnes homines in opinione de nivis candore & splendore Solis. *Camberland de Leg. Naturæ, pag. 157.*

pag. 47

\* Hoc tamen non magis tollit consensum hominum de generali Natura Boni, ejusq; partibus vel speciebus precipuis, quam levis vultuum diversitas tollit convenientiam inter homines in communi hominum definitione, aut similitudinem inter

ibid



cos in partium principalium conformatione & usu. Nulla gens est, quæ non sentiat affectum deum diligendi, &c. Nulla gens non sentit gratitudinem erga parentes & benefactores toti humano generi salutarem esse. Nulla temperamentorum diversitas facit ut quisquam non bonum esse sentiat universis, ut singulorum innocentium vitæ, membra, & libertas conserventur. *Cumberland. de Legib. Naturæ. pag. 166.*

Nec enim an honorifice de Deo sentiendum sit, neq; 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, & cordibus omnium insculpsisse, ne quisquam cuiquam faceret, quod alium sibi facere iniquum duceret. *Hobbs de Homine, cap. 14. [Inconsistently enough with his own Principles.]*

\* Nam ut vera & falsa, ut consequentia & contraria, sua sponte, non aliena, judicantur: sic constans & perpetua ratio vitæ, quæ est virtus; itemq; inconstantia, quod est vitium, sua natura probatur. *Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.*

† Quod vere dicimus, etiam si a nullo laudetur, laudabile esse natura. *Cic. de Offic. lib. 1.*

that there is no general Likeness or Uniformity in the Bodies of Men: For, whatever difference there may be in some particular Laws, 'tis certain that 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 that 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, as Light and Darkness, as Sweet and Bitter: The † Observance of which, though no Man should commend it, would yet be truly commendable in it self: 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 Custom

Custom to determine; is \* 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; Which, if it had its original from the Authority of Men, and could be changed by it, then † 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 \* 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 wholsom; and that any other thing,

\* Hæc autem in opinione existimare, non in natura ponere, demeritis est. Nam nec Arboris nec Equi virtus, quæ dicitur, in opinione sita est, sed in natura. Cic. de Legib. lib. I.

† Jam vero stultissimum illud, existimare omnia justa esse, quæ scita sint in populorum institutis aut legibus. Etiamne siquæ 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 Legib. lib. I.

\* Quod si populorum iustis, si principum decretis, si sententiis iudicum, iura constituerentur; jus esset latrocinari, jus adulterare, jus testam enta falsa supponere, si hæc suffragiis aut scitis multitudinis probarentur. Quæ si tanta potentia est stultorum sententiis atq; iustis, ut eorum suffragiis rerum natura vertatur, cur non sanciant, ut quæ malæ perniciosæq; sunt, habeantur pro bonis ac salutaribus? aut cur, cum jus ex injuriis lex facere possit, bonum eadem facere non possit ex malo? Id. ibid.

which is now destructive of Mankind, may become preservative of it.

*Eternal Moral Obligations, antecedent in some respect, even to this consideration, of their being the Will and Command of God himself.*

it; so its obligation, primarily and originally, is \* antecedent also

\* *Virutis & Vitiurum, sine ulla Discriminatione, grave ipsius conscientia pondus est. Sic de Nat. Deor. lib. 3.*

† Deniq; nequis obligationem Legum naturalium *arbitrarium & mutabilem* a nobis fingi suspicetur; hoc adjiendum censui; Virtutum exercitium, habere rationem *medii necessarii ad finem*, (seposita consideratione *Imperii Divini*;) manente rerum natura tali qualis nunc est. Hæc autem ita intelligo, uti agnoscunt pleriq; omnes, *Additionem* duarum unitatum duabus prius positis, necessario constituere numerum quaternarium; aut uti *præces geometricæ & mechanicæ*, problemata proposita solvunt *inmutabiliter*; adeo ut nec *sapientia* nec *voluntas Divina* cogitari possit quicquam in contrarium constituere posse. *Camberland de Legib. Naturæ, pag. 241.*

\* *Τὸ ὁρώμενον, ἢ διότι ὁρώμενον γὰρ ἔστι, διὰ τὸ το ὁράται ἀλλὰ πρὸς ἀπὸν διότι ὁρώμεται, διὰ τὸ το ὁρώμενον.*  
! Note, these Words are by

6. Further yet: As this *Law of Nature* is infinitely superiour to all Authority of Men, and independent upon it; so its obligation, primarily and originally, is \* antecedent also even to *this Consideration*, of its being the positive Will or Command of God himself. For, † 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, \* *As in Matters of Sense*, the reason why a thing is visible, is not because 'tis Seen; but it is therefore Seen, because 'tis visible: So in Matters of natural Reason and Morality, that which is Holy and Good

(as



(as Creatures depending upon and worshipping God, and practising Justice and Equity one with another, and the like,) *is not therefore Holy and Good, because it is commanded to be done;*

*but is therefore commanded by God, because it is Holy and Good. The Existence indeed of the Things themselves, whose Proportions and Relations we consider, depend entirely on the mere arbitrary Will and good Pleasure of God; who can create Things when he pleases, and destroy them again when ever 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*

*|| the Law of all his Actions in the Government of the World; and condescends to appeal even to Men, for the Equity and Righteousness of Ezech. 18. 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*

*Picinus* ridiculously translated. *videtur* and *visum est.* Ουκ ἐν κτὲρ ὅσον, διότι ὅσον ὄσι, φιλεῖται, ὑπὸ τῶν θεῶν· ἀλλ' ἐκ ὅτι φιλεῖται, διὰ τὸ το ὅσον ὄσι. *Plato* in *Euthyphr.*

|| Καθ' ἡμᾶς ὡς ἡ αὐτὴ ἀρετὴ ὄσι τῶν μακαρίων πάντων ὡς καὶ ἡ αὐτὴ ἀρετὴ ἀνθρώπων καὶ δεισ. *Uigen advers. Celsum. 110. 4.*

ps. 47. 48.

R †

† has

\* *Distamina Divini Intellectus lanciantur in Leges apud ipsam naturas, per immutabilitatem suam perfectiorum. Cuiusmodi de Leg. Naturae. pag. 343.*

Nos e contra quidem, cum aliis plurimis, antequam donari iurisq; omnis originem universalem & distincte considerassem, *dominium Dei, in Creationem velut integram eius originem, resolve. Verum quoniam, &c.* — in hanc tandem concessi sententiam, *dominium Dei esse jus vel potestatem ei a sua Sapientia & Bonitate, velut a Deo, datam ad regimen earum omnium qua ab ipso unquam creata fuerint vel creabuntur.* — Nec poterit unquam merito conqueri, *dominium dei intra nimis angustos limites hac explicatione coerceri; qua hoc unum dicitur, illius nullam partem consistere in potestate quicquam faciendi contra finem optimum, Bonum commune. Idem pag. 345, 346.*

Contra autem, *Hobbianæ* reseruo *domini Divini in potentiam eius irresistibilem* adeo aperte ducit ad, &c, — — — — — ut mihi dubium non sit, siud ab eo fictum fuisse, Deoque attributum, in eum tantam nam, ut iuri suo omnium in omnia patrocineretur. *Id pag. 344.*

Nos e contrario, fontem indicavimus, e quo demonstrari potest, *Justitiam universalem, omnemq; adeo Virtutem moralem, quæ in Rectore requiritur, in Deo præ cæteris retulere, eadem plane methodo, qua homines ad eas excedendas obligari ostendemus, &c. pag. 347.*

\* has excellently shown,) not barely his infinite Power, but the Rules of this eternal Law, a. e. the true Foundation and the Measure of his Dominion over his Creatures. 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; 'tis 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, tho' necessary to be taken notice of in the distinct Order and Method of Discourse, is in it self too dry, and not of great 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. 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; 'tis 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 practise of what Men were before obliged to by right Reason. There is no Man, who has any just Sense of the difference  
between

*The Law of Nature obligatory, antecedent to all consideration of particular Rewards and Punishments.*



between Good and Evil, but must needs acknowledge, that Virtue and Goodness,

Dignæ itaq; sunt, quæ propter intrinsicam tibi perfectionem appetantur, etiam si nulla esset naturæ Lex, quæ illas imperaret. *Cum-nerland. de Leg. Nat. pag. 251.*

\* are truly amiable, 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,

\* Ἀπὸρ δὲ καὶ ὅστις, ἐχ' ὁ μὴ ἀδικῶν,

Ἀλλ' ὅστις ἀδικεῖν δύναμε-  
ται μὴ βέλεται.

Οὐδ' ὅς τὰ μικρὰ λαμβά-  
σειν ἀτέλεστο,

Ἀλλ' ὅς τὰ μεγάλα καρ-  
τερεῖ μὴ λαμβάνων,

Ἐχεν δύναμει τὸ κ' κερ-  
τεῖν ἀζημίως.

Οὐδ' ὅς γὰρ ταῦτα πάντα  
διατηρεῖ μόνον,

Ἀλλ' ὅστις ἀδούρει γνησίαν  
τ' ἔχων εὐσίαν.

Ἔστι δὲ δικαίον, κ' ἔδεικναι  
τὸ βέλεται.

*Philemonis Fragmenta.*

† Honestum id intelligi-  
mus, quod tale est, ut de-  
tracta omni utilitate, sine  
cuius præmiis fructibusque,  
per seipsum possit jure laudari. *Cic. de Finib. 2.*

Atq; hæc omnia propter se solum, ut nihil adjungatur emolumentum, petenda sunt. *Id. de Inventione lib. 2.*

Nihil est de quo minus dubitari possit, quam & honesta expectanda per se, & eodem modo turpia per se esse fugienda. *Id. de Finib. lib. 2.*

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. This likewise is excellently and admirably expressed by Cicero: *Virtue, saith he, is that, which, though no Profit or Advantage whatsoever, was to be expected to a Man's self from the Practise of it, yet must without all Controversy be acknowledged to be truly desirable for its own sake alone: and accor-*

dingly

dingly \* 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, who has made any tolerable Proficiency in Moral Philosophy, can in the least doubt, but that, 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, lustfully, or any way wickedly: Nay, † if a good Man had it in his Power to gain all his Neighbours 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

\* Jus & omne honestum, sua sponte est expetendum. Etenim omnes viri boni, ipsam aequitatem & jus ipsum amant. *Id. de Legib. lib. 1.*

Optimi quoque permulta ob eam unam causam faciunt, quia decet, quia rectum, quia honestum est; etsi nullum consecuturum emolumentum vident. *Id. de Finib. lib. 2.*

|| Satis enim nobis, (si modo aliquid in philosophia profecimus,) persuasum esse debet, si omnes deos hominesque celare possimus, nihil tamen avaro, nihil iniuste, nihil libidinoso, nihil incontinenter esse faciendum. *Id. de Offic. lib. 3.*

Si nemo sciturus, nemo ne suspicaturus quidem sit, quum aliquid divitiarum, potentia, dominationis, libidinis causa feceris; si id diis hominibusque futurum sis semper ignotum, sisne facturus? *Id. ibid.*

† Itaque si vir bonus habeat hanc vim; ut, si digitis concrepaverit, possit in locupletum testamenta nomen eius irrepere; hac vi non utatur, ne si exploratum quidem habeat id omnino neminem unquam suspicaturum.— Hec qui admiratur, is se, quis sit vir bonus, nescire fateatur. *Idem de Offic. lib. 3.*

\* Καὶ οἱ μὴ δυνάμενοι εἶναι ταῦτα λαμβάνουσιν καὶ θεοὺς καὶ ἀνθρώπους, ὁμοίως ἴστέον ἔστι τὸ λόγος εἶναι ἵνα αὐτὴ δεικνύσῃ πρὸς ἀδικίαν αὐτῶν κριθεῖν. *Plato de Republ. lib. 10.*

*good Men.* 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 appear more clearly and undeniably.

*Yet it does not follow from thence at all, 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 practise of Virtue in this present World.*

Thus far is clear: 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 practise of Virtue and Righteousness in this present World. 'Tis 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 practise 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 practise 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 practise of

of



of Vice is accompanied with great Temptations and Allurements of Pleasure and Profit ; and the practise of Virtue is often threatned with great Calamities, Losses, and sometimes even with Death it self : And this alters the Question, and destroys the practise 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 intirely *Self-sufficient*, and able to support a Man under all kinds of Sufferings, and even Death it self, for its sake ; without any prospect of future recompence. Here therefore began the Error of the *Stoicks* ; who taught that the bare practise of Virtue, was it self the chief Good, and able of it self to make a Man happy under all the Calamities in the World. Their defense indeed of the cause of Virtue, was very brave : They saw well that its excellency was intrinsic, and founded in the Nature of the 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 it self, or ever make it cease to be truly

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 practise of Virtue a sufficient Reward to it self 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

\* Est autem unus dies bene & ex præceptis tuis actus, peccanti immortalitati anteponendus. *Cic. Tusc. Quæst. l. 5.*

† Quæro si duo sint, quorum alter optimus vir, aequissimus, summa justitia, singulari fide; alter insigni scelere & 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: proq; hac opinione omnium civium, bonus ille vir vexetur, rapiatur, manus ei dæmque auferantur, effodiuntur oculi, damnetur, vincitur, uratur, exterminetur, egeat; postremo, jure etiam optimo omnibus miserimus esse videatur; contra autem, ille improbus laudetur, colatur, ab omnibus diligatur, omnes ad eum honores, omnia imperia, omnes opes, omnes nemique copiarum conferantur, vir denique optimus omnium æstimatione, & dignissimus omni fortuna judicetur: Quis tandem erit tam demens, qui dubitet utrum se esse malit. *Idem de Republ. lib. 3. fragment.*

only \* infinitely to be preferred before all the sinful Pleasures in the World; but also † that a Man ought without Scruple to chuse, 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 Practise of some few of them, as of *Regulus* for instance, who chose to die the cruellest Death that could be invented, rather than break his Faith with an Enemy; is indeed very wonderful and to be admired. But

yet, after this, 'tis 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 meer 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 reasonably to be expected they should, part with all the Comforts of Life, and even Life it self; without expectation of any future Recompence. So that, if we suppose no future State of Rewards, it will follow, that God has endued Men with such Faculties, as put them under a necessity of approving and chusing 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 ought to have led them to some farther Consequences also, which I shall have occasion particularly to deduce hereafter.

And



The mani-  
fest Ab-  
surdities  
of Mr  
Hobbs's  
Doctrine  
concerning  
the origi-  
nal 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 Hobbs'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 Governours, 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 Hobbs builds his whole Doctrine in this matter, may most easily appear.

I. First then, the Ground and Foundation of Mr Hobbs's Scheme, is this;

that \* *All Men being equal by nature, and naturally desiring the same things, have † every one a Right to every Thing; are every one desirous to have absolute Dominion*

\* Ab aequalitate Naturæ erit unicuique ea, quæ cupit, acquirendi Spes. *Leviathan. c. 13.*

† Natura dedit unicuique jus in omnia. Hoc est in statu mere naturæ, sive ante-

quam homines ullis pactis sese invicem obstrinxissent, unicuique licebat facere quæcunque & in quoscunque libebat; & possidere, uti, sibi omnibus, quæ volebat & poterat. *De Civitate, c. 1. § 10.*

over

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 || contradictory to each other; that is, that a thing may be Right, at the same time that it is confessed to be Wrong. For Example; if every Man has a Right to preserve his own Life, then \* 'tis 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. Hobbs's State of Nature and Equality, every Man having an equal right to preserve his own Life, 'tis evident has a right to an equal proportion

|| Si impossibili sit singularis, omnes & omnia sibi met subicere; ratio quæ hunc finem proponit singularis, qui uni tantum contingere potest, sæpius quam millies proponeret impossibile, & semel tantum possibile. Cumberl. de Leg. Nat. pag. 217.

\* Nec potest cujusquam jus seu libertas ab ulla lege relicta, eo extendere, ut liceat oppugnare ea, quæ aliis eadem Lege imperantur tacitè. Id. pag. 219.

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 *publick Benefit*, to take to himself more than his *Proportion*, is the Beginner of Iniquity, and the Author of all succeeding Mischiefs.

2. To avoid this Absurdity therefore Mr *Hobbs* 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

† Omnium adversus omnes, perpetuæ Suspiciones. — Bellum omnium in Omnes. *De Cive*, c. 1. § 12.

\* Spes unicuique securitatis conservationisq; suæ in eo fra est, ut viribus artibusq; propriis proximum suum vel palam vel ex insidiis preoccupare possit. *Ibid.* c. 5. § 1.

Securitatis viam meliorem habet nemo Anticipatione. *Leviath.* c. 13.

have † perpetual jealousy and suspicions of each other *Incroaching*; therefore just precaution gives every one a Right to \* endeavour 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. But this is even

a plainer Absurdity, if possible, than the former. For (besides that according to Mr *Hobbs's* Principles, Men, before positive Compacts, may justly do what mischief they please, even without the pretence of *Self-preservation*;) what can be

more



more ridiculous, than to imagin 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 entring 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 † 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. 'Tis true, Men by entring into *Compacts* and making *Laws*, agree to Compell 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 it self to hold them to in Practice: And so *Compacts* must be acknowledged to be *in fact* a great Addition and Strengthening of Mens Security. But this Compulsion makes no alteration in the *Obligation* it self; And only shows, that That entirely lawless State, which Mr *Hobbs* calls the *State of Nature*, is by no Means truly *Natural*, and 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

† See *de Cive*, c. 3. § 1.

presently prove more fully from some other Considerations.

3. Another notorious Absurdity and Inconsistency in Mr *Hobbs'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

\* *Man's own Will is his only Law; that † nothing a Man can do, is Unjust; and that †† 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 Hobbs had lived in such a State of Nature, and had happened to be himself the*

\* *Unicuique licet facere quæcumque libet. De Cive, c. 1. § 13.*

† *Consequens est, ut Nichil dicendum sit Injustum. Nemina Justi & Injusti, locum in hac conditione non habet. Leviath. c. 13.*

†† *Ex his sequitur, Injuriam nemini fieri posse, nisi ex quocumque initur pactum.*

———— *Siquis alicui noceat, quocum nihil pactus est; damnum ei interit, non Injuriam* ——— *Etenim si is qui damnum recipit, injuriam expostularet; is qui fecit sic diceret. quid tu mihi? quare facerem ego tuo potius, quam meo libitu? &c.*

*In qua ratione, ubi nulla intercesserunt pacta, non video quid sit quod possit reprehendi. De Cive, c. 3. § 4.*

Suffering

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 \* to seek Peace, and † to enter into Compacts to remedy the fore-mentioned Mischiefs.

\* Prima & fundamentalis Lex Naturæ est, querendam esse pacem, ubi haberi potest, &c. *De Civ.*, c. 2 § 2.

† See *de Civ.*, cap. 2 & 3.

Now if Men are obliged by the original reason and nature of things to seek terms of Peace, and 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 Hobbs in the || place now cited, vindicates from being guilty of any Injustice: And therefore here-

|| Ex his sequitur, Injuriam nemini fieri posse, &c.

in 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 \* the Rules or Distinctions of Good and Evil, Honest and Dishonest, are mere civil Constituti-

\* Regulas boni & mali, justii & injusti, honesti & inhonesti, esse leges civiles; ideoque quod legibus præcepit, ad præceptum, quod



venuerit, id pro malo habendum esse. *De Cive*, c. 12. § 1.

Quod Actio iusta vel iniusta sit, a jure imperantis provenit. Reges legitimi quæ imperant, iusta faciunt imperando, quæ vetant, verando faciunt iniusta. *De Cive*, c. 12. § 1. [In which Section 'tis worth observing how he ridiculously interprets those Words of *Salomon*, (*Dabis servo tuo cor docile ut possit Discernere inter bonum & malum*) to signify, not his Understanding or Discerning, but his Decreeing what shall be good and what evil.]

† si tamen Lex civilis iubeat invadere aliquid, non est illud *Furtum Adulterium*, &c. *De Cive*, c. 14. §. 10.

¶ Sequitur ergo legibus illis, non *Occides non Machabere, non Furabere. Parentes honorabis*, nihil aliud præcepisse Christum, quam ut cives & subditis suis Principibus & summis Imperatoribus in quæstionibus omnibus circa *meum, tuum, suum, alienum*, absolute obedirent. *De Cive*, c. 17. § 10.

\* si quærat an obediendum civitati sit, si imperetur Deum colere sub *Imagine*, coram iis qui id fieri honorificum esse putant; Certe faciendum est. *De Cive*, c. 15. § 18.

† Universaliter & in omnibus obedire obligamur. *De Cive*, c. 14. § 10.

Dicitur alia, quæ Obedientiæ civili repugnat, est, quicquid faciat *Civis* quicumq; contra *Conscientiam* suam, peccatum esse. *Levith*. c. 29.

Opinio eorum qui docent, peccare subditos, quoties mandata Principum suorum, quæ sibi *Iniusta* videntur esse, exsequuntur, & erronea est, & inter eas numeranda quæ Obedientiæ civili adversantur. *De Cive*, c. 12. § 2.

ons; and whatever the Chief Magistrate Commands, is to be accounted Good; whatever he forbids, Evil: that 'tis the Law of the Land only, which makes Robbery to be Robbery; or Adultery, to be Adultery; that || the Commandments, 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 (for in this instance he cautiously excepts Christian ones) it is lawful and their Duty to do it; and (agrecable, as a natural Consequence to all This;) that † 'tis

*Mens positive Duty to obey the Commands of the Civil Power in all things, even in things clearly and directly against their Conscience; (that is, that 'tis their positive Duty to do That, which at the same time they know plainly it is their Duty not to do:)*

\* 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 Humane Laws and Constitutions have || Power to make Light be Darkness, and Darknes 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 Civil Authority is to judge of all Opinions and Doctrines whatsoever; to \* determine Questions Philosophical, Mathematical; and, because indeed the signification of Words is arbitrary, even || 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 humane Laws; as that

\* Concludendum est. Legem Naturæ semper & ubiq; obigare in Foro interno, sive conscientiæ; non semper in Foro externo; sed tum solummodo, cum secure id fieri possit. De Cive, c. 3.

that Humane

|| Quæ si tanta potentia est stultorum sententiis atq; iustis, ut eorum suffragiis rerum natura vertatur; cur non sanciant, ut quæ malæ perniciosæq; sunt, habeantur pro bonis ac salutaribus? Cicero de Legib. lib. 1.

† De Cive, c. 6. § 11.

\* Ibid. c.

17. § 12.

† Ibid. c.

18. § 4.

† Nec; enim an honorifice de Deo sentiendum sit, nec; an sit amandus, timendus, colendus, dubitari potest. Sunt enim hæc Religionem per omnes gentes communia. *De Homine* c. p. 14.

\* Si is qui summam habet imperium, seipsum, imperantium dico, interficere alicui imperet; non tenetur. Nec; Parentem, &c. cum filius mori quam vivere infamis atq; exelus malit. Et alii casus sunt, cum mandata tactu inhonesta sunt, &c. *De Cive*, c. 6. § 13.

‡ Lex naturalis est *Pactis standum esse*, sive fidem observandam esse. *De Cive*, c. 3. § 1.

† Lex naturalis omnes leges civiles jubet observari. *Ibid.* c. 14. § 10.

\*\* Legem Civilem, quæ non sit lata in contumeliam Dei (*cujus respectu ipse Civitates non sunt sui juris, nec dicuntur leges ferre*) &c. *De Cive*, c. 14. § 10.

*Pacti violatio* &c. See *de Cive*, c. 3. § 3.

† *God is to be Loved, Honoured and Adored*; 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; as that || *Compacts ought to be faithfully performed*, and *Obedience* † *to be duly paid to Civil Powers*: The Obligation of *these Things*, he is forced to deduce intirely from the internal Reason and Fitness of the Things themselves; \*\* *antecedent to, independent upon, and unalterable* by all Humane 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 Humane 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



Obligations be sufficiently clear and evident; so that he who or \* wilfully breaks his Faith, is (according to Mr Hobbs's own Reasoning) guilty of as great an Absurdity in Practise, 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 it self; 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 *Humane Constitutions* whatsoever: And consequently, Mr Hobbs'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

+ See de  
Civ. c. 4.  
§ 10.

\* Est Similitudo quadam inter id, quod in vita communi vocatur *Injuria*, & id, quod in Scholis solet appellari *Absurdum*. Quemadmodum enim is, cui argumentis cogitur ad negationem assertionis quam prius asseruerat, dicitur redigi ad *Absurdum*: eodem modo is, qui prae animi impotentia facit vel omittit id quod se non facturum vel non omitturum pacto suo ante promiserat, *Injuriam* facit: neq; minus in contradictionem incidit, quam qui in Scholis reducitur ad *Absurdum* — Est itaq; *Injuria*; *Absurditas* eadem in conversatione: sicut *Absurditas* *Injuria* eadem est in disputatione. De Civ. c. 3. § 3.

trary 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 *Hobbs* 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 it self*, 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

† Ex his sequitur, injuriam nemini fieri posse, nisi ei quocum inicitur pactum. De Civ. c. 3. § 4. [Which whole Section highly deserves to be read and well considered, as containing the Secret of Mr Hobbs's whole Scheme.]

satisfy an † arbitrary humour 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 ones 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

\* this

\* this way also, Mr *Hobbs's* whole Scheme is intirely destroyed.

4. That State, which Mr *Hobbs* 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, 'tis true, in his own Defense, be necessitated, in compliance with the Laws of Nature and Reason, to make War upon his Fellows: But the first Aggressours, who upon Mr *Hobbs's* Principles, (that all Men

\* Itaq; patet quod, si Hobbiana ratiocinatio esset valida, omnis simul *Legum Civilium* obligatio collaberetur; nec aliter fieri potest quin eorum vis labefacteretur ab omnibus principis, quæ Legum naturalium vim tollunt aut minuunt; quoniam in his fundatur & regiminis civilis auctoritas ac securitas, & legum a civitatibus latarum vigor. *Cumberland. de Leg. Nat. pag. 302.*

Etiam extra regimen civile, a multis omnigenis simul consideratis tutior erit qui actibus externis Leges Naturæ constantissime observabit, quam qui, juxta doctrinam Hobbianam, vi aut insidiis alios omnes conando præoccupare, securitatem sibi quaiverit. *Id. pag. 304.*

|| *Voluntas latendi*. omnibus inest in statu Naturæ. *De Cive, c. 1. § 4.*

\* In statu naturali, unicuique licet tacere quæcumque; & in quocumque licet. *Ibid. § 10.*



on; these can never, by any colour what-  
soever, be excused from

† Si nihil existimas con-  
tra naturam fieri, homini-  
bus violandis; quid cum  
eo differas, qui omnino ho-  
minem ex homine tollat?  
*Cic. de offic. lib. 3.*

|| Ταύτη ἡ δίχαι ἔδ' εἶναι  
τοιαύτῃ εὐσεί — γυγνό-  
μενα, τέχνη καὶ τοῖς νόμοις,  
ἀλλ' ἔδ' ἡ πῦρ εὐσεί — Φασ-  
κόντων εἶναι τὸ δικαιοτάτου  
δ, πῦρ ἀνὴρ βιαζόμενος  
ὄθεν ἀσέβει τε καὶ σέβει —  
ὄστω λ' ἔω ἀνθρώπων νέων  
σημασία τολετοῖ τε καὶ ἰδίους  
οἰκίαις. *Plato de Leg. lib.*  
10.

\* Homines Libertatis &  
Dominii per naturam amato-  
res. *Leviath. c. 17.*

Nemini dubium esse de-  
bet, quin avidius terrentur  
homines natura sua, si me-  
tus abesset, ad *Dominationem*  
quam ad *Societatem*. *De*  
*Cive, c. 1. § 2.*

having † *utterly devested*  
*themselves of Humane Na-*  
*ture*, and having || intro-  
duced into the World, con-  
trary to all the Laws of  
Nature and Reason, the  
greatest Calamities and  
most unnatural Confusion,  
that Mankind by the high-  
est Abuse of their natural  
Powers and Faculties, are  
capable of falling under.  
Mr *Hobbs* pretends indeed,  
that one of the first and  
most natural Principles of  
humane Life, is \* a Desire  
necessarily arising in every  
Man's Mind, of having  
Power and Dominion over  
Others; and that this na-  
turally impells Men to use  
Force and Violence to ob-  
tain it: But neither is

it true, that Men, following the di-  
ctates of Reason and uncorrupted Na-  
ture, desire disproportionate Power and  
Dominion over others; neither, if  
it was natural to desire such Power,  
would it at all follow that it was  
agrecable to nature to use violent and  
hurtful means to obtain it. For since  
the only natural and good reason to de-  
fire Power and Dominion (more than  
what is necessary for every Man's Self-  
prefer-

preservation) is, that the Possessor of such Power may have a larger compass and greater Abilities and Opportunities of doing good, (as is evident from God's exercise of perfectly *Absolute Power*;) 'tis 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 *Hobbs* himself unwarily proves against himself, by those very Arguments, whereby he indeavours 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 Mens using themselves (as the Animals he is speaking of, cannot do,) to † *Strive about Honours and Dignities, till the Contention grows up into Hatred, Seditious and Wars;* to \* *separate each one his private Interest from the publick, 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 others management, and thro' Self-conceit bring in continual In-*

† Homines inter se de Honoribus & Dignitatibus perpetuo contendunt; sed Animalia illa [Apes & Formicæ] non item Itaq; inter Homines Invidia, Odium, Bellum, &c. *Leviath. c. 17.*

\* Inter Animalia illa, Eorum publicum & privatum idem est. — Homini autem in bonis propriis nihil tam jucundum est, quam quod alienis sunt maiora. *Id.*

‖ Animantia quæ rationem non habent, nullum defectum vident, vel videre se

*novations*

putant, in administratione  
suarum rerum publicarum :  
Sed in multitudine Hominum  
plurimi sunt qui præ cæteris  
sapere existimantes, conan-  
tur res novare ; & diversi  
novatores innovant diversis  
modis ; id quod est distractio  
& bellum civile. *De Cive,*  
c. 5. § 5.

† Animantia illa verborum  
arte illa carent, qua homi-  
nes alii aliis videri faciunt  
Bonum Malum, & Malum  
Bonum ; Magnum Parvum,  
& Parvum Magnum. *Levi-  
ath. c. 17.*

\* Animalia bruta, quam-  
diu bene sibi est, cæteris non  
invident : Homo autem tum  
maxime molestus est, quan-  
do otio opibusq; maxime  
abundat. *Ibid.*

‡ Consensio creaturarum  
illarum brutarum naturalis  
est ; hominum pacticia tan-  
tum, id est artificiosa. *De  
Cive, c. 5. § 5.*

ftion, could  
instanced in.

5. Lastly, That chief and principal Ar-  
gument, which is one of the main Foun-  
dations of Mr *Hobbs's* and his Followers

‡ Regni Divini naturalis  
Jus derivatur ab eo, quod  
*Divine Potentie resistere im-  
possibile est.* *Leviath. c. 31.*

In regno naturali, reg-  
nandi & puniendi eos qui

novations and distractions  
to † impose one upon ano-  
ther, by Lyes, Falsifying and  
Deceit, calling good evil, and  
evil good ; to \* grow envious  
at the prosperity of others,  
or proud and domineering  
when themselves are in ease  
and plenty ; and to ‡ keep up  
tolerable Peace and Agree-  
ment among themselves, mere-  
ly by artificial Compacts and  
the compulsion of Laws. All  
which things, are so far  
from being truly the Na-  
tural Effects and result of  
Mens Reason and other Fa-  
culties ; that on the contra-  
ry they are evidently some  
of the grossest Abuses and  
most unnatural Corrupti-  
ons thereof, that any one  
who was arguing on the  
opposite side of the Que-  
easily have chosen to have

System ; namely, that †  
*Gods* irresistible Power is  
the only foundation of his  
Dominion, and the only  
measure of his Right over  
his Creatures ; and conse-  
quently,



quently, \* 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; 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;) 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 *Hobbs's* Scheme; since *Dominion* is founded in *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

leges suas violant, jus Deo est a sola potentia irresistibili. De Cive, c. 15. §. 5.

Iis quorum Potentiæ resisti non potest, & per consequens Deo omnipotenti, jus Dominandi ab ipsa potentia derivatur. Ibid.

\* Nam quoniam Deus jus ad omnia habet; & jus Dei nihil aliud est quam ipsa Dei potentia; hinc sequitur, unaniquamq; rem naturalem tantum juris ex natura habere, quantum potentie habet. Spinoz. de Monarch. cap. 2. [See also Tractat. Theolog. politic. cap. 16.] -- pag. 87.

† See Cumberland de Leg. Nature, locis supra citatis:

be

\* See  
*Hobbs de*  
*Cive, c. 3*  
§ 4.

be as *Just* and *Right*, and \* *with as little reason to be complained of*, 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 appears every where over all his Works.

Here Mr *Hobbs*, as an unanswerable Argument in defense of his Assertion, ur-

† Quod si jus regnandi habeat Deus ab Omnipotentia sua, manifestum est Obligationem ad præstandum ipsi obedientiam, incumbere hominibus propter imbecillitatem. [To explain which, he adds in his Note:] Si cui durum hoc videbitur, illum rogo ut tacita cogitatione considerare velit, si essent duo Omnipotentes, uter utri obedire obligaretur. Confitebitur, credo, neutrum neutri obligari. Hoc si verum est, verum quod; est quod posui, homines ideo Deo subiectos esse, quia omnipotentes non sunt. De Cive c. 15. § 7.

ges; 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, 'tis 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; 'tis true they could not indeed be obliged to the *proper Relative Duty of created and dependent Be-*

ings, viz to obey the Will and Command of another in things *Positive*: But from their Obligation to the Practise of *Moral Virtues*, of *Justice*, *Righteousness*, *Equity*, *Holiness*, *Purity*, *Goodness*, *Beneficence*, *Faithfulness* and *Truth*, from which Mr *Hobbs* fallaciously in this Argument, and most impiously in his whole Scheme, indeavours

\* 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.

\* Ut enim cunctam vim & naturam Deorum; ne homines quidem ceteris, nisi imbecilli essent, futuros beneficis & benignos tuisset. Cic. de Nat. Deor. lib. 1.

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 where-with, or in opposition to which, all Doctrines whatsoever, supported by what pretense of Reason or Authority soever, are as certainly and necessarily false, as *God* is true.

II. Though these eternal moral Obligations are indeed of themselves incumbent on all rational Beings, even antecedent to the considera-

T

tion:



tion of their being the positive *Will and Command* of God; yet that which most strongly confirms, and in practise most effectually and indispensably inforces 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.

*That moral Duties are the positive Will and Command of God, proved from the consideration of the Divine Attributes.*

For 1<sup>st</sup>, 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 likewise be his Will, that all his Creatures should be so also, according to the Proportions and Capacities of their several Natures. That there are eternal and necessary Differences of Things, Agreements and Disagreements,  
Pro-

Proportions and Disproportions, Fitnesſes and Unfitnesſes of Things, abſolutely in their own Nature; has been before largely demonſtrated: *That* with regard to theſe fixt 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 it ſelf to chooſe always what in the whole is Beſt and Fiteſt 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 infinite-

ly 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 has an infinitely tenderer and heartier concern for the Happiness of his Creatures, than mortal Man 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. 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



we cannot approve our selves 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, 'tis of all things most manifest that he is;) it follows, that 'tis 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 endued 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 his Sun to rise on the Evil and on the Good, and sending Rain on the Just and on the Unjust*; having never left himself wholly without *Witness*, but always doing Good, giving 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

Heb. 1, 13.

Mat. 5, 45.

Acts 14, 17.

the several Effects and Blessings of the Divine universal Goodness. Lastly, if God is himself a Being of infinite *Mercy* and *Compassion*; as 'tis plain he bears long with Men before he punishes them for their Wickedness, and often freely forgives them his *ten thousand Talents*: It must need be his Will, that they should forgive one another their *hundred Pence*; being *merciful* one to another, as *he is merciful* to them all; and *having Compassion* each 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 U-fitnesses of Things*, and the *necessary Perfections or Attributes of God*;

Mat. 18,  
24, 28.

Lu. 6. 36

Mat. 11.  
23.

\* Ita principem Legem illam & ultimam, mentem esse omnia ratione aut cogentis auctoritatis Dei. Cic. de Legib. lib. 2.

Quævis non modo senior est quam res populorum & civitatum. sed æqualis illius cæli aq; terras tuentis & regentis Dei. Neq; enim esse Mens Divina sine ratione potest, nec ratio divina non hanc vim in rebus pravissq; sancienda habere. Ibid.

† Vis Deos propitiare? Bonus esto: Satis illos colat. cui imitatus est. Senec. epist. 9..

proving equally at the same time that \* That which is truly the *Law of Nature*, or the *Reason of Things*, is in like manner the *Will of God*. And from hence the Soberest and most Intelligent Persons among the Heathens in all Ages, very rightly and wisely concluded, that the best and certainest part of Natural Religion, which was of the greatest importance, and wherein was the least danger of their being mistaken; was † to *imitate* the moral *Attributes of God*, by a Life of

of Holiness, Righteousness and Charity: Whereas in the *External* part of their Worship, there was nothing but Uncertainty and Doubtfulness: It being absolutely impossible, without express Revelation, to discover what, in that particular, they might be secure would be truly acceptable to God.

This Method of deducing the *Will* of God, from his *Attributes*; is of all others the best and clearest, the certainest and most universal, that the Light of Nature affords. Yet there are also (as I said) some other collateral considerations, which help to prove and confirm the same thing; namely, that all moral Obligations, arising from the Nature and Reason of Things, are likewise the positive Will and Command of God. As

2. This appears in some measure from the consideration of God's Creation. For God by *Creating* Things, manifests it to be his Will, that Things should be *what they Are*. And as Providence wonderfully preserves things in their present State; and all necessary Agents, by constantly and regularly obeying the Laws of their Nature, necessarily employ all their Natural Powers in promoting the same End; so 'tis evident it cannot

Καὶ γὰρ δεῖνόν ἄν εἴη, εἰ πρὸς τὰ δῶρα καὶ τὰς εὐσίας ἀποβλέψασιν ἡμῶν οἱ θεοὶ, ἀλλὰ μὴ πρὸς τὴν εὐχρυσίαν ἃς πρὸς ὅσιν καὶ δίδασκον ὡς ἰουδαίῃσι Πτολεμαῖον γράμματα, οἰμαί. ἢ πρὸς τὰς τελευταίας ταύτας περιπαῖς τε καὶ εὐσίας. Plato in Alcibi de 2.

Colitur autem, non aurorum opumque corporibus contrucidatis, nec auro argentoque suscipio, nec in thesauros siipe in'usa; sed pia et recta voluntate. Senec. epist 116.



\* Mens humana non potest non judicare, esse longe credibilius, quod eadem constantissima voluntas, a qua hominibus datum est esse, pariter mallet ipsos porro esse & valere, hoc est, conservari & felicitate frui, quam illo derubarum de situ, in quo ipsos collocavit. — Sic scilicet e voluntate creandi, cognoscitur voluntas conservandi tuendiq; homines. Ex hac autem innotescit obligatio, qua tenemur ad inserviendum eidem voluntati notæ. *Cumberl. de Leg Nat. pag. 227.*

not but \* be the *Will* of God, that all rational Creatures, whom he has indued with those singular Powers and Faculties, of Understanding, Liberty and Free-Choice, whereby they are exalted in Dignity above the rest of the World; should likewise employ those their extraordinary Faculties in preserving the *Order and Harmony* of the Creation, and not introducing *Disorder and Confusion* therein. The

Nature induced and Relations, the Proportions and Disproportions, the Fitnesses and Unfitnesses of Things, are eternal and in themselves absolutely unalterable; But this is only upon Supposition that the Things Exist, and that they Exist in such manner as they at present do. Now that things Exist in such manner as they do, or that they Exist at all, depends entirely on the Arbitrary Will and good Pleasure of God: At the same time therefore, and by the same means, that God manifests it to be his Will that things should Exist, and that they should Exist in such manner as they do; (as by *Creating* them he at first did, and by *Preserving* them he still continually does, declare it to be his Will they should;) he at the same time manifestly declares, that all such moral Obligations, as are the *result of the necessary Proportions*  
and

and Relation of Things, are likewise His positive Will and Commands. And consequently, whoever acts contrary to the before-mentioned Reason and Proportion of Things; by dishonouring God, by introducing unjust and unequal Dealings among Equals, by destroying his own Being, or by any way corrupting, abusing and misapplying the Faculties wherewith God has endued him; (as has been above more largely explained :) is unavoidably guilty of Transgressing at the same time the positive Will and Command of God, which in this manner also, is sufficiently discovered and made known to him.

And from the Tendency of the practice of Morality to the Good and Happiness of the whole World.

3. The same thing may likewise further appear from the following Consideration. Whatever tends directly and certainly to promote the Good and Happiness of the Whole, and (as far as is consistent with that chief End) to promote also the Good and Welfare of every particular part of the Creation; must needs † be agreeable to the Will of God; who being infinitely Self-sufficient to his own Happiness, could have no other Motive to create Things at all, but only that he might communicate to them his Goodness and Happiness; and who consequently cannot but expect and require, that all his Creatures should according to their several

† Dubitari non potest, quin Deus, qui ita naturam rerum omnium ordinem constituit, ut talia sint actionum humanarum consequentia erga ipsos auctores, fecitq, ut ordinaria hæc consequentia ab ipsis præscribi possint, aut summa cum probabilitate expectari; voverit hæc ab his considerari, antequam ad agendum se accingerent; atq, eos his præmissis velut argumentis in Legum sanctione contentis determinari. *Cum eol. de Leg. Nat. pag 22.*

Powers

Reffor, seu Cauſa prima rationalis, cujus voluntate res ita diſponuntur, ut hominibus ſatis evidenter indicetur, Actus quorſdam illorum eſſe media neceſſaria ad finem iſſis, neceſſarium!; *Vult* homines ad hos Actus obligari, vel hos Actus Imperat. *Id.* pag. 285.

Powers and Faculties, endeavour to promote the ſame end. Now that the exact obſervance of all thoſe moral Obligations, which have before been proved to ariſe neceſſarily from the Nature and Relations of Things; (that is to ſay, li-

ving agreeably to the unalterable Rules of Juſtice, Righteouſneſs, Equity and Truth;) is the certaineſt and directeſt means to promote the Welfare and Happineſs, as well of every Man in particular, both in Body and Mind, as of all Men in general conſidered with reſpect to Society; is ſo very manifeſt, that even the greateſt Enemies of all Religion, who ſuppoſe it to be nothing more than a worldly or State-policy, do yet by that very ſuppoſition confeſs thus much concerning it. And indeed This, it is not poſſible for any one to deny. For the practice of *moral*

† Pari ſane ratione (*ac in Arithmetiſis operationibus*) Doctrinæ Moralis veritas fundatur in immutabili coherencia inter Felicitatem ſummam quam Hominum vires aſſequi valent, & Actus Benevolentiaſ universalis. *Id.* pag. 23.

*Virtue* does † as plainly and undeniable tend to the *Natural Good* of the World; as any *Physical Effect* or *Mathematical Truth*, is naturally conſequent to the Principles on which it depends, and from which it is regularly derived: And

without ſuch Practice in ſome degree, the World can never be happy in any tolerable meaſure: As is ſufficiently evident from Mr *Hobbs's* own deſcription of the extreme miserable



miserable condition that Men would be in, through the Total Defect of the Practise of all *moral Virtue*, if they were to live in That State which He styles (falsely and contrary to all reason, as has been before fully proved,) *the State of Nature*; but which really is a State of the grossest Abuse and most unnatural corruption and misapplication of Men's natural Faculties, that can be imagined. For since God has plainly so constituted the nature of Man, that they stand continually in need of each others Help and Assistance, and can never live comfortably without Society and mutual Friendship, and are endued with the Faculties of Reason and Speech, and with other natural Powers, evidently fitted to enable them to assist each other in all matters of Life, and mutually to promote universal Love and Happiness; 'tis manifestly agreeable to nature, and to the *Will of God* who gave them these Faculties, that they should employ them wholly to this regular and good End: And consequently, 'tis on the contrary evident likewise, that all Abuse and Misapplication of these Faculties, to hurt and destroy, to cheat and defraud, to oppress, insult, and domineer over each other; is directly contrary both to the dictates of Nature and to the *Will of God*; who, necessarily doing always what is Best and Fittest and most for the benefit of the whole Creation, 'tis manifest cannot will the corruption and destruction of any of his Creatures; any otherwise than as his  
Preserving

## *The Evidences of Natural*

Preserving their natural Faculties, (which in themselves are good and excellent, but cannot but be capable of being abused and misapplied,) necessarily implies a consequential Permission of such Corruption.

And This now, is the great Aggravation of the Sin and Folly of all Immorality; that it is an obstinate setting up the *Self-Will* of frail, finite, and fallible Creatures; as in Opposition to the eternal *Reason* of Things, the unprejudiced *Judgment* of their own Minds, and the general *Good and Welfare* both of Themselves and their Fellow-creatures; so also in Opposition to the *Will* of the Supreme *Author and Creator* of all Things, who gave them their Beings and all the Powers and Faculties they are endued with: In Opposition to the *Will* of the All-wise *Preserver and Governor* of the Universe, on whose gracious Protection they depend every moment for the preservation and continuance of their Beings: And in Opposition to the *Will* of their greatest *Benefactor*, to whose Bounty they wholly owe whatever they enjoy at present, and all the Hopes of what they expect hereafter. This is the highest of all Aggravations; The utmost *Unreasonableness*, joyned with obstinate *Disobedience* and with the greatest *Ingratitude*.

III. *Though the fore-mentioned eternal Moral Obligations, are incumbent indeed on all rational Creatures, antecedent to any respect*  
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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 Governour and Disposer of all Things.

This Proposition also is in a manner Self-evident.

For 1<sup>st</sup>, if God is himself necessarily a Being (as has been before shown) of infinite Goodness, Justice and Holiness: And if the same Reasons which prove the Necessity of these Attributes in God himself, prove moreover (as has likewise been shown already,) that the same Moral Obligations must needs be his positive Will, Law and Command, to all rational Creatures; It follows also necessarily, by the very same Argument, that He cannot but be Pleased with and Approve such Creatures, as imitate and obey him by observing those Rules; and be Displeas'd with such, as act contrary thereto. And if

*That the Practice of Virtue or Vice must be attended with Rewards and Punishments, proved from the Attributes of God.*



if so; then in the Nature of the thing itself it is evident, that having absolute Power and uncontrollable Authority, as being Supreme Governour and Disposer of all Things, He cannot but *Signify*, by some means or other, his Approbation of the one, and his Displeasure against the other. And this, can no way be done to any effectual purpose, but by the Annexing of respective *Rewards and Punishments*. Wherefore if Virtue go finally unrewarded, and Wickedness unpunished; then God never *Signifies* his Approbation of the one, nor his Displeasure against the other; and if so, then there remains no sufficient proof, that he is really at all *Pleased or Displeased* with either; And the consequence of That, will be, that there is no reason to think the one to be his *Will and Command*, or that the other is *forbidden* by him; which being once supposed, there will no longer remain any certain evidence of his own *Moral Attributes*. Contrary to what has been already demonstrated.

And from the necessity there is, that there should be some Vindication of the Honour of God's Laws and Government.

2. The Certainty of *Rewards and Punishments* in general, may also somewhat otherwise be deduced from their being necessary to support the *Honour of God* and of his *Laws and Government*; in the following manner. 'Tis manifest we are obliged in the highest Ties of Duty and Gratitude, to pay all possible *Honour* to God, from whom we receive our Being, and all our Powers and Faculties, and whatever else we enjoy: Now 'tis plain likewise, that

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we have no other way to *Honour God*, (whose Happiness is capable of no Addition from any thing that any of his Creatures are capable of doing,) than by *Honouring*, that is, by Obeying, *his Laws*: The *Honour* therefore that is thus done to *his Laws*, God is pleased to accept as done *immediately to himself*: And though we were indeed absolutely obliged in Duty to honour him in this manner, notwithstanding that there had been no Reward to be expected thereupon; yet it is necessary in the Government of the World, and well-becoming an infinitely wise and good Governour, that *those who Honour Him he should Honour*, that is, should distinguish them with suitable marks of his Favour. On the contrary: Though nothing that weak and finite Creatures are able to do, can in the least diminish from the absolute Glory and Happiness of God; yet, as to Us, the dishonouring, that is, the disobeying his Laws, is a dishonouring of Himself; that is, 'tis, as much as in Us lies, a despising his supreme Authority, and bringing his Government into Contempt. Now the same reason that there is, why Honour should be paid to the Laws of God at all; the same reason there is, that That Honour should be *vindicated*, after it has been diminished and infringed by Sin; For no Law-giver who has Authority to require Obedience to his Laws, can or ought to see his Laws despised and dishonoured, without taking some measures to vindicate the Honour of them, for the  
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support and dignity of his own Authority, and Government: And the only way, by which the Honour of a Law, or of its Author, can be vindicated after it has been infringed by wilful Sin, is either by the *Repentance and Reformation* of the Transgressor, or by his *Punishment and Destruction*: So that God is necessarily obliged, in vindication of the Honour of his Laws and Government, to Punish those who presumptuously and impenitently disobey his Commandments. Wherefore if there be no distinction made by suitable *Rewards and Punishments*, between those who obey the Laws of God, and those who obey them not; then God suffers the Authority of his Laws to be finally trampled upon and despised without ever making any Vindication of it. Which being impossible; it will follow that these things are not really the Laws of God, and that he has no such regard to them as we imagin: And the consequence of this, must needs be the denial of his *Moral Attributes*; Contrary, as before, to what has been already proved. And consequently the Certainty of *Rewards and Punishments* in general, is necessarily established.

IV. *Though, in order to establish this suitable Difference between the Fruits or Effects of Virtue and Vice, so reasonable in itself, and so absolutely necessary for the Vindication of the Honour of God; the Nature of Things, and the Constitution and Order of God's Creation, was originally such, that the observance*  
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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 practise, to make them miserable: Yet since, through some great and general Corruption and Depravation, (whencesoever That may have arisen,) the condition of Men in this present State is such, that the natural Order of things in this World is in event manifestly perverted, and Virtue and Goodness are visibly prevented in great measure from obtaining their proper and due Effects in establishing Mens Happiness proportionable to their Behaviour and Practise; Therefore it is absolutely impossible, that the whole View and Intention, the original and the final Design, of God's creating such rational Beings as Men are, and placing them on this Globe of Earth, as the chief and principal, or indeed (to speak more properly) the only Inhabitants, for whose sake alone this part at least of the Creation is manifestly fitted up and accommodated; It is absolutely impossible (I say) that the whole of God's Design in all this, should be nothing more than to keep up eternally a Succession of such short-lived Generations of Men, as we at present are; and those in such a corrupt, confused and disorderly State of Things, as we see the World is now in; without any due observation; of the eternal Rules of good and Evil; without any clear and remarkable Effect, of the great and most necessary Difference of Things; and without any final Vindication of the Honour and Laws of God in the proportionable Reward of the best, or Punishment of the worst of Men: And consequently it is certain and

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necessary, (even as certain as the moral Attributes of God before demonstrated,) that instead of the continuing an eternal Succession of new Generations in the present Form and State of Things, there must at some time or other be such a Revolution and Renovation of Things: such a Future State of existence of the same Persons, as that by an exact distribution of Rewards and Punishments therein, all the present disorders and inequalities may be set right: and that the whole Scheme of Providence, which to Us who judge of it by only one small portion of it, seems now so inexplicable and confused; may appear at its consummation, to be a design worthy of infinite Wisdom, Justice and Goodness.

*That according to the original Constitution of things, Virtue and Vice are attended with Natural Rewards and Punishments.*

I. In order to establish a just and suitable Difference between the respective Fruits or Effects of Virtue and Vice; the Nature of Things, and the Constitution and Order of God's Creation, was originally such, that the Observance of the eternal Rules of Piety, Justice, Equity, Goodness and Temperance, does of it self plainly tend by direct and natural Consequence, to make all Creatures happy; and the contrary Practice, to make them miserable. This is evident in general; because the practice of universal Virtue, is (in imitation of the Divine Goodness) the practice of that which is Best in the whole; and that which tends to the benefit of the whole, must of necessary consequence, originally and in its own Nature, tend also to the benefit of every individual Part of the Creation. More particularly: A frequent and habitual Contemplating the infinite-

ly excellent *Perfections* of the All-mighty Creator, and All-wise Governour of the World, and our most bountiful Benefactor; so as to excite in our Minds a suitable Adoration, Love, and Imitation of those Perfections: A *regular* *employing* all our *Powers and Faculties*, in such designs and to such purposes only, as they were originally fitted and intended for by Nature: And a *due* *subjecting* all our *Appetites and Passions*, to the Government of sober and modest Reason: Are evidently the directest means to obtain such *settled Peace and solid Satisfaction of Mind*, as is the first Foundation, and the Principal and most necessary Ingredient of all true Happiness. The *temperate and moderate enjoyment* of all the good things of this present World, and of the pleasures of Life, according to the measures of right Reason and simple Nature; is plainly and confessedly the certainest and most directest Method, to preserve the *Health and Strength of the Body*. And the practise of universal *Justice, Equity and Benevolence*; is manifestly (as has been before observed) as direct and adequate a means to promote the *general Welfare and Happiness of Men in Society*, as any Physical Motion, or Geometrical Operation, is to produce its natural Effect. So that if all Men were truly Virtuous, and practised these Rules in such manner, that the Miseries and Calamities arising usually from the numberless Follies and Vices of Men, were prevented; undoubtedly this great Truth would evidence it self visibly in Fact, and appear experimentally in the

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happy State and Condition of the World, On the contrary: *Neglect of God*, and *Insensibleness of our Relation and Duty towards him*; *Abuse and unnatural misapplication, of the Powers and Faculties of our Minds*; *Inordinate Appetites*, and *unbridled and furious Passions*; necessarily fill the *Mind with Confusion, Trouble, and Vexation*: And *Intemperance*, naturally brings *Weakness, Pains, and Sickneses* into the *Body*: And mutual *Injustice and Iniquity*; *Fraud, Violence and Oppression*; *Wars, and Desolations*; *Murders, Rapine, and all kinds of Cruelty*; are sufficiently plain causes of the *Miseries and Calamities of Men in Society*. So that the original Constitution, Order and Tendency of Things, is evidently enough fitted and designed, to establish naturally a just and suitable Difference in general between Virtue and Vice, by their respective Fruits or Effects.

*But that now in this present World, the natural Order of things is so perverted, that Vice often flourishes in great prosperity, and Virtue falls under the greatest calamities of Life.*

2. But tho' originally the Constitution and Order of God's Creation was indeed such, that Virtue and Vice are by the regular Tendency of Things, followed with natural Rewards and Punishments: Yet in Event, through some great and general Corruption and Depravation, (whencesoever That may have arisen, of which more hereafter;) the condition of Men in the present State is plainly such, that this natural Order of things in the World is manifestly perverted; Virtue and Goodness are visibly prevented in great measure from obtaining their proper and due Effect, in establishing Mens Happiness proportionable to their Behaviour and Practise; and Wickedness

Wickedness and Vice very frequently escape the Punishment, which the general nature and disposition of Things tends to annex unto it. Wicked Men, by Stupidity, Inconsiderateness, and sensual Pleasure, often make shift to silence the reproaches of Conscience; and feel very little of that confusion and remorse of Mind, which ought naturally to be consequent upon their vitious Practises. By accidental Strength and Robustness of Constitution; they frequently escape the natural ill consequences of Intemperance and Debauchery: and enjoy the same proportion of Health and Vigour, as those who live up to the Rules of strict and unblameable Sobriety. And Injustice and Iniquity, Fraud, Violence and Cruelty, though they are always attended indeed with sufficiently calamitous consequences *in the general*; yet the most of those evil consequences fall not always upon such persons *in particular*, as have the greatest share in the guilt of the Crimes, but very commonly on those that have the least. On the contrary: Virtue and Piety, Temperance and Sobriety, Faithfulness, Honesty and Charity; though they have indeed both in themselves the true Springs of Happiness, and also the greatest probabilities of outward Causes to concur in promoting their temporal Prosperity; though they cannot indeed be prevented from affording a Man the highest Peace and Satisfaction of Spirit, and many other advantages both of Body and Mind in respect of his own particular Person: Yet

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in respect of those Advantages which the mutual Practise of social Virtues ought to produce in common, it is in experience found true, that the Vices of a great part of Mankind do so far prevail against Nature and Reason, as frequently to oppress the Virtue of the Best; and not only hinder them from enjoying those publick Benefits, which would naturally and regularly be the consequences of their Virtue; but oftentimes bring upon them the greatest temporal Calamities, even for the sake of that very Virtue. For it is but too well known, that Good Men are very often afflicted and impoverished, and made a prey to the Covetousness and Ambition of the Wicked; and sometimes most cruelly and maliciously persecuted, even upon the account of their Goodness it self. In all which Affairs, the Providence of God seems not very evidently to interpose for the Protection of the Righteous. And not only so; but even in Judgments also, which seem more immediately to be inflicted by the Hand of Heaven, it frequently suffers the Righteous to be involved in the same Calamities with the Wicked, as they are mixed together in Business and the Affairs of the World.

*That therefore there must needs be a Future State of Rewards and Punishments.*

3. Which things being so; (*viz.* that there is plainly in Event no sufficient distinction made between Virtue and Vice; no proportionable and certain Reward annexed to the one, nor Punishment to the other, in this *present* World;) And yet it being no less



less undeniably certain in the general, as has been before shown, that *if* there be a God, (and That God be himself a Being of infinite Justice and Goodness; and it be his Will that all rational Creatures should imitate his moral Perfections; and he \* cannot but see and take notice how every Creature behaves itself; and cannot but be *accordingly* pleased with such as obey his Will and imitate his Nature, and be displeas'd with such as act contrary thereto;) It being certain, I say, that *if* these things be so, God must needs, in vindication of the Honour of his Laws and Government, signify at *some time or other* this his Approbation or Displeasure, by making finally a suitable Difference between those who obey him, and those who obey him not: It follows unavoidably, *either* that all these Notions which we frame concerning God, are *false*; and that there is no Providence, and God sees not, or at least has no regard to what is done by his Creatures, and consequently the ground of all his own moral Attributes is taken away, and even his Being it self; or else that there must necessarily be a *Future State of Rewards and Punishments after this Life*, wherein all the present difficulties of Providence shall be cleared up, by an exact and impartial Administration of

\* Εἰ ὅ μὴ λαμβάνετον τὸς θεός, ὁ μὴ δίκαιος θεοκρατίας εἶναι, ὁ ὅ ἀδίκος θεομισθός. — Ἰὰ ὅ θεοκρατία, ὅσα γε ὑπὸ θεῶν γίνεταί, πάντα γίνεταί ὅς οἷός τε εἶσαι. — Ὅπως εἶρα ὑποκρίτων περὶ τὸ δίκαιο ἀνδρείον εἶναι τὸ ἐν παύσῃ γίνεταί, εἶναι τὸ ἐν νόμοις. ἢ πνὴ ἀνὴρ ἡ δὲ δολοφονία κακῶν ὡς τὸ εἶναι ταῦτα εἰς ἀγαθὸν ἢ πνὴ ἀγαθὸν εἰς ἀνὴρ ἢ κακῶν ἀνὴρ. ἢ ὅτι δὲ ὑπὸ γε θεῶν τὰ τε ἀγαθὰ εἶναι ὅς ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸν εἶναι ἢ δίκαιον γίνεταί, ὅς ἐπιτηδεύων ἀγαθῶν εἰς εἶσο δωμάτων ἀνδρώτων κακῶν εἶναι θεῶν Πλάτο δὲ Κρατῆτος ἀνδρ. 10.

Justice. But now, that these Notions are *True*; that there is a God, and a Providence, and that God is himself a Being indued with all moral Perfections, and expects and commands that all his rational Creatures should govern all their Actions by the same Rules; has been particularly and distinctly proved already. It is therefore directly Demonstrated, that there must be a *Future State* of Rewards and Punishments. *Let not thine heart envy Sinners; but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long; For surely there is a Reward, and thine Expectation shall not be cut off,* Prov. 23. 17 & 18.

*Of the Stoical Opinion concerning the Self-sufficiency of Virtue to its own Happiness.*

4. This Argument is indeed a common one; but it is nevertheless strongly conclusive and unanswerable: So that, whoever denies a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, must of necessity by a chain of unavoidable Consequences be forced to recur to downright Atheism. The only middle Opinion that can be invented, is that Assertion of the *Stoicks*, that Virtue is *Self-sufficient* to its own Happiness, and a full Reward to it self in all Cases, even under the greatest Sufferings that can befall a Man for its sake. Men who were not *Certain* of a Future State (though most of them did indeed believe it highly probable;) and yet would not give up the Cause of Virtue; had no other way left to defend it, than by asserting that it was in all Cases and under all Circumstances, absolutely *Self-sufficient* to its own Happiness: Whereas on the contrary, because it is manifestly *not Self-sufficient*, and yet undoubtedly the Cause of Virtue is not to be given up; there-

therefore they ought from thence to have concluded the *Certainty* of a Future State. That Virtue is truly *worthy* to be chosen, even merely for its own sake, without any respect to any recompense or reward; must indeed necessarily be acknowledged. But it does not from hence follow, that He who *Dies* for the sake of Virtue, is really any more *Happy*, than he that dies for any fond Opinion or any unreasonable Humour or Obstinacy whatsoever; if he has no other Happiness than the bare Satisfaction arising from the Sense of his resoluteness in persisting to preserve his Virtue, and in adhering immoveably to what he judges to be right; and there be no Future State wherein he may reap any Benefit of that his resolute perseverance. On the contrary, it will only follow, that God has made Virtue necessarily amiable, and such as Men's Judgment and Conscience can never but choose; and yet that he has not annexed to it any sufficient encouragement, to support Men effectually in that Choice. Brave indeed and admirable were the Things which some of the Philosophers have said upon this Subject; and which some very few extraordinary Men (of which *Regulus* is a remarkable Instance) seem to have made good in their Practice, even beyond the common Abilities of humane Nature: But 'tis very plain (as I before hinted) that the general Practice of Virtue in the World, can never be supported upon this Foot; It being indeed neither possible nor truly reasonable, that Men by adhering to Vir-  
tue



\* Οὐκ οἶδα ὅπως μακα-  
 εῖος ὑπολάβω τὴν μηδέν  
 ἀπολαύσεως τῆς ἀρετῆς ἀγα-  
 θόν. δι' αὐτῶ ἢ ταύτῳ ἀ-  
 πολλομένους. Dionys. Halicarn.

† Porro ipsa Virtus, cum  
 sibi bonorum culmen vendi-  
 cet humanorum, quid hic  
 agit nisi perpetua bella cum  
 vitiis; nec exterioribus, sed  
 interioribus; nec alienis, sed  
 plane nostris & propriis.  
 —Absit ergo, ut quam-  
 diu in hoc bello intestino  
 sumus, jam nos beatitudi-  
 nem, ad quam vincendo vo-  
 lumus pervenire, adeptos esse  
 credamus. Augustin. de Civitate Dei, lib. 19. c. 4.

Non enim virtus ipsa est *Summum Bonum*, sed effectrix & mater  
 est summi boni; quoniam perveniri ad illud sine virtute non potest.  
 Laſtant. lib. 3.

From  
 whence the  
 Certainty  
 of a Future  
 State is  
 again con-  
 cluded.

5. 'Tis therefore absolutely impossible,  
 that the whole View and Intention, the  
 original and the final Design of God's crea-  
 ting such rational Beings as Men are;  
 endued with such noble Faculties, and so  
 necessarily conscious of the eternal and  
 unchangeable Differences of Good and  
 Evil: 'Tis absolutely impossible (I say)  
 that the whole Design of an infinitely Wise  
 and Just and Good God, in all this, should  
 be

tue should part with their  
 Lives, if \* thereby they  
 eternally deprived them-  
 selves of all possibility of  
 receiving any Advantage  
 from that adherence. Vir-

tue, 'tis true, in its proper Seat, and with  
 all its full Effects and Consequences un-  
 hindered; must be confessed to be the *chief*  
*Good*; as being truly the Enjoyment, as  
 well as the Imitation of God: But, as the

† Practise of it is circum-  
 stantiated in this present  
 World, and in the present  
 State of things; 'tis plain  
 it is not it self the chief  
 Good, but only the *means*  
 to it; as Running in a  
 Race, is not it self the  
 Prize, but the way to ob-  
 tain it.

be nothing more than to keep up eternally a Succession of new Generations of Men; and those in such a corrupt, confused, and disorderly State of Things, as we see the present World is in; without any due and regular Observation, of the eternal Rules of Good and Evil; without any clear and remarkable Effect, of the great and most necessary Differences of things; without any sufficient Discrimination of Virtue and Vice, by their proper and respective Fruits; and without any final Vindication of the Honour and Laws of God, in the proportionable Reward of the Best, or Punishment of the Worst of Men. And consequently it is certain and necessary, (even as certain as the moral Attributes of God before demonstrated,) that instead of the continuing an eternal Succession of new Generations in the present Form and State of Things, there must at some time or other be such a Revolution and Renovation of Things, such a *Future State* of existence of the same Persons, as that by an exact distribution of Rewards and Punishments therein, all the present Disorders and Inequalities may be set right; and that the whole Scheme of Providence, which to Us who judge of it by only one small Portion of it, seems now so inexplicable and much confused; may appear at its Consummation, to be a design worthy of infinite Wisdom, Justice and Goodness.

Without this, All \* comes to Nothing, If this Scheme be once broken; there is no Justice, no Goodness,

\* Ita fit, ut si ab illa rerum Summa, quam superius comprehendimus, aberraveris; omnis ratio intereat, & ad nihilum omnia revertantur. *Lactant. lib. 7.*

no Order, no Reason, nor any thing upon which any Argument in moral Matters can be founded, left in the World. Nay, even though we should set aside all consideration of the *Moral* Attributes of God, and consider only his *Natural* Perfections, his infinite Knowledge and Wisdom, as Framer and Builder of the World; it would even in That View only, appear infinitely improbable, that God should have created such Beings as Men are, and indued them with such excellent Faculties, and placed them on this Globe of Earth, as the only Inhabitants for whose sake this part at least of the Creation is manifestly fitted up and accommodated; and all this

† Non enim temere, nec fortuito facti & creati sumus; sed profecto fuit quædam vis, quæ generi consuleret humano, nec id gigneret aut aleret, quod cum exant avisset omnes labores, tum incidere in mortis malum sempiternum. *Cic. Tusc. Quest. lib. 1.*

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

without any further Design, than † only for the maintaining a perpetual Succession of such short-lived Generations of Mortals, as we at present are; to live in the utmost confusion and disorder for a very few Years, and then Perish eternally into Nothing. What \* can be imagined more vain and empty? what more absurd? what more void of all Marks of Wisdom, than the Fabrick of the World, and the Creation of Mankind, upon this Supposition? But then, take in also the Consideration of the *Moral* Attributes of God; and it amounts (as I have said) to a compleat



pleat Demonstration, that there must be a *Future State.*

6. It may here at first sight seem to be a very strange thing, that through the whole System of Nature, in the *material*, in the *inanimate*, in the *irrational* part of the Creation, every single thing should have in it self so many and so obvious, so evident and undeniable marks, of the infinitely accurate Skill and Wisdom of their Almighty Creator; that from the brightest Star in the Firmament of Heaven, to the meanest Pebble upon the Face of the Earth, there is no one piece of Matter which does not afford such instances of admirable Artifice and exact Proportion and Contrivance, as exceeds all the Wit of Man, (I do not say to imitate, but even) ever to be able fully to search out and comprehend; And yet, that in the management of the *rational and moral World*, for the sake of which all the rest was created, and is preserved only to be subservient to it; there should not in many Ages be plain Evidences enough, either of the Wisdom, or of the Justice and Goodness of God, or of so much as the interposition of his divine Providence at all; to convince Mankind clearly and generally of the World's being under his immediate Care, Inspection and Government. This, I say, may indeed at first sight seem very wonderful. But if we consider the matter more closely and attentively, it will appear not to be so strange and astonishing, as we are apt to imagine,

*Why the Wisdom of God is not so clearly and plainly seen in his Government of the Moral, as in the Fabrick of the Natural World.*

## The Evidences of Natural

imagine. For, as in a great *Machine*, contrived by the skill of a consummate Artificer, fitted up and adjusted with all conceivable Accuracy for some very difficult and deep-projected Design, and polished and fine-wrought in every part of it, with admirable niceness and dexterity; any Man who saw and examined one or two Wheels thereof, could not fail to observe in those single parts of it, the admirable Art and exact skill of the Work-man; and yet the Excellency of the End or Use for which the whole was contrived, he would not at all be able, even though he was himself also a skilful Artificer, to discover and comprehend, without seeing the Whole fitted up and put together: So though in every part of the *natural* World, considered even single and unconnected, the Wisdom of the great Creator sufficiently appears; yet his Wisdom and Justice and Goodness in the Disposition and Government of the *moral* World, which necessarily depends on the Connexion and Issue of the whole Scheme, cannot perhaps be distinctly and fully comprehended by any Finite and Created Beings, much less by frail and weak and short-lived Mortals, before the Period and Accomplishment of certain great Revolutions. But 'tis exceedingly reasonable to believe, that as the Great Discoveries which by the Diligence and Sagacity of later Ages have been made in Astronomy and *Natural* Philosophy, have opened surprizing Scenes of the Power and Wisdom of the Creator, beyond what Men could possibly have conceived or imagined

imagined in Former Times : so at the unfolding of the whole Scheme of Providence in the Conclusion of this present State, Men will be surprized with the amazing Manifestations of Justice and Goodness, which will then appear to have run through the whole Series of God's Government of the *Moral* World.

This is the chief and greatest Argument, on which the *natural* Proof of a *Future State of Rewards and Punishments*, must principally be founded. Yet there are also several other collateral Evidences, which joyntly conspire to render the same Thing extreamly credible to mere natural Reason. As

1<sup>st</sup>. There is very great Reason, even from the bare *Nature* of the Thing it self, to believe the *Soul to be Immortal*; Separate from all moral Arguments drawn from the Attributes of God; and without any Consideration of the general System of the World, or of the Universal Order and Constitution, Connexion and Dependencies of Things. The Immortality of the Soul, has been commonly believed in

*Of the Immortality of the Soul; and the natural Proofs we have of it;*

\* all Ages and in all Places, by the *unlearned* part of all civilized People, and by the almost general consent of all the most *barbarous* Nations under Heaven; from a *Tradition* so ancient and so universal, as cannot be conceived to owe its original either to Chance or to vain Imagination, or to any other Cause than to the Author of Nature Himself:

\* Et primum quidem omni Antiquitate, &c. Cic. *Tusc. Quest. lib. 1.*

And



† *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God. See also a Letter to Mr Dodwel, with the several Answers and Replies.*

And the most *learned and thinking* part of Mankind, at all times and in all Countries, where the Study of Philosophy has been in any measure cultivated, have pretty generally agreed, that it is capable of a just Proof from the abstract consideration of the *Nature and Operations* of the Soul it self. That none of the known Qualities of *Matter* can in any possible Variation, Division, or Composition, produce *Sense* and *Thought* and *Reason*; is abundantly evident, as has been demonstrated in the former † Discourse. That *Matter* consists of innumerable, divisible, separable, and for the most part actually disjoyned Parts; is acknowledged by all Philosophers. That the *Powers and Faculties of the Soul*, being the most remote and distant from all the known Properties of *Matter*, that can be imagined; 'tis at least a putting great violence upon our Reason, to imagine them superadded by Omnipotence to one and the same Substance; cannot easily be denied. That 'tis highly unreasonable and absurd, to suppose the Soul made up of innumerable Consciousnesses, as Matter is necessarily made up of innumerable Parts; and on the contrary, that 'tis highly reasonable to believe the *seat of Thought* to be a simple Substance, such as cannot naturally be divided and crumbled into Picces, as all Matter is manifestly subject to be; must of necessity be confessed. Consequently the *Soul* will not be liable to be dissolved at the dissolution of the *Body*: And therefore it will naturally

naturally be *Immortal*. All this seems to follow, at least with the highest degree of probability, from the single consideration of the Souls being endued with *Sense, Thought or Consciousness*. I cannot imagine, saith \* *Cyrus*, in that Speech which *Xenophon* relates he made to his Children a little before his Death, that the Soul while it is in this Mortal Body, lives; and that when it is separated from it, then it should die: I cannot persuade my self, that the Soul, by being separated from this Body which is devoid of Sense, should thereupon become itself likewise devoid of Sense: On the contrary, it seems to me more reasonable to believe, that when the Mind is separated from the Body, Then it should become most of all sensible and intelligent; Thus He. But then further, if we take also into the Consideration all the higher and nobler Faculties, Capacities and Improvements of the Soul; the Argument will still become much stronger. I am persuaded, saith † *Cicero*, when I consider with what *Swiftness* of Thought the Soul is indued, with what a wonderful *Memory* of Things past, and fore-cast of Things to come; how many *Arts*, how many *Sciences*, how many wonderful *Inventions* it has

\* Οὐ τοι ἔγωγε, ὦ παῖδες, εἶδέ τι τοῦτό ποτε ἐπεισώλω, ὡς ἢ ψυχὴ, ἕως ἂν ἐν θνήσκῃ σώματι ἢ ζῆ ὅταν ὁ τῆς ἀπαλλαγῆ, τεθνηκῶν. (εἶδέ γε ὅπως ἄφρων ἔσαι ἢ ψυχὴ ἐπειδὴ τὸ ἄφρονος σώματος διχα γένηται εἶδέ τι τοῦ πεπεισῶμαι. Ἄλλ' ὅταν ἀκρατος καὶ καρτερὸς ὁ νῦν ἐκκρίθῃ, τότε καὶ φρονιμώτατον εἰκὲς αὐτὸν εἶδ). *Cyrus apud Xen.*

† Quid multa? Sic mihi persuasi, sic sentio; quæ tantæ celeritas animorum sit, tantæ memoria præteritorum, futurorum providentia, tot artes, tantæ scientiæ, tot inventa; non posse eam naturam, quæ res eas continet, esse mortalem. *Cic. de senectute.*

found out; that That Nature, which is Possessor of such Faculties, cannot be Mortal. A-

\* Quod & præterita re-  
near, & futura provideat, &  
complecti possit præsentia;  
hec divina sunt: Nec inve-  
nietur unquam, unde ad ho-  
minem venire possint, nisi  
a Deo. *Idem Tusc. Quest.*  
*lib. 1.*

gain; The Memory, saith  
he, which the Soul has of  
Things that have been, and  
its Foresight of Things that  
will be, and its large Com-  
prehension of things that at  
present are, are plainly di-  
vine Powers: Nor can the

Wit of Man ever invent any way, by which  
these Faculties could possibly come to be in  
Men, but by immediate Communication from

|| Mentem hominis quam-  
vis eam non videas, ut De-  
um non vides; tamen, ut  
Deum agnoscis ex operi-  
bus eius, sic ex memoria  
rerum & inventione & ce-  
leritate Motus, cunctiq; pul-  
chritudine virtutis, vim di-  
vinam Mentis agnoscito. *Id.*  
*Ibid.*

God. Again; Tho' we see  
not, saith || he, the Soul of  
Man, as indeed neither are  
we able to see God; Yet, as  
from the Works of God we  
are certain of his Being; so  
from the Faculties of the  
Soul, its Memory, its Inven-  
tion, its Swiftnes; of Thought,  
its noble Exercise of all Vir-

tues, we cannot but be convinced of its di-  
vine original and nature. And, speaking  
of the Strength and Beauty of that Argu-  
ment, which from the wonderful Facul-  
ties and Capacities of the Soul, concludes  
it to be of an Immaterial and Immortal  
Nature; Tho' all the vulgar and little Phi-

† Licet concurrant ple-  
bent omnes philosophi, (sic  
etiam ii qui a Platone & So-  
crate & ab illa familia diffi-  
dent, appellandi videntur:) non modo nihil unquam tam eleganter  
explicebant, sed ne hoc quidem ipsum quam subtiliter conclusum in-  
telligent. *Id., Ibid.*

losophers in the World, saith  
† he, (for so I cannot but  
call all such, as dissent from



Plato and Socrates and those Superior Ge-  
nius's,) should put their Heads together;  
they will not only never, while they live, be  
able to explain any thing so neatly and ele-  
gantly; but even this Argument it self,  
they will never have understanding enough ful-  
ly to perceive and comprehend, how neat and  
beautiful and strong it is. The chief preju-  
dice against the belief of the Souls existing  
thus and living after the Death of the  
Body; and the Summ of all the Objecti-  
ons brought against this Doctrine by the  
Epicurean Philosophers of old, who denied  
the Immortality of the Soul; and by cer-  
tain Atheistical Persons of late who dif-  
fer very little from them in their manner  
of reasoning; is This:

That they \* cannot appre-  
hend how the Soul can  
have any Sense or percep-  
tion, without the Body  
wherein evidently are all  
the Organs of Sense. But  
neither || can they any bet-  
ter apprehend or explain  
how the Soul in the Body,  
(that is, the Body it self,  
according to their Opini-  
on,) is capable of Sense or  
Perception, by means of  
the Organs of Sense. And  
besides: This Argument,  
that the Soul can have no  
Perception, when all the  
ways of Perception that  
we have at present Ideas of,

\* ——— Si immortalis na-  
tura animi est,

Et sentire potest secreta a  
corpore nostro;

Quinq; (ut opinor) eam  
faciendum est sensibus au-  
ctam:

— At neq; secusum o-  
culi, &c.

Lucret. lib. 3.

Quod autem corpus animo  
per se? qua materia? ubi  
cogitatio? quomodo vi-  
sus? auditus? aut qui tangit?  
qui usus eius? aut quod sine  
his bonum? Plin. lib. 7.

Neq; aliud est quidquam  
cur incredibilis his animo-  
rum videatur aeternitas, nisi  
quod nequeunt qualis sit ani-  
mus vacuum corpore intelligere  
& cogitatione comprehende-  
re. Cic. Top. Quest. lib. 1.

Quasi vero intelligant

qualis sit in ipso corpore.  
 — Mihi quidem naturam  
 animi inveni, multo dif-  
 ficilior occurrit cogitatio,  
 multoq; obsecrator, qualis  
 animus in corpore sit, quam  
 qualis cum exierit. *Id. ibid.*

have in our

† *Demonstration of the Be-  
 ing and Attributes of God,*  
 p. 86, &c.

*The natu-  
 ral credi-  
 bility of  
 the Soul's  
 being Im-  
 mortal, of  
 great Use  
 to the wi-  
 ser Hea-  
 thens.*

This consideration, of the Soul's ap-  
 pearing in all Reason to be *naturally im-  
 mortal*, afforded great Pleasure and Sa-  
 tisfaction to the wisest and soberest Men in  
 the Heathen World; as a great Support  
 under Calamities and Sufferings, especially  
 under such as Men brought upon them-  
 selves by being virtuous; filled them  
 with great hopes and comfortable expecta-  
 tions of what was to come hereafter; and  
 was a mighty encouragement to the pra-  
 ctise of all moral Virtue, and particularly  
 to take pains in subduing the Body and  
 keeping it in subjection to the Reason of  
 the Mind. *First*, it afforded great Plea-  
 sure and Satisfaction, to the wisest and  
 soberest Men in the Heathen World, from  
 the bare contemplation of the Thing it

\* Sed Me nemo de im-  
 mortalitate depellet. *Cic.*  
*T. sc. Quest. lib. 1.*

† Quod si in hoc erro,  
 quod animos hominum immortales esse credam, libenter erro; nec  
 mihi hunc errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo. *Idem*  
*de senectute.*

are removed; is exactly the  
 very same Argument, and  
 no other, than what a  
 Man born blind might  
 make use of with the very  
 same force, to prove that  
 none of Us can possibly  
 present Bodies any *Perception*  
 of Light or Colours; as I  
 have explained more par-  
 ticularly in the † former  
 Discourse.

self. *No Body, saith \* Cicero,*  
*shall ever drive Me from the*  
*Hope of Immortality: And, †*

If this my Opinion concerning the Immortality of the Soul, should at last prove an Error; yet it is a very delightful Error; And I will never suffer my self to be undeceived in so pleasing an Opinion, as long as I live.

Secondly, it was a great Support to them under Calamities and Sufferings, especially under such as Men brought upon themselves by being Virtuous: These and the like Contemplations, saith

|| Cicero, had such an Effect upon Socrates, that when he was tried for his Life, he neither desired any Advocate to plead his Cause, nor made any Supplication to his Judges for Mercy; and on the very last day of his Life, made many excellent Discourses upon this Subject; and a few days before, when he had an opportunity offered him

to have escaped out of Prison, he would not lay hold of it: For thus he believed, and thus he taught; that when the Souls of Men depart out of their Bodies, they go two different ways; the Virtuous to a place of Happiness, the Wicked and the Sensual to Misery.

Thirdly, it filled them with great Hopes, and comfortable Expectations of what was to come hereafter: O

happy Day, saith \* the good old Man in Cicero, when I shall go to that blessed Assembly of Spirits, and depart out of this wicked and mise-

|| His & talibus adductus Socrates, nec patronum quæsit ad iudicium capitis, nec iudicibus supplicis fuit; & supremo vitæ die, de hoc ipso multa differuit; & paucis ante diebus, cum facile posset educi e custodia, noluit. — Ita enim sentiebat, itaq; differuit. duas esse vias, duplicesq; cursus animorum, e corpore excedentium, &c. Id. Tusc. Quæst. lib. 1.

\* O præclarum diem, quum in illud animorum concilium eorumq; proficiscar, & quum ex hac turba & convolutione discedam! Idem de Senect.



rably confused World! Lastly, It was a mighty encouragement to the practise of all moral Virtue, and particularly to take pains in subduing the Body and keeping it in subjection to the Reason of the Mind:

† Χρη̄ πάντα ποιε̄ν ὡσε̄  
ἀρετῆς κ̄ φρονήσεως ἐν τῷ  
βίῳ μεταχεῑν καλὸν γὰρ τὸ  
ἀεὶλον, κ̄ ἡ ἐλπίς μεγάλη  
Plato in Protagora.

opened up the

|| Καὶ μὴ τὰ γε μέγιστα  
ἐπιχειρε̄ ἀρετῆς κ̄ προκεί-  
μενα ἀθλα ἢ διεληλυθαυτο.  
— Τί δ' ἂν ἐν γε ὀλίγῳ  
χρόνῳ μέγα γένοιο; πᾶς γὰρ  
ἔτος γε ὁ ἐκ παιδὸς μέχρι  
πρεσβύτου χρόνος πρὸς πάν-  
τα ὀλίγος πᾶσις ἂν εἴη,  
Plato de Republ. lib. 10.

World, being  
comparison of

\* Ταῦτα πίνω εἰς ἄνθρω-  
πλήθει εἰς ἐμεγεθε̄ πρὸς  
ἕκαστα ἀτελεύτητα ἐκεί-  
τερον περιμένει. Idem. ibid.

which attend

† Οἱ μὴ ἀεὶ νίκης ἐρεκα  
πάλης κ̄ δρόμων κ̄ τῶν τοιαύ-  
των, ἐπίλυσαν ἀπεχέσθαι.  
— Οἱ ὅ ἡμέτεροι παίδες ἀ-  
σωατήσοσι κερταρε̄, πολὺ  
καλλίον ἢ ἐν ἀεὶ νίκης; Pl-  
to de Legg. lib. 8.

We ought to spare no Pains, saith † Plato, to obtain the Habit of Virtue and Wisdom in this Life; for the Prize is noble, and the Hope is very great. Again; having reck-  
temporal Advantages of Vir-  
tue in the present World, he adds; || But we have not yet mentioned the greatest and chiefest Rewards, which are proposed to Virtue; For what can be truly great, in so small a proportion of Time? the whole Age of the longest Liver in this our present inconsiderable and nothing in Eternity. And again; These things, saith \* he, are nothing, either in Number or Greatness, in comparison with those Rewards of Virtue, and Punishments of Vice, Men after Death. And, to mention no more places; They, saith † he, who in the Games hope to obtain a Victory in such poor Matters, as Wrestling, Running, and the like; think not much to prepare themselves for the Contest

*Contest by great Temperance and Abstinence: And shall our Scholars in the Study of Virtue, not have courage and resolution enough, to persevere with Patience, for a far nobler Prize? Words very like those of St Paul, 1 Cor. 9, 24. Know ye not, that they which run in a Race, run all; And every Man that striveth for the Mastery, is temperate in all things? Now they do it to obtain a corruptible Crown, but we an incorruptible.*

2. Another Argument which may be used in proof of a *Future State*, so far as to amount to a very great probability; is That *necessary Desire of Immortality*, which seems to be naturally implanted in all Men, with an unavoidable *Concern* for what is to come *hereafter*. If there be no *Existence* after this *Life*; it will seem that the irrational *Creatures*, who always enjoy the *present Good* without any *Care* or *Solicitude* for what may happen *afterwards*, are better provided for by *Nature*, than Men, whose *Reason* and *Foresight*, and all other those very *Faculties*, by which they are made more excellent than *Beasts*, serve them, upon this *Supposition*, scarcely for any other purpose, than to render them *uneasie* and *uncertain* and *fearful* and *solicitous* about things which are not. And it is not at all probable, that *God* should have given Men *Appetites*, which were *never to be satisfied*; *Desires*, which had *no Objects* to answer them; and unavoidable *Apprehensions*, of what was *never really to come to pass*.

*The Argument for a future State, drawn from Mens natural desire of Immortality.*

Another,  
drawn  
from Mens  
Conscience  
or Judg-  
ment of  
their own  
Actions.  
Rom. 2. 14.  
and 15.

3. Another Argument, which may be brought to prove a *Future State*, is That *Conscience* which all Men have of their own Actions, or that inward *Judgment* which they necessarily pass upon them in their own Minds: Whereby they that have not any *Law*, are a *Law unto themselves*, their *Conscience bearing Witness*, and their *Thoughts accusing or else excusing one another*. There is no Man, who at any time does good and brave and generous things, but the reason of his own Mind applauds him for so doing; and no Man at any time does things base and vile, dishonourable and wicked, but at the same time he condemns himself in what he does. The one is necessarily accompanied with good *Hope*, and *Expectation of Reward*: The other with continual *Torment* and *Fear of Punishment*. And hence, as before, it is not probable, that God should have so framed and constituted the Mind of Man, as necessarily to pass upon it self a *Judgment* which shall never be verified, and stand perpetually and unavoidably convicted by a *Sentence* which shall never be confirmed.

Another,  
drawn  
from Mens  
being by  
nature an  
account-  
able Crea-  
ture.

4. Lastly, Another Argument, which may be drawn from right Reason in proof of a *Future State*, is this; That Man is plainly in his Nature an *Accountable Creature*, and capable of being *Judged*. Those Creatures indeed, whose Actions are all determined by something without themselves, or by what we call mere instinct; as they are not capable of having a Rule given



given them, so 'tis evident that neither can they be accountable for their Actions: But *Man*, who has intirely within himself a free Principle or Power of determining his own Actions upon moral Motives, and has a Rule given him to act by, which is Right Reason; can be, nay, cannot but be, accountable for all his Actions, how far they have been agreeable or disagreeable to that Rule. Every Man, because of the natural Liberty of his Will, *can* and *ought* to govern all his Actions by some certain Rule, and give a Reason for every thing he does. Every moral Action he performs, being Free and without any compulsion or natural necessity, proceeds either from some *Good Motive* or some *Evil* one; is either *conformable to right Reason*, or *contrary* to it; is worthy either of *Praise* or *Dispraise*, and capable either of *Excuse* or *Aggravation*. Consequently it is highly reasonable to be supposed, that since there is a Superiour Being, from whom we received all our Faculties and Powers; and since in the *right Use* or in the *Abuse* of those Faculties, in the governing them by the Rule of right Reason, or in the neglecting that Rule, consist all the moral Difference of our Actions; there will at some time or other be an *Examination* or *Inquiry* made into the grounds and motives and circumstances of our several Actions, how agreeable or disagreeable they have been to the Rule that was given us; and a suitable *Judgment* be passed upon them. Upon these considerations, the Wisest of  
the

the Antient Heathens believed and taught that the Actions of every particular Person should all be strictly tried and examined after his Death, and he have accordingly a just and impartial Sentence passed upon him. Which Doctrine though the Poets indeed wrapt up in Fables and obscure Riddles, yet the wisest of the Philosophers had a better Notion of it, and more agreeable to Reason. From this

\* Ταύτης τ' δίκης ἔτε σὺ μὴ ποίε, ἔτε εἰ μὴ αὐτοῦ γένουσαι· ἐπιπέμπεται δὲ γενέσθαι θεῶν. — Οὐ γὰρ ἀμεληθήσῃ ποτ' ὑπ' αὐτῆς· ἔχῃ τὸ σμικρὸς ἂν δύση καὶ τὸ τ' γῆς βάθος· ἐδ' ὑψηλὸς γένουσαι· εἰς τ' ἕρανὸν ἀναπέμψῃ· τίσεις δ' αὐτῶν πῶς προσήκων πικρῶν, εἴτ' ἐνθάδε μένων εἴτε καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις διαπορευθεῖς· εἶδε καὶ τῶν εἰς ἀγιάτερον ἔπι διακομθεῖς τόπων. *Plato de Legib. lib. 10.*

Judgment, saith \* Plato, let no Man hope to be able to escape: For though you could descend into the very Depth of the Earth, or rise on high to the extremities of the Heavens; yet should you never escape the just Judgment of the Gods, either before, or after Death. An expression very agreeable to that of the Psalmist, *Psal. 139. 8, 9.*

These, I say, are very good and strong Arguments for the great probability of a *Future State*: But That drawn, as above, from the consideration of the Moral Attributes of God, seems to amount even to a Demonstration.

V. Though the necessity and indispensableness of all the great and moral Obligations of *Natural Religion*, and also the Certainty of a *Future State of Rewards and Punishments*, is thus in general deducible, even demonstrably, by a Chain of clear and undeniable reasoning.

Yet (in the present State of the World, by what means soever it came originally to be so corrupted; the particular Circumstances whereof could not Now be certainly known but by Revelation;) such is the Carelessness, Inconsiderateness, and Want of Attention of the greater part of Mankind; so many the Prejudices and false Notions taken up by evil Education; so strong and violent the unreasonable Lusts, Appetites, and Desires of Sense; and so great the Blindness, introduced by Superstitious Opinions, vicious Customs, and debauched Practices through the World; that very few are able, in reality and effect, to discover these things clearly and plainly for themselves; but Men have great need of particular Teaching, and much Instruction; to convince them of the Truth, and Certainty, and Importance of these things; to give them a due Sense, and clear and just Apprehensions concerning them; and to bring them effectually to the Practice of the plainest and most necessary Duties.

1. There is naturally in the greater part of Mankind, such a prodigious Carelessness, Inconsiderateness, and Want of Attention; as not only hinders them from making use of their Reason, in such manner as to discover these things clearly and effectually for themselves; but is the cause of the grossest and most stupid Ignorance imaginable. Some seem to have little or hardly any Notion of God at all; and More take little or no care to frame just and worthy Apprehensions concerning him, concerning the Divine Attributes and Perfections of his Nature;

Men  
by  
A. 1720.



ture; and still many More are entirely negligent and heedless, to consider and discover what may be his *Will*. Few make a due use of their Natural Faculties, to distinguish rightly the essential and unchangeable *Difference* between *Good* and *Evil*; Fewer yet, so attend to the natural Notices which God has given them, as by their own Understanding to collect, that What is *Good* is the express *Will and Command* of God, and what is *Evil* is *Forbidden* by him; And still Fewer consider with themselves the *Weight and Importance* of these Things, the natural *Rewards* or *Punishments* that are frequently annexed in *this Life* to the Practise of Virtue or Vice, and the much greater and certainer *Difference* that shall be made betwixt them in a *Life to come*. Hence it is, that (as Travellers assure us) even some whole Nations seem to have very little Notion of God, or at least very poor and unworthy Apprehensions concerning him; and a very small Sense of the Obligations of Morality; and very mean and obscure Expectations of a Future State. Not that God has any where *left himself* wholly *without Witnesses*; or that the *Difference* of Good and Evil, is to any rational Being undiscernible; or that Men at any Time or in any Nation, could ever be firmly and generally persuaded in their own Minds, that they perished absolutely at Death: But through *Supine Negligence and Want of Attention*, they

they let their Reason (as it were) sleep, and \* are deaf to the Dictates of common Understanding, and, like Brute Beasts, minding only the things that are before their Eyes, never consider any thing that is abstract from Sense, or beyond their present private Temporal Interest. And it were well, if, even in civilized Nations, this was not, very nearly, the case of too many Men, when left entirely to themselves, and void of particular Instruction.

\* Multis signis natura declarat quid velit: — ob-  
surdescimus tamen nescio  
quo modo, nec audimus. Cic.  
*de Amicit.*

2. The greater part of Mankind are not only *Unattentive*, and barely *Ignorant*; but commonly they have also, through a careless and Evil Education, taken up *early Prejudices*, and many *vain and foolish Notions*; which pervert their natural Understanding, and hinder them from using their Reason in *moral Matters* to any effectual purpose. This cannot be better described, than in the Words of Cicero: *If we had come into the World, saith † he, in such Circumstances, as that we could clearly and distinctly have discerned Nature her self, and have been able in the course of our Lives to follow her true and uncorrupted Directions; this alone might have been sufficient, and there would have been little need of Teaching and Instruction:*

*And by  
early pre-  
judices and  
false No-  
tions.*

† Si tales nos natura genuisset, ut eam ipsam intueri & perspicere, eac; optima duce cursum vitæ conficere possemus; haud esset sane quod quisquam rationem & doctrinam requireret. Nunc verò &c. Cic.  
*Tusc. Quest. lib. 3.*

Nunc parvulos nobis dedit igniculos, quos celeriter malis moribus opinionibusq;

But

depravatis sic restringimus, ut nihil in Nature lumen apparet — Simul atq; editi in Luce & suscepti sumus, in omni continuo pravitate, & in summa opinioum pervertitate versamur; ut pene cum lacte nutricis, errorem lacte videamur. Cum vero parentibus redditi, deinde magistris traditi sumus, tum variis imbuimur erroribus, ut vanitati veritas, & rationi confirmatæ natura ipsa cedat — Cum vero erit hic eodem, quasi maximus quidem magister, populus atq; omnis undiq; ad vitia contentiens multitudo; tum plane inficimur opinioum pravitate, a naturaq; ipsa desciscimus. *Ibid.*

But Now Nature has given us only some small Sparks of right Reason, which we so quickly extinguish with corrupt Opinions and evil Practices, that the true Light of Nature no where appears: As soon as we are brought into the World, immediately we dwell in the midst of all Wickedness, and are surrounded with a number of most perverse and foolish Opinions; so that we seem to suck in Error even with our Nurses Milk: Afterwards, when we return to our Parents, and are committed to Tutors;

then we are further stocked with such Variety of Errors, that Truth becomes perfectly overwhelmed with Falshood; and the most natural Sentiments of our Minds, are entirely stifled with confirmed Follies: But when after all this, we enter upon Business in the World, and make the Multitude, conspiring every where in Wickedness, our great Guide and Example; then our very Nature it self is wholly transformed, as it were, into corrupt Opinions. A livelier Description of the present corrupt estate of Humane Nature, is not easily to be met with.

And by sensual appetites, Passions, and worldly Business.

3. In the generality of Men, the Appetites and Desires of Sense are so violent and importunate; the Business and the Pleasures of the World, take up so much of their time; and their Passions are so very strong

and



and unreasonable; that, of Themselves, they are very backward and unapt to employ their Reason, and fix their *Attention* upon moral Matters; and still more backward to apply themselves to the *Practise* of them. *The Love of Pleasure*, is (as *Aristotle* elegantly \* expresses it) so *nourished up* with us from our very *Childhood*, and so *incorporated* (as it were) into the whole course of our Lives; that it is very difficult for Men to withdraw their Thoughts from Sensual Objects, and fasten them upon things remote from Sense: And if perhaps they do attend a little, and begin to see the reasonableness of governing themselves by a higher Principle, than mere Sense and Appetite; yet with such † *Variety of Temptations* are they perpetually incompassed, and continually solicited; and the Strength of *Passions, and Appetites*, makes so great Opposition to the Motions of Reason; that commonly they yield and submit to practise those things, which at the same time the Reason of their own Mind || condemns; and *what they allow not, That they Do*. Which Observation is so true of too great a part of Mankind, that *Plato* upon this

\* Ἐπὶ δὲ ἐκ νεότητος πεποιημένων συνήθειται [ἡδονῆ] διὰ καὶ χαλεπὸν ἀπτεῖσθαι τὸ πρὸς τὸ πάθος, ἐγκαταστάνον πρὸ βίῳ. *Aristot. Ethic. lib. 2. c. 2.*

† Vicia de mercede sollicitant: Avaricia pecuniam promittit: Luxuria multas ac varias voluptates: Ambitio purpuram & plausum: & ex hoc potentiam & quicquid potentia ponit. *Senec. Epist. 50.*

Τὸδε δὲ ἴσμεν, ὅτι ταῦτα τὰ πάθη ἐν ἡμῶν οἷον νεύουσιν ἢ μῆεν δὲ πρὸς ἐγκαταστάσει τε ἡμᾶς, καὶ ἀλλήλοις ἀνδράκων, ἐναντία ἔσονται ἐπ' ἐναντίας πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς. *Plato de Legib. lib. 1.*

|| — Video meliora proboque, Deteriora sequor.

Ground

\* Ἐδοξε δὲ, καὶ νῦν ἐπιδο-  
κειν, ταυτὶ ἀλλὰ ἐπιτιθε-  
μαία πάλαι, ἡ σοφία χα-  
λεπὴ τὸ ἵπνα τρόπον  
χερῶν. ἡ δὲ χεὶρ ἐκ ἀνδρώ-  
πων παυχάλεπον. Platon in  
Epinemide,

† φρόνησιν δὲ καὶ ἀληθεῖς  
δοξὰς βεβαίαν. εὐτυχὲς ὅτω,  
καὶ περὶ τὴν γῆρας παρεγένε-  
το. Id. de Legib. lib. 2.

And, above  
all, by vi-  
tious Hab-  
bits and  
Practises.

Rom. 1.  
19, &c.

Ground declares \* All Arts  
and Sciences to have in his  
Opinion less of difficulty in  
them, than that of making  
Men Good; Inſomuch that,  
it † is well, ſaith he, if Men  
can come to attain a right  
Sense, and juſt and true No-  
tions of Things, even by that  
time they arrive at old Age.

4. But that which above all other things,  
moſt depraves Mens natural Underſtand-  
ing, and hinders them from diſcerning  
and judging rightly of Moral Truths, is  
this; That as ſtupid and careleſs Ignorance  
leads them into fond and ſuperſtitious Opi-  
nions, and the Appetites of Senſe overcome  
and tempt them into Practices contrary to  
their Conſcience and Judgment; ſo on the  
reverse, the multitude of *ſuperſtitious Opi-  
nions, vicious Habits, and debauched Pra-  
ctiſes,* which prevail in all Ages through  
the greater part of the World, do recipro-  
cally increaſe Mens groſs Ignorance, Care-  
leſneſs and Stupidity. False and unwor-  
thy Notions of God, or Superſtitious Ap-  
prehenſions concerning him, which Men  
careleſly and inconfiderately happen to  
take up at firſt; do (as it were) blind  
the Eyes of their Reaſon for the future,  
and hinder them from diſcerning what of  
it ſelf originally was eaſy enough to be  
diſcovered. *That which may be known of  
God, has been manifeſt enough unto Men  
in all Ages; for God hath ſhewed it unto  
them: For the inviſible things of Him from  
the*

the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; even his eternal Power and Godhead: So that they who are ignorant of him, cannot but be without excuse. But notwithstanding all the Heathen World had so certain means of knowing God; yet generally they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was darkned; And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into Images of the meanest and most contemptible Creatures; and worshipped and served the Creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. The natural Consequence of which absurd Idolatry, and also the just Judgment of God upon them for it, was, that they were given up to a reprobate Mind, to Uncleanness and to all vile Affections to such a degree, that not only their Common Practises, but even their most Sacred Rights and Religious Performances, became themselves the extreamest Abominations. And when Men's *Morals* are thus corrupted, and they run with greediness into all excess of Riot and Debauchery; then, on the other hand, by the same natural Consequence, and by the same just Judgment of God, both their *Vicious Customs* and *Actions*, as well as Superstitious Opinions, reciprocally increased the *Blindness of their Hearts*, darken the Judgment of their *Understandings*, stupifie and fear

Ephes. 4.  
13 and 19.  
their

Y



their *Consciences* so as to become *pe-*  
*feeling*, and by degrees  
 extinguish wholly the  
*Light of Nature* in their  
 own Minds, which was  
 given them originally  
 inable them to discern  
 between *Good* and *E-*  
*vil*.

\* *Justos natura esse fa-*  
*ctos; — tantam autem esse*  
*corruptelam male consuetu-*  
*dinis, ut ab ea tanquam ig-*  
*niculi extinguantur a natura*  
*dati; exoriantorq; & con-*  
*firmantur vitia contraria.*  
*Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.*

Wherefore  
 Men have  
 great need  
 to be  
 taught and  
 instructed  
 in matters  
 of Religi-  
 on.

By these means it comes to pass, that  
 though the great *Obligations* and the  
 principal *Motives* of *Morality*, are in  
 deed certainly discoverable and de-  
 monstrable by right *Reason*; and all  
 considerate Men, when those *Motives*  
 and *Obligations* are fairly proposed  
 to them, must of necessity (as has been  
 fully proved in the foregoing Head)  
 yield their Assent to them as certain  
 and undeniable *Truths*; yet under the  
 disadvantages now mentioned, (as it is  
 the case of most Men to fall under some  
 or other of them,) very few are  
*Themselves* able, in reality and effect  
 to discover those *Truths* clearly and  
 plainly for themselves; But most Men  
 have great need of particular *Teaching*  
 and much *Instruction*, not without some  
 weight of *Authority*, as well as *Reason* and  
*Persuasion*;

1<sup>st</sup>. To raise and stir up their *Attent-*  
*ion*; to move them to shake off their  
 habitual *Carelessness*, *Stupidity* and  
*Inconsiderateness*; to persuade them to  
 make use of their natural *Reason*.

Understanding, and to apply their Minds to apprehend and study the Truth and Certainty of these things. For, as Men, notwithstanding all the rational Faculties they are by nature indued with, may yet through mere Neglect and Incogitancy be grossly and totally ignorant of the plainest and most obvious Mathematical Truths: so Men may also, for want of Consideration, be very ignorant of some of the plainest Moral Obligations, which, as soon as distinctly proposed to them, they cannot possibly avoid giving their Assent unto.

2. To give them a due *Sense*, and right and just *Apprehensions* concerning these things; to convince them of the great *Concern* and vast *Importance* of them; to correct the false Notions, vain Prejudices, and foolish Opinions; which deprave their Judgment; and to remove that Levity and Heedlessness of Spirit, which makes Men frequently to be in their practice <sup>very</sup> very little influenced by what in abstract Opinion they may seem firmly to believe. For there are many Men, who will think themselves highly injured, if any one should make any doubt of their Believing the indispensable Obligations of Morality, and the Certainty of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments; who yet in their Lives and Actions, seem to have upon their Minds but a very small Sense

of the Weight and infinite Importance of these great Truths.

3. To *Inculcate* these things frequently upon Them, and press them effectually to the practice of the plainest and most necessary Duties; to persuade them to moderate those Passions, to subdue those Lusts, to conquer those Appetites, to despise those Pleasures of Sense, and (which is the greatest Difficulty of all) to reform and correct those vitious Customs and evil Habits, which tempt and hurry them too often into the Commission of such things, as they are convinced at the same time, in the Reason of their own Minds, ought not to be practised. For 'tis very possible Men may both clearly understand their Duty, and also be fully convinced of the reasonableness of practising it; and yet at the same time, find a *Law in their Members warring and prevailing against the Law of their Mind, and bringing them into Captivity to the Law of Sin and Death.* Men \* may be pleased with the Beauty and excellency of Virtue, and have some faint Inclinations and even Resolutions to practise it: and yet at the return of their Temptations, constantly

Rom. 7, 23. *yet at the same time, find a Law in their Members warring and prevailing against the Law of their Mind, and bringing them into Captivity to the Law of Sin and Death.*

\* Quidam ad magnificas voces excitantur, & transeunt in affectum dicentium, alacres vulsu & animo. Rapiunt illos instigantque rerum pulchritudo. — Juvat protinus quæ audias, facere. Afficiuntur illi. & sunt quales jubentur, si illa animo forma permaneat, si non imperum insignem protinus. Pauci illam quam conceperant mentem, domum pertere potuerunt. *Senec. epist. 107.*

populus honesti dissuasor excipiat.

stantly



stantly fall back into their accustomed Vices; if the great Motives of their Duty be not very frequently and very strongly inculcated upon them, so as to make very deep and lasting impressions upon their Minds; and they have not some greater and higher Assistances afforded them, than the bare Conviction of their own speculative Reason.

For these Reasons (I say) it is absolutely necessary, that notwithstanding the natural demonstrableness both of the Obligations and Motives of Morality, yet considering the manifest corruptness of the present Estate which humane Nature is in, the generality of Men must not by any means be left wholly to the workings of their own Minds, to the use of their natural Faculties, and to the bare convictions of their own Reason; but must be particularly *Taught and Instructed* in their Duty, must have the Motives of it frequently and strongly pressed and inculcated upon them with great Weight and Authority, and must have many extraordinary Assistances afforded them; to keep them effectually in the Practise of the great and plainest Duties of Religion.

And hence we may, by the way, justly observe the exceeding great Use and Necessity there is, of establishing an *Order* or Succession of Men, whose peculiar Office and continual Employ-

*The great Use and Necessity of an Order of Preachers.*

ment it may be, to Teach and Instruct People in their Duty, to press and exhort them perpetually to the Practise of it, and to be Instruments of conveying to them extraordinary Assistances for that purpose. To which excellent Institution, the Right and worthy Notion of God and his Divine Perfections, the just Sense and Understanding of the great Duties of Religion, and the universal Belief and due Apprehension of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments; which the generality even of the meaner and more ignorant sort of People among us, are now possess of; is manifestly and undeniably almost wholly owing: As I shall have Occasion hereafter more particularly to observe.

VI. *Though in almost every Age there have indeed been in the Heathen World some wise and brave and good Men who have made it their business to study and practise the Duties of natural Religion: Themselves, and to teach and exhort Others to do the like; who seem therefore to have been raised up by Providence, as Instruments to reprove in some measure and put some kind of check to the extream 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*

have in earnest set themselves about this excellent Work; and they that have indeed sincerely done it, have themselves been intirely 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 practise of the World.

1. There have indeed in almost every Age been in the Heathen World, some Wise and Brave and Good Men, who have made it their Business to study and practise the Duties of natural Religion Themselves, and to teach and exhort others to do the like. An eminent Instance whereof, in the Eastern Nations, the Scripture it self affords us in the History of Job; concerning whom it does not certainly appear, that he knew any positive revealed Institution of Religion, or that, before his Sufferings, any immediate Revelation was made unto him; as there was to Abraham and the rest of the Patriarchs. Among the Greeks, Socrates seems to be an extraordinary Example of this kind. Concerning



concerning whom *Plato* tells us, in his *Apo-*

\* Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο ποιεῖται  
των ἐγὼ περὶ ἐρχομαι, ἢ πεί-  
σασθαι ὑμῶν καὶ νεωτέρους καὶ  
πρεσβυτέρους μὴ τὸ σώμα-  
των ἐπιμελεῖσθαι, μὴτε  
χρημάτων πρότερον, μὴτε  
ἄλλα πρὸς ἕτω σφόδρα,  
ὡς τὴ ψυχῆς, ὅπως αἰεὶ εἴη  
ἔσται λόγων ὅτι ἐκ ἐκ χρη-  
μάτων ἢ ἀρετῆ γίνεται, ἀλλ'  
ἐξ ἀρετῆς χρήματα καὶ τὰ ἄ-  
λλα παρὰ τὴ πρὸς ἀνθρώ-  
ποις ἅπαντα, καὶ ἰδίᾳ καὶ δη-  
μοσίᾳ. *Plato in Apol. 30-  
31. 16.*

logy, that \* he did nothing  
else, but go continually  
about, perswading both old  
and young, not to be so  
much solicitous to gratifie  
the Appetites of the Body,  
or to heap up Wealth, or  
to raise themselves to Ho-  
nour, or gain any out-  
ward Advantage whatso-  
ever; as to improve the  
Mind by the continual Ex-  
ercise of all Virtue and  
Goodness: Teaching them,

that a Man's true value did not arise  
from his Riches, or from any outward  
Circumstances of Life; but that True  
Riches, and every real Good, whether  
publick or private, proceeded wholly  
from Virtue. After him, *Plato* and  
*Aristotle* and Others followed his Ex-  
ample, in teaching Morality. And  
among the Romans, *Cicero*; and in  
latter times, *Epicetus* and *Antoninus*, and  
several Others, gave the World admi-  
rable Systems of Ethicks, and noble  
moral Instructions and Exhortations, of  
excellent Use and Benefit to the Gene-  
rations wherein they lived, and deser-  
vedly of great value and esteem even  
unto this Day.

Who seem  
to have  
been de-  
signed by  
Providence  
to bear Wit-  
ness against  
the Weak-  
ness of  
the Nati-  
ons where-  
in they li-  
ved.

2. So that, I think, it may very just-  
ly be supposed, that these Men were  
raised up and designed by Providence,

(the

(the abundant Goodness of God having never left it self wholly without Witness, notwithstanding the greatest corruptions and provocations of Mankind,) as Instruments to reprove in some measure, and put some kind of check to the extreme Superstition and Wickedness of the Nations wherein they lived, or at least to bear Witness against and condemn it. Concerning Job, the case is evident and confessed: And, for the same reason, some of the Antientest Writers of the Church have not scrupled to † call even Socrates also, and some others of the Best of the Heathen Moralists, by the Name of Christians; and to affirm, that \* as the Law was as it were a Schoolmaster to bring the Jews unto Christ, so true moral Philosophy was to the Gentiles a Preparative to receive the Gospel. This perhaps was carrying the matter somewhat too far: But to be sure, thus much we may safely assert, that || whatever any of these Men were at any time enabled to deliver Wisely and Profitably and Agreeably to Divine Truth, was as a Light shining in a dark Place, de-

† Καὶ οἱ μετὰ λόγον βεβαιώσαντες, χριστιανοί εἰσι, καὶ ἄλλοι ἐνομιάζοντες οἷον ἐν Ἑλληνισμῷ Σωκράτης καὶ Ἡράκλειος, καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι αὐτοῖς ἐν βαρβάρους ἢ Ἰβηράμ, &c. Justin Apolog. 2.

\* Ταύτα ὅτι καὶ προηγουμένως πῶς Ἑλλήσιν ἐδόθη ἡ φιλοσοφία τότε, πρὶν ἢ τον κύριον καλέσαι καὶ τὰς Ἑλλήνας ἐ-αἰδαγώγει ὡς καὶ αὐτὴ τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ὡς ὁ νοῦς τὰς Ἑβραίους εἰς χεῖρὸν προπαρασκευάζει τὸν νόμον ἢ φιλοσοφία, προσδοκῶνται τὸ ὑπὸ χεῖρὸς τελειόμενον. Clem. Alexand. Strom. 1.

|| Ὁ θεὸς ὡς αὐτοῖς ταῦτα, καὶ ὅσα καλῶς λέλεκται, ἐφανερώσεται. Orig. contra Celsum. lib. 6.

rived

rived to them by a Ray of that infinite overflowing Goodness, which does good to all even both *Just and Unjust*; from God the sole Author of all Truth and Wisdom: And That, for some Advantage and Benefit to the rest of the World even in its blindest and most corrupt Estate.

*But yet none of these Men were ever able to reform the World with any considerable Success.*

*ROM. I. 21, & 28.*

3. But then, notwithstanding the most that can be made of this Supposition, 'tis certain the *Effect* of all the teaching and instruction even of the best of the Philosophers in the Heathen World, was in comparison very small and inconsiderable. They never were able to reform the World with any great and universal Success, nor to keep together any considerable number of Men in the knowledge and practise of true Virtue. With respect to the Worship of God, *Idolatry* prevailed universally in all Nations, and notwithstanding Men did indeed *know God*, so as to be *without excuse*, yet they *did not like to retain him in their Knowledge*, but *became vain in their Imaginations*, and *their foolish Heart was darkned*, and *they changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into Images of the vilest Creatures*, and no Philosophers ever turned any great number of Men from this absurd *Idolatry*, to the acknowledgment and Worship of the only true God. In respect of Mens dealings  
one



one with another; Honour, and Interest, and Friendship, and Laws, and the Necessities of Society, did indeed cause *Justice* to be practised in many Heathen Nations to a great degree; But very few Men among them were Just and Equitable upon right and true Principles, a due Sense of Virtue, and a constant Fear and Love of God. With respect to themselves, *Intemperance* and *Luxury* and unnatural *Uncleannefs* was commonly practised, even in the most civilized Countries; and This not so much in Opposition to the Doctrine of the Philosophers, as by the consent indeed and encouragement of too great a part of them. I shall not enlarge upon this ungrateful and melancholly Subject: There are Accounts enough extant, of the universal corruption and debauchery of the Heathen World. St Paul's Description of it, in the whole first Chapter of his Epistle to the *Romans*, is alone sufficient; and \* the Complaints of their own Writers, abundantly confirm it. The Disciples of the best Moralists, at least the Practisers of their Doctrine, were, in their own Lifetime, very † few; as too plainly appears from the evil Treatment, which that

\* Egregium sanctumq; virum si cerno, bimembri  
Hoc monstrum puero, vel  
miranti sub aratro  
Piscibus inventis, & fœtæ  
comparo mulæ.

*Juvenal. Sat. 13:*  
See also the places cited a little below.

† Sint licet perhonesti;  
— sed audire deposci-  
mus quos sint aut fuerint nu-

great

mero. — — *Unus, Duo, Tres.* — — At genus humanum non ex bonis pauculis, sed ex cæteris omnibus æstimari convenit. *Arnob. advers. Gentes, lib. 2.*

Da mihi virum qui sit iracundus, maledicus, effrænatus; paucissimis Dei verbis tam placidum, quam ovem, reddam. Da libidinosum, &c. — — *Numquis hæc Philosophorum aut unquam præstitit, aut præstare, si velit, potest? Lactant. lib. 3.*

Παρὰ μὲν τοῖς Ἕλλησιν εἰς πρῶτον αἰῶνα, καὶ ἔκ ὅθεν εἰ δεύτερον, &c. *Origen. advers. Ecclj. lib. 1.*

remarkable instance. These considerations (so very early did they appear to be true,) Affected in such a manner that great Admirer of *Socrates, Plato*; that he sometimes seems to give over all Hopes of working any Reformation in Men by Philosophy; and

\* Ταῦτα λογισμῶ λαβῶν, ψυχίαν ἔχων, καὶ τὰ αὐτῶ περιττῶν, οἷον ἐν χειμῶνι κρυορτῶ καὶ ζέλης ὑπὸ πνεύματῶ φερόμεν, ὑπὸ τοιχείον ὑποσῶς, ὁρῶν τὰς ἄλλας κατὰ πηλαμένους ἀνομίαις, ἀγαπᾷ εἴ πη αὐτὸς καθαρὸς ἀδικίας τε καὶ ἀνοσίων ἔργων, τότε ἐνδεῖδε βίον βιώσεται, καὶ τὴν ἀπαλλαγὴν αὐτῶ μετὰ καλῆς ἐλπίδῶ ἰλαίως τε καὶ εὐμνήως ἀπαλλάξεται. *Plato de Republ. lib. 6.*

great Man *Socrates* met withal at *Athens*: And at their Deaths, their Doctrine in great measure died with them; not having any sufficient Evidence or Authority to support it. And their Followers quickly fell back into the common Idolatry, Superstition, Uncleaness and Debauchery. Of which, the Character the *Roman* Writers give of those that called themselves the Disciples of *Socrates*, is a particular and

says, that \* a good Man, when he considers these Things, would even choose to sit quiet, and shift for himself; like a Man that in a violent Hurricane, creeps under a Wall for his Defense; and seeing the whole

World round about him filled with all manner of Wickedness, be content if, preserving his single Self from Iniquity and every evil Work, he can pass away the present Life in Peace, and at last Die with Tranquillity and good Hope. And indeed, for many Reasons, it was altogether impossible, that the Teaching of the Philosophers should ever be able to reform Mankind, and recover them out of their very degenerate and corrupt Estate, with any considerably great and universal Success.

1. In the first place, Because the Number of those, who have in earnest set themselves about this excellent Work, have been exceeding Few. Philosophers indeed, that called themselves so, there were enough in every place, and in every Age: But those who truly made it their business to improve their Reason to the height; to free themselves from the Superstition, which overwhelmed the whole World; to search out the Obligations of Morality, and the Will of God their Creator; to obey it sincerely themselves, as far as they could discover it by the Light of Nature; and to encourage and exhort others to do the like; were but a very few Names. The Doctrine of far the greatest part of the Philosophers, consisted plainly in nothing but Words, and Subtilty, and Strife, and empty Contention;



tention; and did not at all amend even their own Manners; much less was fitted to reform the World. Their

† Ἄλλ' οἱ πολλοὶ ταῦτα μὴ κ' ἀφ' ἑτέροις ὅτι τὸ λόγον καταφύγοντες οἴονται φιλοσοφεῖν, καὶ ἕως ἔσχατος σπουδαῖοι ὅμοιον ποιῶντες τοῖς κλέουσιν, οἱ τῶν ἰατρῶν ἀκέσσι μὲν ἐπιμελῶς, ποιῶσι δ' ἔθεν τὴν προσασσομένων. ὡς περὶ ἐν ἑδ' ἐκείνοι εὖ ἔξεσι τὸ σῶμα, ἕτω δεξαπυδόμενοι ἑδ' ἕτοι τὴν ψυχῶν, ἕτω φιλοσοφῶντες. *Aristot. Ethic. lib. 2. cap. 3.*

Scholars, as *Aristotle* † excellently describes them, thought themselves bravely improved in Philosophy, and that they were become gallant Men, if they did but hear and understand and learn to dispute about Morality; though it had no effect at all, nor influence upon their Manners: Just as if a sick Man should expect to be healed, by hearing a Physician discourse;

though he never followed any of his Directions: Undoubtedly, saith he, the Mind of the one, was exactly as much improved by such Philosophy; as the Health of the others, Body, by such Physick. And no wonder the generality of the common Hearers judged of their own Improvement in Philosophy, by such false measures; when the enormous Viciousness of the Lives of the Philosophers themselves, made it plainly appear that \* their Art

\* *Inclusos [Philosophos] in Angulis, facienda præcipere, quæ ne ipsi quidem faciunt qui loquuntur; & quoniam se a veris actibus removerunt, apparet eos exercendæ linguæ causa, vel advocandi gratia, artem ipsam Philosophiæ reperisse. Lactant. lib. 3.*

was not so much intended and fitted for the Reformation of Men's Manners,

as to be an *Exercise of Wit and Subtilty*, and an *Instrument of Vain-Glory*. Excepting perhaps *Socrates* and *Plato*, and some others of that Rank; this Account is too plainly true of the greater part of the Philosophers. The Argument is too unpleasent, to instance in particulars. Whoever pleases, may in *Diogenes Laertius* and other Writers, find Accounts enough, of the lewdness and unnatural Vices of most of the Philosophers. It is a shame for Us, so much as to speak of those Things, which were done of them, not only in secret, but even in the most publick manner. I shall here only add the Judgment of *Cicero*; a Man as able to pass a right Judgment in this Matter, as ever lived: *Do you think*, says \* he, *that these Things*, [meaning the Precepts of Morality] *had any influence upon those Men*, (excepting only a very few of them,) *who taught, and writ, and disputed about them?* No; *Who is there of all the Philosophers, whose Mind and Life and Manners were conformable to right Reason?* who ever made his Philosophy to be the Law and Rule of his Life, and not a mere Boast and Show of his Wit and

\* Sed hæc eadem numquam censetur apud eos ipsos valere, nisi admodum paucos, a quibus inventa, disputata, conscripta sunt? Quotus enim quisque Philosophorum invenitur, qui sit ita moratus, ita animo ac vita constitutus, ut ratio postulat; qui disciplinam suam non ostentationem scientiæ, sed legem vitæ putet; qui obtemperet ipse sibi, & decretis suis pareat? Videre licet multos, libidinum servos, &c. Cic. *Tusculanæ Question. lib. 2.*

*Parts? who observed his own Instructions, and lived in obedience to his own Precepts? On the contrary; many of them were Slaves to filthy Lusts, many to Pride, many to Covetousness, &c.*

*And those few of the Philosophers, who did indeed sincerely endeavour to reform Mankind, were yet themselves entirely ignorant of some Doctrines absolutely necessary to the bringing about that great End.*

2. Those few extraordinary Men of the Philosophers, who did indeed in good measure sincerely Obey the Laws of natural Religion Themselves, and made it their chief Business to instruct and exhort Others to do the same; were yet *Themselves intirely ignorant* of some Doctrines absolutely necessary to the bringing about this great End, of the Reformation and Recovery of Mankind.

*In general:* Having no knowledge of the whole Scheme, Order, and State of things, the Method of God's governing the World, his Design in Creating Mankind, the original Dignity of Humane Nature, the Ground and Circumstances of Mens present corrupt Condition, the Manner of the Divine Interposition necessary to their recovery, and the Glorious End to which God intended finally to conduct them: Having no knowledge (I say) of all This; their whole Attempt to discover the Truth of Things, and to

instruct others therein, was  
\* like wandering in the wide Sea, without knowing whither they were to go, or which way they were

\* Errant ergo velut in Mari magno, nec quo ferantur, intelligunt; quia nec viam cernunt, nec ducem sequuntur. *Lactant. lib. 6.*



were to take, or having any Guide to conduct them. And accordingly † the Wisest of them were never backward to confess their own ignorance and great blindness: *that Truth* || was hid from them, as it were in an unfathomable Depth: *That* † they were much in the Dark, and very dull and stupid, not only as to the profounder things of Wisdom, but as to such things also, which seemed very capable of being in great part discovered: Nay, *That* even † those things, which in themselves were of all others the most Manifest, (that is, which, whenever *Made known*, would appear most obvious and evident,) their natural Understanding was of it self as unqualified to find out and apprehend, as the Eyes of Bats to behold the Light of the Sun: *That* the very first and most necessary thing of all, || the Nature and Attributes of God himself, were, notwithstanding all the general Helps of Reason,

Z

† Ex cæteris Philosophis, nonne optimas & gravissimos quosque confiteatur, multa se ignorare; & multa sibi etiam atque etiam esse discenda? Cic. *Tusc. Quest.* 3.

|| Ἐν βούλῃ ἀλήθεια.

† Tui ergo te, Cicero, libri arguunt, quam nihil a philosophia dulci possit ad vitam. Hæc tuâ verba sunt: *Mihi autem non modo ad sapientiam cæci videmur; sed et ea ipsa, quæ aliis ex parte cerni videntur, hebetes & obtusi.* Lactant. lib. 3.

\* Ὡςπερ γὰρ καὶ τὰ ἄνθρωποις οὐκ ὄντων οὐρανόθεν πρὸς τὸ γέννημα ἔχει τὸ μέτρον ἡμετέρας ψυχῆς ὁ νόμος πρὸς τὰ τῆ φύσει φανερώτατα πάντων. Αἰτίαι. Μεταφυσ. lib. 2. c. 1.

|| Τὸν μὲν δὲ ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τῶν θεῶν τὰ αὐτῶν, εὐρεῖν τε ἔργον, καὶ εὐερίαν λέγειν εἰς πάντα ἀδύνατον. Plato in *Timæo*.

very

Profecto eos ipsos, qui se aliquid certi habere arbitrantur, addubitare cogit doctissimorum hominum de maxima re tanta dissensio. Cic. de Natura Deor. lib. 1.

\* Urinam tam facile vera invenire possem, quam falsa convincere. Id. Ibid.

† Ἐπεὶ εὐξάμεθα μετ' ἐμῶν. — Καὶ μοι δύσβατος γέ πῃ τόπος φαίνεται καὶ ἐπίσκητος ἔστιν ἐν σκοτεινῶς καὶ δυσδιεξεύρητος. Plato de Republ. lib. 4.

|| See Plato in Apologia Socratis.

Particularly, they were very ignorant in what manner God might be acceptably worshipped.

very difficult to them to find out in particular, and still more difficult to explain; it being much \* more easy to say what God was not, than what he was: And finally, that the Method of instructing Men effectually, and making them truly Wise and Good, was a thing very obscure and dark and difficult to be found out. In a word: Socrates himself always openly professed, that he pretended to be Wiser than

other Men, only in this one thing, that he was duly sensible of his own Ignorance, and || believed that it was merely for that very Reason, that the Oracle pronounced him the wisest of Men.

More particularly: The Manner, in which God might be acceptably worshipped, these Men were entirely and unavoidably ignorant of. That God ought to be worshipped; is, in the general, as evident and plain from the Light of Nature, as any thing can be: But in what particular Manner, and with what Kind of Service he will be worshipped, cannot be certainly discovered by bare Reason. Obedience to the Obligations of Nature, and Imitation

tation of the Moral Attributes of God; the wisest Philosophers easily knew, was undoubtedly the most acceptable Service to God: But some external Adoration seemed also to be necessary; and how this was to be performed, they could not with any certainty discover. Accordingly even the very best of them complied therefore generally with the outward Religion of their Country, and advised others to do the same; and so, notwithstanding all their wise Discourses, they fell lamentably into the practise of the most foolish Idolatry. *Lactantius* observes that *Socrates* himself, \* at the Conclusion of one of the bravest Discourses that ever was made by any Philosopher, superstitiously ordered a Sacrifice to be offered for him to *Æsculapius*. But herein *Lactantius* was certainly mistaken: For *Socrates* undoubtedly spake this in mockery of *Æsculapius*; looking upon Death as his truest Deliverance. *Plato*, after having delivered very noble and almost divine Truths concerning the Nature and Attributes of the Supreme God, † weakly advises Men to worship likewise Inferiour Gods, Dæmons, and Spirits; and

Εἶπεν, ὃ δὴ τελευ-  
ταῖον ἐπέειξεν. ὦ Κεῖ-  
πον, τῷ Ἀσκληπιῷ εὐχέ-  
σαι, ἀλεκτεύειν, ἀλλὰ  
ἀπόδοτε, καὶ μὴ ἀμελήσητε.  
*Plato in Phædone.*

Illud vero nonne summe  
vanitatis; quod ante mortem  
familiares suos rogavit, ut  
*Æsculapio* gallum, quem vo-  
verat, pro se sacrarent. *Lactant.  
lib. 2.*

† Πρῶτον μὲν, εὐχόμε-  
θαί τις πρὸς ὁτιδήποτε  
τε καὶ τὰς πάλαι ἔχου-  
σας, θεάς, πῶς χυδαίοντες  
dared



ἀν τις θεοῖς ἄρπα καὶ δεύ-  
 τερα ἢ καὶ ἀεισεργῶν νέμων,  
 ὀρθότατα τῶν ἢ εὐσεβίας  
 σκοπεῖ τυχεύει. — Με-  
 τὰ θεὸς ὃ τέταρτον, καὶ τοῖς  
 δαίμοσιν ὄγ' ἔμφρων ὀρ-  
 γιάζοιτ' ἄν — — — Ἐπακο-  
 λυθεῖ δ' αὐτοῖς ἰδρύμα-  
 τα ἴδια πατρῴων θεῶν  
 κατὰ νόμον ὀργιάζουμενα.  
*Plato de Legib. lib. 4.*

|| Τὰς μὲν γὰρ θεῶν  
 ἑρῶντες σαφῶς, πινώμεν.  
 θεῶν ὃ εἰκόνας ἀγαλματα  
 ἰδ' υπαίμενοι, ὅς ἡμῖν ἀ-  
 γάλλουσι, καίπερ ἀψύχους  
 ὄντας, ἐκείνους ἠγούμεθα  
 τὰς ἐμψυχους θεὸς πολ-  
 λὴν διὰ ταῦτ' εὐνοίαν καὶ  
 χάριν ἔχειν. *Plato de Le-  
 gib. lib. 11.*

\* Τὸ Πλάτωνι ἐκ ἀ-  
 πιθανῶς μὲν εἰρημέσα, ἢ  
 μὴν καὶ διέθεντο τὸ φιλό-  
 σοφον ἀξίως καὶ αὐτὰ ἀ-  
 νασφαρῆναι ἐν τῇ πρὸς τὸ  
 ποιητικῶν θεῶν ὅλων εὐσεβεία,  
 ἢ ἔχρησεν μὴ νοθεύειν, μη-  
 δὲ μιάνειν τῇ εἰδωλολα-  
 τρείᾳ *Orig. advers. Cels.  
 lib. 6.*

† A Patribus acceptos  
 Deos placet coli. *Cic. de  
 Legib lib. 2.*

|| Itam illud ex institu-  
 tis Pontificum & Aruspici-  
 cum non mutandum est,  
 quibus hostiis immolan-  
 dum cuique Deo. *Id. i-  
 bid.*

N c si quor Magos  
 Perfarum, quibus aucto-

dared not to condemn the  
 worshipping even of Sta-  
 tues also and Images, de-  
 dicated according to the  
 Laws of their Country;  
 as if || the Honour they  
 paid to lifeless Idols,  
 could procure the Favour  
 and Good-will of Supe-  
 rior Intelligences: And  
 so \* he corrupted and  
 spoiled the best Philoso-  
 phy in the World, by  
 adding Idolatry to that  
 Worship, which he had  
 wisely and bravely be-  
 fore proved to be due  
 to the Creatour of all  
 Things. After him, Ci-  
 cero, the greatest and best  
 Philosopher that *Rome*, or  
 perhaps any other Nation  
 ever produced, allowed †  
 Men to continue the Ide-  
 latry of their Ancestors;  
 advised them || to con-  
 form themselves to the  
 superstitious Religion of  
 their Country, in offering  
 such Sacrifices to different  
 Gods, as were by Law  
 established; and \* disap-  
 proves and finds fault  
 with the *Perjian* Magi.

for burning the Temples of the Grecian Gods, and asserting that the whole Universe was God's Temple. In all which, he fondly contradicts himself, by † inexcusably complying with the Practises of those Men, whom in many of his Writings he largely and excellently proves to be extremely Foolish upon account of those very Practises. And to mention no more, for indeed those of a lower Rank, the *Minuter* Philosophers, as *Tully* calls them, are not worth the mentioning;) That admirable Moralist *Epictetus*, who for a true Sense of Virtue, seems to have had no Superior in the Heathen World; even He also || advises Men to offer Libations and Sacrifices to the Gods, every one according to the Religion and Custom of his Country.

ribus *Xerxes* inflammatis, templa Græciæ dicitur quod parietibus include- rent deos, quorum hoc mundus omnis templum esset & domus. Melius Græci atq; nostri, qui, ut auferent pietatem in De- os, easdem illos, cuius nos, urbes incolere voluerunt. *Id. ibid.*

† Video te, Cicero, ter-rena & manufacta vene- rari. Vana esse intelligis, & tamen eadem facis, quæ faciunt ipsi, eos ipse stultissimos contem- nis. — Si libenter errantem amas, qui errare se iudicant, quanto magis vulgus indoctum: *Lactantius* lib. 2.

Ἐπιπέσειν δὲ καὶ τῶν, ἢ ἀπαρξέσθαι κατὰ τὰ πρῶ- τερα, ἐλάττω ὁφείλουσι. *Epictet. c. 33.*

But *still more particularly*: That which of all other things, these best and wisest of the Philosophers were most absolutely and unavoidably ignorant of; and yet which, of all other things

And in what Manner the Gods were worshipped according to the Religion of the Heathens.

## *The Evidences of Natural*

was of the greatest Importance for *Sinful Men* to know; was *The Method*, by which such as have erred from the right way, and have offended God, may yet again restore themselves to the *Favour of God*, and to the *Hopes of Happiness*. From the consideration of the Goodness and Mercifulness of God, the Philosophers did indeed *very reasonably hope*, that God would show himself placable to Sinners, and might be some way reconciled; But when we come to inquire more particularly, *what Propitiation* he will accept, and in *what Manner* this reconciliation must be made; here Nature stops, and expects with impatience the aid of some particular Revelation. That God will receive returning Sinners, and accept of Repentance instead of perfect Obedience, *They cannot certainly know*, to whom he has not declared that he *will* do so: For though this be the most *probable* and *only* means of reconciliation, that Nature suggests; yet whether this will be alone sufficient; or whether God will not require something further, for the Vindication of his Justice and of the Honour and Dignity of his Laws and Government, and for the expressing more effectually his Indignation against Sin, before he will restore Men to the Privileges they have forfeited; they cannot be satisfactorily



factorily assured. For it cannot positively be proved from any of God's Attributes, that he is *absolutely obliged* to pardon all Creatures all their Sins at all times, barely and immediately upon their Repenting. There arises therefore from Nature no *Sufficient* Comfort to Sinners, but anxious and endless Solicitude about the Means of appeasing the Deity. Hence those divers ways of Sacrificing, and numberless Superstitions, which over-spread the Face of the Heathen World, but were so little satisfactory to the wiser part of Mankind, even in those times of darkness; that the more considering Philosophers could not forbear frequently declaring, that \* they thought those Rights could avail little or nothing towards appeasing the Wrath of a provoked God, or making their Prayers acceptable in his Sight; but that something still seemed to them to be wanting, though they knew not what.

\* See *Plato's Alcibiades 2, throughout.*

3. Some other Doctrines absolutely necessary likewise to the bringing about this great End of the Reformation of Mankind; though there was indeed so much proof and evidence of the Truth of them to be drawn from Reason, as that the best Philosophers could not by any means be *intirely ignorant* of them; yet so much *doubtfulness,*

*And other Doctrines absolutely necessary in order to reform Mankind, the best Philosophers were very doubtful and uncertain about.*

*uncertainty, and unsteadiness,* was there in the Thoughts and Assertions of these Philosophers concerning them, as could

† Præterea nihil apud eos certi est, nihil quod a secula veniat; ——— & nemo parat, quia nemo vult ad incertum laborare. *L. Sent. lib. 3.*

not but † very much diminish their proper Effect and Influence upon the Hearts and Lives of Men. I instance in the *Immortality of the Soul*, the *Certainty of a Future State*,

and *the Rewards and Punishments to be distributed in a Life to come*. The Arguments, which may be drawn from Reason and from the Nature of things for the Proof of these great Truths; seem really (as I have before shown) to come very little short of strict Demonstration: And accordingly the wisest Philosophers (as has likewise been shown before) did indeed sometimes seem to have reasoned themselves into a firm Belief of them, and to have been fully convinced of their Certainty and Reality; even so far as to apply them to excellent purposes and uses of Life. But then on the other hand, a Man cannot without some pity and concern of Mind observe, how strangely at other times the weight of the same Arguments seem to have slipped (as it were) out of their Minds; and with what wonderful *Diffidence, Wavering and Unsteadiness*, they discourse about the same Things. I de

not here think it of any very great moment, that there were indeed some whole Sects of Philosophers, who absolutely denied the *Immortality of the Soul*, and peremptorily rejected all kind of Expectation of a *Life to come*; (Though, to be sure, this could not but in some measure shock the *common People*, and make them entertain some suspicion about the strength of the Arguments used on the other side of the Question by wiser Men: Yet, I say,) it cannot be thought of any very great moment, that some whole Sects of Philosophers did indeed absolutely deny the *Immortality of the Soul*; Because these Men were weak Reasoners in other matters also, and plainly low and contemptible Philosophers, in comparison of those greater Genius's we are now speaking of. But that which I now observe, and which I say cannot be observed without some pity and concern of Mind, is this; that even those Great Philosophers themselves, the very Best and Wisest, and most considerate of them, that ever lived; notwithstanding the undeniable strength of the Arguments, which sometimes convinced them of the Certainty of a *Future State*; did yet at other times express themselves with so much hesitancy and unsteadiness concerning it, as, without doubt, could not but extremely



extremely hinder the proper effect and Influence, which that most important Consideration ought to have upon the Hearts and Lives of Men.

† Ἐμοὶ μὲν ἀπεθανομένην ὑμῖν ὅ βίωσομένους ὁπόπερ ὅ ἡμῶν ἔρχονται ἐπι ἀμεινον πράγμα, ἀδύλον παντὶ πλὴν ἢ τῷ θεῷ Plato in Apolog. Socr.

\* Quod præter Deos negat scire quenquam, scit ipse, utrum melius sit; nam dixit antè. Sed suum illud, nihil ut affirmet, tenet ad extremum. Cic. *Tusc. Qu. lib. 1.*

concerning the Immortality of the Soul;

† Νῦν ὅ ἐν ἴσῃ ὅτι παρ' ἀνδρας τε ἐλπίζω ἀφίξασθαι ἀγαθῆς, καὶ τῶν μὲν ἂν πάνυ διαχρησαίμεν. Plato in Phæd.

*Men: Yet I would not be too peremptory and confident concerning it:*

|| Ἐἰ δ' αὖ οἶον ἀποδημῶσαι ὅσιν ὁ θάνατος ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον, καὶ ἀληθῆ ὅτι τὰ λεγόμενα, ὡς ἄρα ἐκεῖ εἰσι πάντες οἱ τεθνεώτες, &c. Plato in Apolog. Socrat.

*there; Then &c. So likewise Cicero, speaking*

*I am now, said † Socrates a little before his Death, about to leave this World; and ye are still to continue in it: Which of us have the better Part allotted us, God only knows: † Seeming to express some Doubtfulness, whether he should have any Existence after Death, or not. And again, at the End of his most admirable Discourse*

*I would have you to know, said † he to his Friends who came to pay him their last Visit, that I have great Hopes I am now going into the Company of Good*

*Men: Yet I would not be too peremptory and confident concerning it: But || if Death be only as it were a Transmigration from hence into another place; and those Things, which are told us, be indeed true; that those who are dead to Us, do all Live*

speaking of the same Subject: I will endeavour, saith \* he, to explain what you desire; yet I would not have you depend upon what I shall say, as certain and infallible; But I may guess, as other Men do, at what shall seem most probable; And further than this, I cannot pretend to go. Again: Which of those two Opinions, saith † he, [that the Soul is mortal, or that it is immortal,] is True, God only knows; Which of them is most Probable, is a very Great Question. And again in the same Discourie, having brought all those excellent Arguments before-mentioned in proof of the Immortality of the Soul; Yet we ought not, saith † he, to be over-confident of it: For it often happens that we are strongly affected at first, with an acute Argument; and yet a little while after, stagger in our Judgment and alter our Opinion, even in clearer Matters than these; For these Things must be confessed to have some obscurity in them. And again: I know not how, saith

\* Ea, quæ vis, ut poterò, explicabo; nec tamen quasi Pychius Apollo, certa ut sint & fixa quæ dixerò; sed ut homunculus unus e multis, probabilis coniectura sequens. Ultra enim quo progrediar quam ut verisimilia videam, non habeo, Cic. Tusc. Quest. lib. 1.

† Harum sententiarum, quæ vera sit, Deus alicui viderit; quæ verisimilima, magna Quæstio est. Id. ibid.

‡ Etsi nihil nimis oportet considerare. Movemur enim læpe aliquo acute concluso: labamus mutamusq; sententiam clarioribus etiam in rebus; in his est enim aliqua obicuritas. Id. ibid.

Nescio quomodo, dum lego, assentior; cum posui librum, & mecum ipse de immortalitate animorum capi cogitare, assensio omnis illa elabitur. *Id. ibid.*

faith \* he, when I read the Arguments in proof of the Souls Immortality, methinks I am fully convinced; and yet after I have laid aside the Book, and come to think and consider of the Matter alone by my self, presently I find my self slipt again insensibly into my old Doubts. From all which it appears, that notwithstanding all the bright Arguments and acute Conclusions, and brave Sayings of the best Philosophers; yet *Life and Immortality* were † not fully and satisfactorily brought to Light by bare natural Reason; but Men still plainly stood in need of some farther and more compleat Discovery.

† Credebam facile opinionibus magnorum virorum, rem gratissimam [anima immortalitatem] promittentium magis quam probantium. *Senec. epist. 102.*

Adeo omnis illa tunc sapientia *Socratis*, de industria venerat consultæ æquanimittatis, non de fiducia comperitæ veritatis. *Tertullian: de Anima*

And those things which they were indeed certain of, yet they were not able to prove and explain clearly and distinctly enough.

4. Those Things which the Philosophers were indeed the most fully certain of, and did in good measure understand; such as the Obligations of Virtue, and the Will of God in matters of Morality; yet they were never able to prove and explain clearly and distinctly enough, to Persons of all Capacities, in order to their complete conviction and reformation. First, because most of



of their Discourses upon these Subjects, have been rather speculative and learned, nice and subtle Disputes; than practical and universally useful Instructions. They proved, by strict and nice Argumentation, that the *Practise of Virtue* is wise and reasonable and fit to be chosen; rather than that 'tis of plain, necessary and indispensable Obligation; And were able to deduce the *Will of God*, only by such abstract and subtle Reasonings, as the generality of Men had by no means either Abilities or Opportunities to understand or be duly affected by. Their very Profession and manner of Life, led them to make their Philosophy rather an Entertainment of leisure time, a Trial of Wit and Parts, an Exercise of Eloquence, and of the Art and Skill of good Speaking; than an Endeavour to reform the Manners of Men, by showing them their plain and necessary Duty. And accordingly the Study of it, was, as *Cicero* † himself observes, unavoidably confined to a Few, and by no means fitted for the

\* Profecto cunctis istorum disputatio, quantum uberrimos fontes virtutis & scientiæ continet, tamen collata cum horum [qui rempublicam gubernant] actis perfectissq; rebus, veretur ne non tantum videatur aculisse negotiis hominum utilitatis, quantum *Orat. Stat. in quâdam Orat. Cic. de Repub. fragm.*

† Est, inquit Cicero, philosophia paucis contenta iudicibus, multitudinem consulto ipsa fugiens — maximum itaq; argumentum est, phi-

losophiam neq; sapientiam tendere, nec; insam esse sapientiam; quod in ætate, barba tantum celebratur & pallo. *Lactant. lib. 3.*

bulk and common sort of Mankind who, as they cannot judge of the true strength of nice and abstract Arguments, so they will always be suspicious of

|| Ὀλίγες μὲν ὤνησεν ἢ  
 πεικαλλίς καὶ ἐπίετη-  
 δευμένη Πλάτωνος λέξι-  
 ς, πλείονας ἢ ἢ τῶν εὐ-  
 τελέστερον ἅμα καὶ πραγμα-  
 τικῶς καὶ ἐσυχασμένως τῶν  
 πολλῶν διδασκάλων καὶ  
 γραφῶν· ἐστὶ γὰρ ἰ-  
 δῆν, ὅτι μὲν Πλάτωνος ἐν  
 χερσὶ τῶν σοκένων ἐστὶ φι-  
 λολόγων μόνων. Orig. ad-  
 vers. Cels. lib. 6.

Ἀγροικότερον εἰπὼν ὁ  
 Ἰησῆς, τῶν δέλεοντι τὸ χι-  
 τῶνά σὺ λαβῆν, ὅσες καὶ  
 τὸ ἱμάτιον, βιωσελέστερον  
 κεκίνηκε τὸν λόγον καὶ πα-  
 ρέστητε ἕτως εἰπὼν, ἢ ὡς  
 ἐν τῷ Κρίτωνι Πλάτωνος,  
 ἔτι μὴδ' ἀκρίβειν ἰδιῶται  
 δυνάμει, ἀλλὰ μόγις οἱ  
 τὰ ἐγκύκλια πρὸς τὸ στυ-  
 γίης Ἑλλήνων φιλοσοφίας  
 μαμαθηκότες. Id. lib. 7.

some Fallacy in them, None || but Men of Parts and Learning, of Study and liberal Education, have been able to profit by the sublime Doctrine of Plato, or by the subtle disputations of other Philosophers; whereas the Doctrine of Morality, which is the Rule of Life and Manners, ought to be plain, easy and familiar, and suited fully to the Capacities of all Men. Secondly, Another Reason why the Philosophers were never able to prove and explain clearly and distinctly enough, even those things of which they were the most Certain, to Persons of

all Capacities, in order to their complete conviction and reformation; was because they never were able to frame to themselves any complete, regular, and consistent System or Scheme of things; but the Truths which they

\* Οὐκ ὅτι ἀλλότρια  
 εἶναι τὰ Πλάτωνος διδασκ-

taught, were \* single and scattered, accidental as it

were

were, and hit upon by chance, rather than by any Knowledge of the whole true state of Things; and consequently less universally convictive. Nothing could be more Certain, (as they all well knew), than that *Virtue* was unquestionably to be chosen, and the Practise of

μαλιστα τῷ Χριστῷ· ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐκ ἑστὶ πάντῃ οὐσία, ὡς περ ἐδὴ τὰ τῶν ἄλλων.— ἕκαστος γὰρ τις, ἀπο μέρους τῷ σπερματικῷ θεῷ λογε τὸ συγγενὲς ὄρων, καλῶς ἐφ' ἐγγύθιο. Οἱ δὲ τὰναντία αὐτοῖς ἐν κυριότητι εἰρηκότες, ἐκ ἐπιστήμης τῶν ἀποπλοῦν καὶ γνῶσιν τὴν ἀν' ἀλεγειῶν φαίνονται ἐρηκέναι. Justin. Apolog. 1.

it to be recommended necessarily above all things; And yet they could never clearly and satisfactorily make out, upon what Principles originally and for what End ultimately, this Choice was to be made; and upon what Grounds it was universally to be supported. Hence they perpetually † disagreed, opposed, and contradicted one another in all their Disputations to such a degree, that St. *Austin* somewhere out of *Varro* reckons up no less than 280 Opinions concerning that one

† Nec, quid defendere debeant, scientes; nec quid refutare. Incurtantiq; passim sine delectu omnia quæ afferunt, quicunq; dissentiant. *Lactant. lib. 7.*

Question, What was the *Chief Good* or *Final Happiness* of Man. The Effect of all which Differences could not, without doubt, but be a mighty hindrance to that Conviction and general Influence, which That great Truth, in the *Certainty* whereof they All clearly agreed, (namely, that the Practise

of



of *Virtue* was necessary and indispensable,) ought to have had upon the Minds and Lives of Men. This whole Matter, is excellently set forth by *Lactantius*:

\* Totam igitur veritatem, & omne divinæ religionis arcanum Philosophi attigerunt. Sed aliis resistentibus, defendere id, quod invenerant, nequiverunt; quia singulis ratio non quadravit; nec ea, quæ vera senserant, in summam redigere potuerunt. *Lactant. lib. 7.*

*Lactantius*: The Philosophers, saith \* he, take them All together, did indeed discover all the particular Doctrines of true Religion; But because each one endeavoured to confute what the others asserted; and no One single Scheme, was in all its parts consistent, and agreeable to Reason and Truth;

and none of them were able to collect into One whole and Entire Scheme, the several Truths dispersed among them All; therefore they were not able to maintain and defend what they had discovered. And again; having set down a brief summary of the whole Doctrine and Design of true Religion, from the Original to the Consummation of all Things;

† Quam summam, quia Philosophi non comprehenderunt; nec veritatem comprehendere potuerunt; quamvis ea fere, quibus summa ipsa constat, & viderint & explicaverint. Sed diversi ac diverse illa omnia protulerunt, non annexentes nec causas rerum, nec

This Entire Scheme, saith † he, because the Philosophers were ignorant of, therefore they were not able to comprehend the Truth; notwithstanding that they saw and discovered singly, almost all the Particulars of which the whole Scheme consists. But this was done by different

rent Men and at different times, and in different Manners; (with various Mixtures of different Errours, in what every one discovered of Truth singly;) and without finding the Connexion of the Causes, and Consequences and Reasons of Things; from the mutual Dependancies of which, the Compleatness and Perfection of the whole Scheme arises. Whereas, had there been any Man, who could have collected and put together in Order all the several Truths, which were taught singly and scatteredly by Philosophers of all the different Sects, and have made up out of them One Entire consistent Scheme; truly he would not have differed much from Us Christians; But This, it was not possible for any Man to do, without having the True System of Things first Revealed to him.

consequentias, nec rationes; ut summam illam, quæ continet universa, & compingerent & completerent. *Lactant. lib. 7.*

Quod si existisset aliquis qui veritatem sparsam per singulos, per sectasq; diffusam, colligeret in unum, ac redigeret in corpus; is profecto non dissentiret a nobis. Sed hoc nemo facere, nisi veri peritus ac sciens, potest. Verum autem non nisi ejus scire est, qui sic doctus a Deo. *Id. ibid.*

5. Lastly, Even those Things, which the Philosophers were not only themselves certain of, but which they have also been able to prove and explain to Others, with sufficient clearness and plainness; such as are the most obvious and necessary Duties of Life; they have not yet had Authority enough to enforce and inculcate upon Men's Minds with so strong an Impression, as to influence and govern the general Practice of the World. The

And those things which they were able to prove and explain clearly and distinctly enough, yet they had not sufficient Authority to enforce in Practice.

Truths which they proved by specula-  
tive Reason, \* wanted still

\* *Platonis* documenta, quamvis ad rem multum conferant, tamen parum habent *Firmitatis* ad probandam & implendam veritatem. *Lactant. lib. 7.*

† Quid ergo ? nihilne illi [*Philosophi*] simile præcipiunt? Imò permulta, & ad verum frequenter accedunt. Sed nihil ponderis habent illa præcepta, quia sunt humana; & auctoritate majore, id est, divina illa, carent. Nemo igitur credit; quia tam se hominem putat esse qui audit, quam est ille qui præcipit. *Lactant. lib. 3.*

|| \* Εἰπομε δ' ἂν ἄλλοθ' εἰ τὸς διωκθέντας διαδοῖναι τὸς ἀκρόατας τῶν λεγομένων ἕως βινύτας, ὡς τῶν ἕως ἐχόντων. Διατίθενται Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ χριστιανοὶ περὶ τῶν ἀπ' αὐτῶν καλυμένων μέλλοντων αἰῶνων. — δεικνύτω ἕν καὶ κίλισθ' ἢ ὁ βυλόμενθ', τίνες διετέθησαν περὶ αἰωνίων κολάσεων, ὑπὸ τῶν τελετῶν καὶ μεταγωγῶν. *Origen, advers. Cels. lib. 8.*

Παροὶ μὲν τοῖς Ἕλλησιν εἰς πρὸς Φαίδων, καὶ ἕκαστος εἰ δυνάμειθ', καὶ εἰς Πολέμων, μεταβαλόντες ἀπὸ ἀσώβη καὶ μοχθηροτάτη βίη, ἐφιλοσόφησαν ὡς εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν, ἢ μόνον τίττε οἱ δώδεκα, ἀλλ' αἰεὶ καὶ πολλαπλασίους οἵπνες γινόμενοι σωφρογῶν χερῶς. *Idem. lib. 3.*

Da mihi virum qui sit iracundus, &c. Numquid hæc *Philosophorum* &c. *Lactant. lib. 3. See this passage cited above, pag. 170.*

some more sensible Authority to back them, and make them of more Force and Efficacy in Practice; and the † *Precepts* which they laid down, however evidently reasonable and fit to be obeyed, seemed still to want Weight, and to be but the *Precepts* of Men. Hence || none of the *Philosophers*, even of those who taught the clearest and certainest *Truths*, and offered the best and wisest *Instructions*, and enforced them with the strongest *Motives* that could be; were yet ever able to work any remarkable Change, in the Minds and Lives of any considerable Part of Mankind; as the preaching of Christ and his Apo-



Itles undeniably did. Neither does it appear in History, that \* any Number of Socrates's or Plato's Followers, were convinced of the Excellency of true Virtue, or the Certainty of its final Reward in, such a manner as to be willing to lay down their Lives for its sake; as Innumerable of the Disciples of Christ, are known to have done.

\* Σωκράτης ὡς τὸ εὐδὲς ὅπως εἶπεν ὅτι τὸ θεῖον τὸ δόγμα ἐστὶν ἡ ἀποδοξασθεῖν. Χριστῷ ὃ τὸ καὶ ἀπὸ Σωκράτους ἀπὸ μέγας γνωσκόντι ὁ φιλοσοφοῖ ἐστὶ φιλολόγοι μόνον ἐπέειπεν. ἀλλὰ καὶ παντελῶς ἰδιώται καὶ ὁμοξῆς καὶ εὐβία καὶ ἀναγὰ κατὰ φρονήσαντες. Justin. Apolog. 1.

In *Speculation* indeed, it may perhaps seem possible, that, notwithstanding it must be confessed Philosophy cannot discover any compleat and satisfactory Remedy for *past* Miscarriages, yet the Precepts and Motives offered by the best Philosophers, might at least be sufficient to amend and reform Men's Manners for the *future*. But in *Experience and Practice* it hath on the contrary appeared to be altogether impossible, for Philosophy and bare Reason to reform Mankind effectually, without the Assistance of some higher Principle. For, though the bare natural Possibility of the thing, cannot indeed easily be denied; yet *in this Case*, (as *Cicero* excellently expresses

† it,) *in like manner as in Physick it matters nothing, whether a Disease be such*

† Nam si, consensu communium Philosophorum, sapientiam nemo assequitur,

in summis malis omnes sumus, quibus vos optime consultum a Diis immortalibus dicitis. Nam ut nihil interest utrum nemo valeat, an nemo possit valere; sic non intelligo quid intersit, utrum nemo sit sapiens, an nemo esse possit. Cic. de Natura Deor. lib. 3.

*as that no Man does, or no Man can recover from it; so neither does it make any difference, whether by Philosophy no Man is, or no Man can be made wise and good: So that, without some greater Help and Assistance, Mankind is plainly left in a very bad*

*State.* Indeed in the original uncorrupted State of Humane Nature, before the Mind of Man was depraved with prejudicate Opinions, corrupt Affections, and vitious Inclinations, Customs and Habits; right Reason may justly be supposed to have been a sufficient Guide, and a Principle powerful enough to preserve Men in the constant Practice of their Duty: But in the present Circumstances and Condition of Mankind, the wisest and most sensible of the Philosophers themselves have not been backward to complain, that they found the *Understandings* of Men so *dark and cloudy*, their *Wills* so *byassed and inclined to Evil*, their *Passions* so *outragious and rebelling against Reason*; that they lookt upon the Rules and Laws of right Reason, as very hardly practicable, and which they had very little Hope. of ever being able to persuade the World to submit to: In a Word, they confessed that

Humane

Humane Nature was strangely corrupted; and acknowledged this Corruption to be a Disease whereof they knew not the true Cause, and could not find out a sufficient Remedy. So that the great Duties of Religion, were laid down by them as Matters of *speculation and dispute*, rather than as the *Rules of Action*; and not so much urged upon the *Hearts and Lives of Men*, as proposed to the *Admiration* of those, who thought them scarce possible to be effectually practised by the generality of Men. To remedy all these Disorders, and conquer all these Corruptions; there was plainly wanting some extraordinary and supernatural Assistance; which was above the reach of bare Reason and Philosophy to procure, and yet without which the Philosophers themselves were sensible there \* could never be any truly Great Men.

\* Nemo unquam vir magnus, sine Divina Adjutoria fuit. Cicero.

VII. For these Reasons there was plainly wanting a Divine Revelation, to recover Mankind out of their universally degenerate Estate, into a State suitable to the original Excellency of their Nature: Which Divine Revelation, both the Necessities of Men, and their natural Notions of God, gave them reasonable ground to expect and hope for; As appears from the acknowledgments which the



## The Evidences of Natural

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.

*A Divine Revelation absolutely necessary for the recovery of Mankind.*

I. There was plainly wanting a *Divine Revelation*, to recover Mankind out of their universal corruption and degeneracy; and without such a Revelation, it was not possible that the World should ever be effectually reformed. For *If* (as has been before particularly shown) the gross and stupid Ignorance, the innumerable Prejudices and vain Opinions, the strong Passions and Appetites of Sense, and the many vitious Customs and Habits, which the generality of Mankind continually labour under; make it undeniably too difficult a Work, for Men of all Capacities to discover every One for himself, by the bare Light of Nature, all the particular Branches of their Duty; but most Men, in the present State of Things, have manifestly need of much Teaching, and particular Instruction: *If* those who were best able to discover the Truth and instruct others therein, namely the Wisest and Best of the Philosophers, were Themselves unavoidably altogether ignorant of some Doctrines, and  
 very

very doubtful and uncertain of others, absolutely necessary to the bringing about that great *End*, of the Reformation of Mankind: *If* those Truths, which they were themselves very certain of, they were not yet able to prove and explain clearly enough, to vulgar Understandings: *If* even those things which they proved sufficiently, and explained with all clearness, they had not yet Authority enough to enforce and inculcate upon Men's Minds with so strong an Impression, as to influence and govern the general Practice of the World; neither pretended to afford Men any supernatural Assistance, which yet was very necessary to so great a Work: And *If*, after all, in the discovery of such Matters as are the great Motives of Religion, Men are apt to be more easily wrought upon, and more strongly affected, by good Testimony, than by the strictest abstract Arguments; So that, upon the whole, 'tis plain the Philosophers were never by any means well qualified to reform Mankind with any considerable Success: *Then* there was evidently wanting some *particular Revelation*, which might supply all these Defects: There was plainly a Necessity of some *particular Revelation* to

\* Νομοθέτης ὅστις νῦν  
κέκτιται, ἔποτε μὴ τολ-  
μήσῃ κλινοτομῶν ἐπὶ θεο-  
σέβειαν ἢ πρὸς μὴ σαφῆς  
ἔχει πρὸς τὴν πόλιν ἑαυ-  
τῆς. — μὴ δὲν παρὰ τὴν  
εἰδῶς, ὡς περὶ εἰδ' ὄνδ' ἰωα-  
τὸν εἰδέναι. τῆσ' ἢ τῆσ' οὐ-  
σι τ' τοῖσ' περὶ πῆρι. Pla-  
to in Epinomide.

Τὰ γὰρ δὴ τοιαῦτα [θε-  
ῶν θεραπεΐας] ἔτ' ἐπιστά-  
μεθα ἡμεῖς οἰκίζοιτές τε  
πόλιν ἐδενὶ ἄλλω πεισό-  
μεθα εἰάν νῦν ἔχομεν, ἐδὲ  
χρησόμεθα ἐξηγητῆ ἄλλ'  
ἢ τῶ παλαιῷ Θεῷ. Plato  
de Republ. 4.

† Τὸ μὲν ἀληθές ὃ  
ἔνε, διὰ γὰρ ἰδέσθαι ταῦτα  
ἔπως ἔχειν πολλῶν ἀμ-  
οισθησάντων. Θεῷ ἔστι.  
Plato de Legib. lib. 1.

|| Τὸ δὴ ἔν τὸ μέρθ  
φαιμέν οὐσί κωιδίαλον  
κ' δυναλὸν ὡς οἶον τε  
μάλιτα κ' ἀεισα μαδ' αἶν,  
εἰ διδάσχοι πρὸς ἄλλ' ἔδ'  
ἄν διδάξαιεν, εἰ μὴ Θεὸς  
ὀφηγοίτο. Plato in Epi-  
nomide.

discover \* in what Man-  
ner; and with what Kind  
of external Service, God  
might acceptably be wor-  
shipped: There was a Ne-  
cessity of some particu-  
lar Revelation, to disco-  
ver what Expiation God  
would accept for Sin; by  
which the Authority, Ho-  
nour, and Dignity of his  
Laws might be effectua-  
lly vindicated: There  
was a Necessity of some  
particular Revelation, to  
give Men full assurance  
of the Truth of those  
great Motives of Religion;  
the Rewards and Punish-

ments of a future State; which, not-  
withstanding the strongest Arguments  
of Reason, Men could not yet for-  
bear doubting of: In fine, There was  
a Necessity of some particular Divine

Revelation, to || make the  
whole Doctrine of Reli-  
gion clear and obvious to  
all Capacities, to add  
Weight and Authority to  
the plainest Precepts, and  
to furnish Men with ex-  
traordinary Assurances to  
enable them to overcome

the Corruptions of their Nature. And  
without



without the Assistance of such a Revelation, 'tis manifest it was not possible that the World could ever be effectually reformed; Ye may e'en give over, faith \* Socrates, all Hopes of amending Mens Manners for the future, unless God be pleased to send you some Other person to instruct you: And Plato, Whatever, faith † he, is set right and as it should be, in the present Evil state of the World; can be so only by the particular Interposition of God.

\* Εἴη αὖτε καὶ ὑμῶν γένον-  
 του καθεύδοντος διαπε-  
 λαιῆ αὐτῶ, εἰ μὴ πῶς ἀπο-  
 λῶ ὑμῶν ὁ Θεὸς ἐπι-  
 πέμψῃ καὶ ἄλλοθεν ἄλλον.  
 Plato in Apolog. Socratis.

† Εὖ δὲ χερσὶ ἐπιθεῖται,  
 ὁ, πὶ πρὸς ἀνθρώπων τὸ ἐν  
 ἡμῖν οἶον εἶναι. καὶ πῶς  
 αὐτῶν καταστάσει πρὸς ἑα-  
 ῶν, Θεὸς ὑμῶν αὐτὸς ἐπι-  
 σταί. Plato de Republ.  
 lib. 6.

2. Since therefore there was plainly and confessedly wanting a Relation, to relieve the Necessities of Men in their Natural State; And since no Man can pretend to say, that it is inconsistent with any of the Attributes of God, or unbecoming the Wisdom of the Creator of all things, to supply that Want; to reveal to his Creatures more fully the way to Happiness; to make more particular discoveries of his Will to them; to set before them in a clearer Light, the Rewards and Punishments of a future State; to explain in what manner he will be pleased to be worshipped; and to declare what Satisfaction he will accept for Sin, and upon what Condi-  
 tions

That it  
 was agree-  
 able to the  
 dictates of  
 Nature  
 and right  
 Reason, to  
 exp. & or  
 hope for  
 such a di-  
 vine Re-  
 velation.

tions he will receive returning Sinners; Nay, since on the contrary, it seems more suitable to our natural Notions of the Goodness and Mercy of God, to suppose that he should do all this, than not: It follows undeniably, that it was most reasonable, and agreeable to the dictates of Nature, to *expect* or *hope for* such a divine Revelation. The generality of the Heathen World, who were far more equal and less prejudiced Judges in this matter, than our modern Deists; were so fully persuaded, that the great Rules for the Conduct of Humane Life, must receive their Authority from Heaven; that their chief Law-givers thought it not a sufficient recommendation of their Laws, that they were agreeable to the Light of Nature; unless they pretended also, that they received them from God. But I have no need in this Argument, to make use of the Examples of Idolatrous Law-givers: The Philosophers themselves, the Best and Wisest, and the least Superstitious of them, that ever lived; were not ashamed to confess openly, their Sense of the Want of a Divine Revelation; and to declare their Judgment, that it was most natural and truly agreeable to right and sound Reason, to *hope for* something of that Nature. There is, besides

sides the several places before cited, a most excellent Passage in Plato to this purpose; one of the most remarkable Passages indeed in his whole Works, though not quoted by any that I have met with; which therefore I think highly worthy to be transcribed at large, as a just and unanswerable Re-

proach to all those who deny that there is any Want or Need of a Revelation. It seems best to me, saith  
 † Socrates to one of his Disciples, that we expect quietly; nay it is absolutely necessary, that we wait with patience, till such time as we can Learn certainly, how we ought to behave our selves both towards God and towards Men. When will that time come, replies the Disciple; and who is it that will teach us this? For methinks I earnestly desire to see and know who the Person is that will do it. It is one, answers Socrates, who has now a Concern for you. But in like manner, as Homer relates that Minerva took away the Mist from before Diomedes's Eyes, that he might be able to distinguish

\* ΣΩΚ. Εμοὶ μὲν ὄφρα δοκῆι κρῖναι τὸν ἔμψυχον ἔχον. — ἀναγκαῖον ἐν ὅτι περὶ αὐτὴν, ἕως ἄν τις μάθῃ ὡς δεῖ πρὸς θεὸν καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους διακεῖσθαι. ΑΛΚ. τίς οὖν ἐν παρούσῃ ὁ χρῆσθαι οὖτος, ὦ Σάκρατες; καὶ τίς ὁ παιδείων; ἠδὲ τίς γὰρ ἂν μοι δοκῶ ἰδεῖν τῶν ἀνθρώπων τίς ὄφρα. ΣΩΚ. Οὐ τίς ὄφρα. ὦ μίλει περί σε. ἀλλὰ δοκῆι μοι, ὡς περὶ τὸ Διομήδει φασὶ τὴν Ἀθήνην Ὀμηροῦ ἀπο τῆ ὀρθαλμῶ ἀφελεῖν τὴν ἀχλίω, ὅφρα εὖ γινώσκῃ ἡμῶν θεὸν ἠδὲ καὶ ἀνθρώπου, ἕως καὶ σε δεῖν ἀπὸ τῆ ψυχῆς πρώτου κελόν] ἀτὴν ἀχλίω, ἢ εὖν παρὸς ταυγάνας, πηρωματῆ ἠδὲ πρῶτον εἶναι ὡς μάλιστα γινώσκειν ἡμῶν κακὸν ἠδὲ καὶ ἐσλόν γὰρ μὲν γὰρ ὄφρα



ἂν μοι δοκῆς δυναθῆναι.  
 ΑΛΚ. Ἀφαιρέσω εἴτε  
 βέβαιαι, τὴν ἀχλὺν, εἴτε  
 ἄλλο τι ὡς ἐγὼ πα-  
 ρεσκευάσμαι μηδὲν ἂν  
 φεύγειν τὸ ὑπὲρ ἐκεί. & πα-  
 ρασσομένων, ὅστις ποτ' ἐ-  
 σιν ὁ ἀνθρώπος, εἴη μέλ-  
 λοιμι βελίων γινεσθαι.  
 ΣΩΚ. Ἀλλὰ μὴν καί κεί-  
 ρος θαυμαστὴν ὄσιν περὶ  
 σε παρ' αὐτὴν ἔχει. ΑΛΚ.  
 Εἰς τίπε τοῖνυν καὶ τὴν  
 θυσιᾶν ἀναβάλλεσθαι κατὰ  
 τισὶν εἴδ' μοι δοκεῖ. ΣΩΚ.  
 Καὶ ὁρθῶς γέ στί δοκεῖ.  
 ἀσφαλέστερον γὰρ ἔστιν ἢ πα-  
 ρακινδυνεύειν τοσέτου  
 κινδυνου. ΑΛΚ. Τοῖς  
 θεοῖς ἢ καὶ θεράνεσ καὶ τὰ λ-  
 λα πάντα τὰ νομιζόμενα  
 πρὸς δάσους, ὅταν ἐπει-  
 γνῆν τὴν ἡμέραν ἐλθέσθαι  
 ἰδῶ ἢ ξείδ' ἢ διὰ μακρῶ,  
 τέτων θελότων. Plato  
 in Alcibiade 2. [If it be  
 supposed that Socrates in  
 this passage means Him-  
 self, (which is very diffi-  
 cult;) yet it nevertheless  
 very lively represents the  
 great Sense which the most  
 considerate Heathens had,  
 of their Want of some Ex-  
 traordinary Instruction.]

one Person from another;  
 so it is necessary that the  
 Mist which is now before  
 your Mind, be first taken  
 away, that afterwards you  
 may learn to distinguish right-  
 ly betwixt Good and Evil;  
 for, as yet, you are not able  
 to do it. Let the Person  
 you mentioned, replies the  
 Disciple, take away this  
 Mist, or whatever else it be,  
 as soon as he pleases: For  
 I am willing to do any  
 thing he shall direct, who-  
 soever this Person be; so  
 that I may but become a good  
 Man. Nay, answers So-  
 crates, That Person has a  
 wonderful readiness and wil-  
 lingsness to do all this for  
 you. It will be best then,  
 replies the Disciple, to  
 forbear offering any more  
 Sacrifices, till the time that  
 this Person appears. You  
 judge very well, answers  
 Socrates; it will be much  
 safer so to do, than to

run so great a hazard of offering Sa-  
 crifices, which you know not whether they  
 are acceptable to God or no. Well then,  
 replies the Disciple, we will Then make  
 our Offerings to the Gods, when That  
 Day

Day comes; And I hope, God willing, it may not be far off. And in another place, the same Author, having given a large Account of that most excellent Discourse, which Socrates made a little before his Death, concerning the great Doctrines of Religion, the Immortality of the Soul, and the Certainty of a Life to come; introduces one of his Disciples replying in the following manner: I am, saith \* he, of the same Opinion with you, O Socrates, concerning these things; that, to discover the certain Truth of them, in this present Life, is either absolutely impossible for us, or at least exceeding difficult; Yet, not to enquire with our utmost diligence into what can be said about them, or to give over our inquiry before we have carried our search as far as possible, is the sign of a mean and low Spirit: On the contrary, we ought therefore by all means to do one of these two things; either, by hearkning to Instruction, and by our own diligent Study, to find out the Truth; or, if that be

\* Ἐμοὶ γὰρ δοκεῖ, ὡς Σόκράτης, εἶναι τῆς αὐτῆς γνώμης ὡς περὶ καὶ σὺ· τὸ μὲν σαφὲς εἶναι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ βίῳ ἢ ἀποθανόντι, ἢ παύχ' ἀλλ' ἄρα τὸ μὲν τοιαῦτα λέγει τὰ λεγόμενα περὶ αὐτῶν μὴ ἔχει παντὶ τῷ σωφροδύτῳ, καὶ προσειπεῖν αὐτῶν πρὸς τὴν ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν ἀδύνατον. πρὸς τὴν ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν ἀδύνατον. [Note that Ficinus in his translation of this passage, as if the Word ἔχει was to be repeated ἀπὸ τῆς κινήσεως with προσειπεῖν, writes absurdly non est. instead of ἀδύνατον.] Δεῖν γὰρ σαφὲς εἶναι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ βίῳ ἀποθανόντι ἢ παύχ' ἀλλ' ἄρα τὸ μὲν τοιαῦτα λέγει τὰ λεγόμενα περὶ αὐτῶν μὴ ἔχει παντὶ τῷ σωφροδύτῳ, καὶ προσειπεῖν αὐτῶν πρὸς τὴν ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν ἀδύνατον. πρὸς τὴν ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν ἀδύνατον. ἀδύνατον

ἐπι χεδίας, κινδυνεύοντα  
 διαπλεύσαι ἢ βίον· εἰ μὴ  
 τις δυνάμει ἀσφαλέστερον  
 καὶ ἀκινδυνότερον, ἐπὶ βέ-  
 βαιοτέρῳ ὀχήματι, ἢ  
 λόγῳ Θεοῦ τινος, δια-  
 πορευθῆναι. Plato in *Phae-*  
*done.*

absolutely impossible, then to  
 fix our Foot upon that which  
 to humane Reason, after the  
 utmost search, appears best  
 and most probable; and,  
 trusting to That, venture  
 upon that bottom to direct  
 the course of our Lives ac-

cordingly: Unless a Man could have still  
 some more sure and certain Conduct to  
 carry him through this Life; such as a  
 Divine Discovery of the Truth, would  
 be. I shall mention but one Instance  
 more, and that is of *Porphyry*; who,  
 though he lived after our Saviour's  
 time, and had a most inveterate ha-  
 tred to the Christian Revelation in

† Quum autem dicit  
*Porphyrius*, in primo *de*  
*Regressu Animæ* libro, non-  
 dum receptum in unam  
 quandam sectam quæ u-  
 niversalem viam nimæ  
 contineat liberandæ, non-  
 dumq; in suam noticiam  
 eandem viam historiali  
 cognitione perlatam; pro-

cul dubio confiteretur, esse aliquam; sed nondum in suam  
 venisse noticiam. Ita ei non sufficiebat quicquid de anima  
 liberanda studiosissime didicerat, sibi, vel potius aliis,  
 nosse ac tenere videbatur. Sentiebat enim adhuc sibi de-  
 esse aliquam præstantissimam auctoritatem, quam de re  
 tanta sequi oporteret. *Augustin. de Civitate Dei, lib. 10*  
*c. 32.*

particular, yet † confes-  
 ses in general, that he  
 was sensible there was  
 wanting some universal *Me-*  
*thod of delivering Mens*  
*Souls*, which no Sect of  
 Philosophy had yet found  
 out.



2. This Sense of the Antient and Wifest Philosophers, is much departed from by our *Modern Deists*, who contend that there was no Want, no Need of a Revelation; that Philosophy and right Reason was of it self sufficiently able, to instruct and preserve Men in the Practice of their Duty; and that nothing was to be expected from Revelation. But besides what has been already hinted concerning the extreme Barbarity of the present Heathen World, and what the Philosophers both Greeks and Latins have confessed concerning the State of the more civilized Nations wherein they lived; I think we may safely appeal even to our Adversaries themselves, whether the Testimony of *Christ*, (without considering at present what Truth and Evidence it has,) concerning the Immortality of the Soul, and the Rewards and Punishments of a Future State, have not had (notwithstanding all the Corruptions of Christians,) visibly in Experience and Effect, a \* greater and more powerful Influence upon the Lives and Actions of Men, than the Reasonings of all the Philosophers that ever were in the World; Whether credible Testimony, and the Belief and

The unreasonableness of Modern Deists, in denying the Want and Use of a Revelation.

\* Οὐκ ὀλίγους ἔλαβον καὶ βαρβάρους, σοῦτος ἐξ ἀπορίας. μὲν γὰρ συνέτασ ἀγωνίζεσθαι ὑπὲρ Χριστιανισμοῦ, ἢ αὐτὸν μὴ ἐξομῶσθαι. ἔπειθ' ἕτεροι ὑπὲρ ἄλλης δόγματι ἰσχυρήταί ποιεῖν. Origen. ἀδύνατον. Cap. lib. 1.

Authority

Authority of Revelation, be not in it self as it were a Light held to the Consciences of stupid and careless Men; and the most natural and proper means that can be imagined, to awaken and rowze up many of those, who would be little affected with all the strict Arguments and abstract Reasonings in the World; And, to bring this matter to a short Issue; *whether* in Christian Countries, (at least where Christianity is professed in any tolerable degree of Purity,) the ge-

† Ὡς μὲν καὶ τὸ παλαιὸν βροχ. χεῖρ τινὰς καὶ ἀριθμῶ ληπτὰς. ὁρθεῖς περὶ Θεῶ φέρειν δόξας ἀλλὰ μυρία πλήθη βαρβαρῶν. Euseb. Demonst. Euang. lib. 3. c. 3.

Αἱ δὲ τῶ Θεῶ Χριστῶ μαθητευθεῖσαι ἐκκλησίαι, σπινθηροειδέσθαι ταῖς ὧν παροικῆσαι δῆμων ἐκκλησίαις, ὡς φασὶν εἶσιν ἐν κόσμῳ. Ἰὶς γὰρ ἐκ ἄν ὁμολογήσαι, καὶ τὰς χεῖρας τῶ ἀπὸ τῶ ἐκκλησίας καὶ συγκρίσει τῶ βελτιώτων ἐλάττωσιν, πολλῶ κρείττους τῶ γὰρ ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς δῆμοις ἐκκλησιῶν; [Note this passage is both corruptly printed, πολλῶν instead of πολλῶ; and also the sense of it hurt by an imperfect Translation. Origen. adv. Cel. lib. 3. Edit. Cant. ab. pag. 128.]

nerality even † of the meaner and most vulgar and ignorant People have not Truer and Worthier Notions of God, more just and right Apprehensions concerning his Attributes and Perfections, a deeper Sense of the Difference of Good and Evil, a greater regard to moral Obligations and to the plain and most necessary Duties of Life, and a more firm and universal Expectation of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments;

than

than in any Heathen Country, any considerable Number of Men were ever found to have had.

It may here perhaps be pretended *The great* by Modern Deists, that the great Ig- *norance* norance and undeniable corruptness *of the* of the whole Heathen World, has *of the* always been owing, not to any ab- *of the* solute Insufficiency of the Light of Nature it self, but merely to the Fault of the several particular Persons, in not sufficiently improving that Light; and that Deists *Now*, in places where Learning and right Reason are cultivated, are well able to discover and explain all the Obligations and Motives of Morality, without believing any thing of Revelation. But this, even though it were true; (as, in the Sense they intend, it by no means is; because, as has been before shown, there are several very necessary Truths not possible to be discovered with any certainty by the bare Light of Nature; But) supposing it, I say, to be true, that all the Obligations and Motives of Morality *could possibly* be discovered and explained clearly, by the mere Light of Nature alone; yet even This would not at all prove, that there is no need of Revelation. For whatever the bare *Natural Possibility* was; 'tis certain in *Fact.*



† See an excellent Pass.ig<sup>r</sup> of Cicero to this purpose cited above, pag. 196.

the Wisest *Philosophers of Old*, † never were able to do it to any effectual purpose, but always willingly acknowledged that they still wanted some higher Assistance. And as to the great Pretences of the *Modern Deists*; 'tis to be observed, that the clearness of moral Reasonings was much improved, and the Regard to a future State very much increased, even in Heathen Writers after the coming of *Christ*. And almost all the Things that are said wisely and truly by modern Deists, are plainly borrowed from that Revelation, which they refuse to embrace; and without which, they could never have been able to have said the same things. Now indeed, when our whole Duty, with its true motives, is clearly revealed to us; its Precepts appear plainly agreeable to Reason; and Conscience readily approves what is Good, as it condemns what is Evil; Nay, after our Duty is thus made known to us, 'tis easy not only to see its agreement *with* Reason, but also to begin and deduce its Obligation *from* Reason. But had we been utterly destitute of all revealed Light; then, to have discovered our Duty in all points, with the true motives of it, merely by the help of natural Reason, would have been a work of Nicety, Pains and Labour; like groping

ping for an unknown way in the obscure Twilight. What ground have any of our Modern Deists to imagine, that if they themselves had lived without the Light of the Gospel, they should have been wiser than *Socrates* and *Plato* and *Cicero*? How are they certain, they should have made such a right use of their Reason, as to have discovered the Truth *exactly*, without being any way led aside by Prejudice or Neglect? If their Lot had been among the *Vulgar*; how are they sure they should have been so happy, or so considerate, as not to have been involved in that Idolatry and Superstition, which overspread the whole World? If they had joyned themselves to the *Philosophers*; which Sect would they have chosen to have followed? And what Book would they have resolved upon, to be the adequate Rule of their Lives and Conversations? Or, if they should have set up for *Themselves*, how are they certain they should have been skilful and unprejudiced enough, to have deduced the several Branches of their Duty, and applied them to the several Cases of Life, by Argumentation and dint of Reason? 'Tis *one thing* to see that those Rules of Life, which are before-hand plainly and particularly laid before us, are perfectly agreeable

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agreeable to Reason; and *another thing* to find out those Rules merely by the Light of Reason, without their having first been any otherwise made known. We see that even many of those, who profess to govern their Lives by the *plain written Rule* of an *instituted and revealed Religion*, are yet most miserably ignorant of their Duty; and how can any Man be sure he should have made so good Improvement of his Reason, as to have *understood it perfectly* in all its parts, without any such help? We see that many of those, who profess to believe firmly *that great and everlasting Happiness*, which Christ has promised to Obedience; and *that great and eternal Misery*, which Christ has threatened to disobedience; are yet hurried away by their Lusts and Passions to transgress the Conditions of that Covenant, to which these Promises and these Threatnings are annexed: And how can any Man be sure he should be able to overcome those great Temptations, if these mighty Motives *were less distinctly known*, or less *powerfully enforced*? But suppose he could, and that by strength of Reason he could demonstrate to himself these things with all *clearness and distinctness*; yet could *All Men* do so? Assuredly all Men are not *equally capable*



*pable* of being *Philosophers*, though all Men are *equally obliged* to be *Religious*. At least thus much is certain, that the Rewards and Punishments of another World, the great Motives of Religion, cannot be so *powerfully enforced*, to the influencing the Lives and Practise of all sorts of Men, by one who shall undertake to demonstrate the reality of them by abstract Reasons and Arguments; as by one who showing sufficient Credentials of his having been himself in that other State, shall assure them of the Truth and certainty of these things. But after all, the Question does not really lie here. The Truth, at the bottom, is plainly This: All the great Things that Modern Deists affect to say of *right Reason*, as to its sufficiency in discovering the Obligations and Motives of *Morality*; is only a Pretense, to be made use of, when they are opposing *Christianity*. At other times, and in reality, they have no hearty regard for *Morality*, nor for the natural Evidences of the Certainty of a Future State: they are willing enough to believe, that Men perish absolutely at Death; and so they have no concern to support effectually the Cause of Virtue, nor care to make out any consistent Scheme of Things; but unavoidably recur, in Truth, to

*downright Atheism.* At least, in the Manners of most of them, 'tis too plain and apparent, that absolute Libertinism is the thing they really aim at; and however their Creed may pretend to be the Creed of Deists, yet almost always their Practise is the Practise of very Atheists.

*Yet God was not absolutely Obliged, to afford Men the Field of such a Revelation.*

4. To return therefore to the Argument. From what has been said upon this Head, it appears plainly, that 'tis agreeable to the natural Hopes and Expectations of Men, that is, of Right Reason duly improved; to suppose God making some particular Revelation of his Will to Mankind, which may supply the undeniable Defects of the Light of Nature. And at the same time, 'tis evident that such a thing is by no means unworthy of the Divine Wisdom, or inconsistent with any of the Attributes of God; but rather, on the contrary, most suitable to them. Consequently considering the manifold Wants and Necessities of Men, and the abundant Goodness and Mercy of God; there is great Ground from right Reason and the Light of Nature, to believe, that God would not always leave Men wholly destitute of so needful an Assistance, but would at some time or other actually afford it them. Yet it does not from hence at all follow

follow, (as some have imagined,) that God is *Obliged* to make such a Revelation: For then it must needs have been given in all Ages, and to all Nations; and might have been claimed and demanded as of Justice, rather than wished for and desired as of Mercy and condescending Goodness. But the fore-mentioned Considerations are such as might afford Men reasonable ground to *Hope* for some Favour of this kind, to be conferred at such Time, and in such Manner, and upon such Persons, as should seem best to supreme infinite Wisdom: At least, they might well dispose and prepare Men before-hand, whenever any Doctrine should come accompanied with just and good Evidence of its being such a Revelation, to believe and embrace it with all readiness.

It has been made use of, by † a modern Author, as his principal and strongest Argument against the reasonableness of believing any Revelation at all; that it is confessed there has been no Revelation *universally* owned and embraced as such, either in all Ages, or by all Nations in any Age. He pretends to acknowledge, that if the Doctrine of Christianity was *universally* entertained, he would not doubt of its being truly a Revelation of

*Want of Universality, no sufficient Objection against the Truth of a Revelation. † Oracles of Reason, pag. 197, &c.*



the Will of God to Mankind: But since, in Fact, there is no instituted Religion *universally* received as a Divine Revelation; and there are several Nations to whom the Christian Doctrine in particular, was never so much as preached, nor ever came to their knowledge at all; he concludes that, what is not universal and equally made known to *All Men*, cannot be needful for *Any*; and consequently, that there never was any real Want of a Revelation at all, nor any ground to think any further Assistance necessary to enable Men to answer all the Ends of their Creation, than the bare Light of Nature. This is the Summ and Strength of this Author's Reasoning; and herein all the Deniers of Revelation agree with him. Now, (not to take notice here, that it is by no means impossible, but all Men may be capable of receiving some Benefit from a Revelation, which yet a great part of them may never have heard of;) If these Mens Reasoning was true, it would follow by the same Argument, that neither was *Natural Religion* necessary to enable Men to answer the ends of their Creation. For, though all the Truths of Natural Religion, are indeed certainly discoverable by the due use of right Reason, alone; yet

'tis

'tis evident *All Men* are not indued with the same Faculties and Capacities, nor have they All equally afforded to them the same means of making that discovery; As these Gentlemen themselves upon some occasions are willing enough to own, when they are describing the barbarous Ignorance of some poor Indian Nations: And consequently the knowledge of Natural Religion being, in Fact, by no means universal; it will follow that there is no great Necessity even of That; but that Men may do very well without it, in performing the Functions of the Animal Life, and directing themselves wholly by the Inclinations of Sense; And thus these Gentlemen must at last be forced to let go all moral Obligations, and so recur unavoidably to absolute Atheism. The Truth is: As God was not obliged, to make all his Creatures equal; to make Men, Angels; or to endue all Men, with the same Faculties and Capacities as Any; So neither is he bound to make all Men capable of the *same Degree* or the *same Kind* of Happiness, or to afford all Men the very same *means and opportunities* of obtaining it. There is ground enough, from the consideration of the manifest corruption of Humane Nature, to be so far sensible

ble of the Want of a Divine Revelation, as that right Reason and the Light of Nature it self will lead a wise and considerate Man to think it very probable, that the infinitely merciful and good God may actually vouchsafe to afford Men some such supernatural Assistance: And consequently such a Person will be very willing, ready, and prepared to entertain a Doctrine which shall at any time come attended with just and good Evidence of its being truly a Revelation of the Will of God. But it does not at all from hence follow, either that God is absolutely bound to make such a Revelation; or that, if he makes it, it must equally be made to All Men; or that, since in Fact it is not made to All, therefore there is no Reason to believe that there is any Need or any Probability of its being made to Any.

VIII. *There is no other Religion now in the World, but the Christian, that has any just pretense or tolerable appearance of Reason, to be esteemed such a Divine Revelation: And therefore, if Christianity be not true, there is no Revelation of the Will of God at all made to Mankind.*

This Proposition will easily be granted by all *Modern Unbelievers*; and therefore  
fore



fore I need not be particular in the Proof of it.

The *Mahometan* Religion, was found-<sup>of the</sup> ed by a vitious Person, proposes ri-<sup>Mahome-</sup> diculous and trifling Doctrines to be <sup>tan Reli-</sup> believed, was propagated merely by <sup>gion.</sup> violence and force of Arms, was confirmed by no publick and uncontestable Miracles, promises vain and sensual Rewards to its Professours, and is every way incompasped with numberless such Absurdities and Inconsistencies, (as those who have given us Accounts of the Life of *Mahomet*, and the Nature of his Religion, have abundantly made out; and is sufficiently evident even from the *Alcoran* it self;) that there is no great Danger of *Its* imposing upon rational and considerate Men.

The *Jewish* Religion, was founded <sup>Of the</sup> wholly upon the Expectation of a <sup>Jewish</sup> Messiah to come; and the Time of <sup>Religion.</sup> his appearance was limited by such plain and determinate Prophecies, that what difficulties soever there may be in computing the very nice and exact Time of their Completion; or what different Periods soever may be fixed, from whence to begin several Computations; yet the time of their being fulfilled, is now, in all possible ways of computing, so very far elapsed, that, if the *Christian* Doctrine be false, there

there is no Supposition left, upon which the *Jewish* Religion, can, with any Colour of Reason, be believ'd to be true.

It being evident therefore, that either the Christian Revelation is true, or else (how great Want soever there may be of it) there is no such thing as Revelation at all; It remains that we proceed to consider what *positive and direct* Evidence there is, to prove the actual Truth of this Divine Revelation.

IX. *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.*

*The marks of a Religion coming from God.*

The necessary Marks and Proofs of a Religion coming from God, are these. *First*, That the *Duties* it enjoyns, be all such as are agreeable to our natural Notions of God; and perfective of the Nature, and conducive to the Happiness and Well-being of Men; And that the *Doctrines* it teaches, be all such; as, though not indeed discoverable by the bare Light of Nature, yet, when discovered by Revelation, may be consistent with, and agreeable

agreeable to, sound and unprejudiced Reason. For otherwise, no Evidence whatsoever, can be of so great force to prove that any Doctrine is True; as its being either Contradictory in it self, or wicked in its Tendency, is, to prove that it must necessarily be False. *Secondly*, For the same Reason, the *Motives* likewise, by which it is recommended to Mens Belief and Practice; and all the peculiar *Circumstances*, with which it is attended; must be such as are suitable to the excellent Wisdom of God, and fitted to amend the Manners and perfect the Minds of Men. *Lastly*, It must moreover be *positively and directly proved* to come from God, by such certain *Signs and Matters of Fact*, as may be undeniable Evidences of its Author's having actually a Divine Commission: For otherwise, as no Evidence can prove a Doctrine to come from God, if it be either Impossible or Wicked in it self; so on the other hand, neither can any degree of Goodness or Excellency in the Doctrine it self, make it certain, but only highly probable, to have come from God, unless it has moreover some positive and direct Evidence of its being actually Revealed.

The entire Proof therefore of this Proposition, must be made by  
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an Induction of Particulars, as follows.

X. First, *The Practical Duties which the Christian Religion enjoyns, 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 Practises of any of those Philosophers; ought to be embraced and practised by all rational and considering Deists, who will act consistently, and steddily pursue the consequences of their own Principles; as at least the best Scheme and Sect of Philosophy, that ever was set up in the World; and highly probable, even though it had no external Evidence, to be of Divine Original.*

*The Proposition proved, in the several Instances of Duty.*

This Proposition is so very evident, that the greatest Adversaries of the Christian Institution have never been able to deny it any otherwise, than by confounding the Inventions of Men,

Men, the Superstitious Practices of particular Persons, or the corrupt Additions of certain particular Churches or Societies of Christians, with the pure and simple Precepts of the Gospel of Christ. In all those Instances of Duty, which pure and uncorrupt Christianity enjoyns, the Proposition is manifest and altogether undeniable. The Duties of *Love, Fear, and Adoration*, which the Christian Religion obliges us to render unto *God*, are so plainly incumbent upon us from the consideration of the excellent Attributes of the Divine Nature, and our relation to him as our Creator and Preserver; that no Man who considers, can think himself free from the Obligations which our Religion lays upon him to practise these Duties; without denying the very Being of *God*, and acting contrary to the Reason and all the natural Notions of his own Mind. Its placing the true and acceptable Worship of *God*, not so much in any positive and ritual Observances, as in approaching him with pure Hearts and undefiled Bodies, with unfeigned Repentance for all past Miscarriages, and sincere Resolutions of constant Obedience for the future; in praying to him for whatever we want, and returning him our most hearty Thanks  
for

for whatever good things we receive, with such Dependence and Humility, such Submission, Trust and Reliance, as are the proper Affections of dutiful Children; all this is plainly most agreeable to our Natural Notions and Apprehensions of God. And that the Prayers of sinful and depraved Creatures, sincerely repenting, should be offered up to God, and become prevalent with him, through and by the Intercession of a *Mediator*; is very consonant to right and unprejudiced Reason; as I shall have occasion to show more particularly hereafter, when I come to consider the Articles of our *Belief*. Again; The Duties of *Justice*, *Equity*, *Charity*, and *Truth*, which the Christian Religion obliges us to exercise towards *Men*, are so apparently reasonable in themselves, and so directly conducive to the Happiness of Mankind; that their unalterable Obligation is not only in great measure deducible, from the bare Light of Nature and right Reason; but even those Men also, who have broken through all the Bonds of natural Religion it self, and the original Obligations of Virtue, have yet thought it necessary for the preservation of Society and the well-being of Mankind, that the Observation of these Duties to some degree, should be enforced by  
the



the Penalties of humane Laws. And the additional Improvements, which our Saviour has made to these Duties, by commanding his Disciples to be as it were Lights in the World, and Examples of good Works to all Men; to be so far from injuring others, that on the contrary they should not indulge themselves in any degree of Anger or Passion; to seek reconciliation immediately upon any Difference or Offence that may arise; to bear injuries patiently, rather than return evil for evil; to be always willing to forgive one another their trespasses, as they all expect forgiveness at the Hands of God; to be kind and charitable to all Men; to assist readily, and be willing to do all good Offices, not only to their Friends, but even to their bitterest Enemies also; in a Word, to raise their Virtue and Goodness far above the common Practise of Men, extending their Charity universally in imitation of the Goodness of God himself, who maketh the Sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth Rain on the just and on the unjust: These Precepts, I say, are such, as no unprejudiced Philosopher would have been unwilling to confess were the utmost Improvements of Morality, and to the highest degree Perfective of humane

C c                      Nature;

*Mat. 5;  
16, 31c.*

*Mat. 5.*  
28.

*Mat. 6 ;*  
19, 24,  
&c.

Nature. In like manner; The Duties of *Sobriety, Temperance, Patience and Contentment*, which our Religion enjoins us to practise in *Our selves*, are so undeniably agreeable to the inward Constitution of humane Nature, and so perfective of it, that the principal Design of all true Philosophy has ever been to recommend and set off these Duties to the best Advantage; Though, as the Philosophers themselves have always confessed, no Philosophy was ever able to govern Mens practise effectually in these respects. But the additional Precepts, and the new Weight and Authority, which our Saviour has added to his Instructions of this kind; teaching his Disciples to govern their very Thoughts, Desires and Inclinations; to contemn and get above all the Desires of this present World, and to set their Affections principally upon that which is to come; These are the things, which, when the Christian Religion was in its primitive and purest State, worked Men up actually to such a Pitch of cheerful and generous Obedience to the Laws of God, and taught them to obtain such a compleat Victory over the World, and over all the Desires and Appetites of Sense; as the best Philosophers have acknowledged, their Instructions were never

never able to do. Lastly; even those *positive and external Observances*, (the *Two Sacraments*;) which are instituted in the Christian Religion, as means and assistances to keep Men stedfast in the practise of those *great and moral Duties* which are the *weightier Matters of the Law*; even those positive Institutions (I say) are so free from all appearance of Superstition and Vanity, and so wisely fitted to the end for which they were designed, that no Adversaries of Christianity have ever been able to object any thing at all against the things themselves, but only against certain Corruptions and Superstitions, which some, who call themselves Christians, have, directly in opposition to the true Design of Christianity, introduced and annexed to them. For, what reasonable Man can pretend to say, that 'tis any way unreasonable or Superstitious, for every Member of the Society to be solemnly admitted into his Profession, by a plain and significant Rite, intitling him to all the Privileges, and charging him with all the Obligations, which belong to the Members of that Society as such? which is the Design of *One of the Sacraments*: Or, that 'tis unreasonable and Superstitious, for Men frequently to commemorate with all Thankfulness the



Love of their greatest Benefactor, and humbly and solemnly to renew their Obligations and Promises of Obedience to him? which is the Design of the *Other*.

*This, a  
great Evi-  
dence of a  
Religion  
coming  
from God*

Let now any impartial Person judge, whether this be not a wise and excellent Institution of *practical* Religion; highly conducive to the Happiness of Mankind; and worthy to be established by a Revelation from God, when Men had confessedly corrupted themselves to such a degree, that not only the Light of Nature and right Reason was altogether insufficient to restore true Piety, but even That Light it self (as *Cice-*

→ ——— ut Naturæ Lu-  
men nusquam appareat *Cic.*  
*Tusc. Qu. lib. 3.* See this  
Passage cited before at large,  
pag 158.

*ro* \* expressly acknow-  
ledges) no where appear-  
ed. Let any impartial  
Person judge, whether a  
Religion that tends thus  
manifestly to the reco-

very of the rational part of God's Crea-  
tion, to restore Men to the Imitation  
and Likeness of God, and to the  
Dignity and highest Improvement of  
their Nature; has not within it self  
an intrinsic and very powerful Evi-  
dence of its being truly Divine. Let  
any one read the *fifth, sixth and  
seventh Chapters of St Matthew's Gospel*,  
and judge if they do not, as it were,  
*set before his Eyes* such a lovely Image  
and Representation of true Virtue, as

*Plato*

Plato \* said could not but charm Men with the highest degree of love and admiration imaginable. In a Word, let any Man of an honest and sincere

\* *Formam ipsam, & tanquam Faciem honesti; quæ si oculis cerneretur, mirabiles amores, ut ait Plin. excitaret Sui. Cic. de Off. lib. 1.*

Mind consider, whether That practical Doctrine has not even *in it self* the greatest marks of a Divine Original; wherein whatsoever things are *true*, Phil. 1, 8. 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 thing *praise-worthy*; all these, and these only, are the things that are earnestly recommended to Mens practise. What wise Precept was ever delivered by any Philosopher of any Sect, which is not more plainly laid down by our Saviour and his Apostles? And not only so; but enforced moreover with greater Efficacy and Strength? founded upon nobler and more consistent Principles? urged with greater Weight and Authority? and pressed with more powerful and affecting Arguments? Nay, neither is This all the difference, even in respect barely of the Excellency of the Doctrine it self. For the Philosophers taught indeed many excellent moral Truths; but some upon one occasion

and upon one Set of Principles, some upon another; and every one of them were mistaken in some Instances of Duty, and mingled particular Superstitions and false Notions with their good Instructions, and built their *Doctrine* upon no sure Foundation of consistent Principles; and All of them (as has been before shown) were very imperfect and deficient, and far from being able to make up an entire and compleat Scheme of the whole Duty of Man in all Cases.

\* Οὐχ ὅτι ἀλλότεια  
 ὅτι τὰ Πλάτων⊕ δι-  
 δάγματα τῶ Χριστῷ· ἀλλ'  
 ὅτι ἐκ ἑστὶ πάντη ὁμοια·  
 ὡσπερ ὑδὲ τὰ τῶν ἀλ-  
 λων· — ἕκαστ⊕ γὰρ πῶς  
 ἀπὸ μέρους τῶ σπερματικῶ  
 δεῖτε λόγους τῶ συζητῶντες ὁρᾶν,  
 καλῶς ἐφθέρχεται —  
 ὅσα ἐν τῶν πασι καλῶς  
 εἴρηται. ἡμῶν τῶν Χριστιαν-  
 ῶν ὅτι. *Justin apolog.*  
 I.

Quod si exstitisset aliquis, qui veritatem sparsam per singulos, per sectasq; diffusam, colligeret in unum ac redigeret in corpus; is profecto non dissentiret a nobis. Sed hoc nemo facere, nisi veri peritus ac sciens, potest. Verum autem non nisi ejus scire est, qui sit doctus a Deo. *Lactant. lib. 7.*

But now, \* to put together all the wise and good Precepts that ever were delivered by any wise Men of any Sect and in any Age; to improve and exalt every one of them, to the highest possible degree of excellency and perfection; to separate and lay aside all the superstitious Opinions and Practises, that had been mixed by all or any of the different Sects of Philosophers, or Teachers of Religion in any Nation, with their respective moral Instructions; and to supply all those Doctrines, wherein both



both moral Philosophy and the additional Institutions of all Religions in the World, had in the whole been hitherto altogether deficient; and all this, in one plain, entire and regular System, upon the Foundation of certain and consistent Principles; This is the peculiar Character of the Christian Institution; and all this cannot with any colour of Reason, be imagined to have ever been done by any Man, but one sent immediately from God. Upon this consideration alone, all sincere Deists (if any such there be) who really are what they pretend to be, who believe the Being and Attributes of God, and are firmly convinced of the Obligations of Virtue and natural Religion, and the certainty of a Future State of Rewards and Punishments; must needs by their own Principles be strongly inclined to embrace the Christian Religion; to believe, at least to *hope* confidently, that a Doctrine so plainly fitted to recover Men out of their universally corrupt Estate, and restore them to the Knowledge and Favour of God, is truly Divine; and to entertain it with all cheerfulness, as what in itself has those manifold Marks of Goodness and Perfection, which are themselves sufficient to satisfy a good Man, that it cannot be any thing else than a

† Sed si vel casu id  
essiceret, certissime phi-  
losopharetur; & quamvis  
non posset divinis testi-  
monis illa defendere, ta-  
men scriptam veritas illu-  
straret suo lumine. *Lactant.*  
*lib. 7.*

Revelation from God, e-  
ven † though it had  
wanted all those outward  
Proofs, and divine and  
miraculous Testimonies,  
which shall hereafter be  
mentioned in their proper  
place.

XI. Scouldly, *The Motives by which  
the Christian Religion inforces the Practise  
of the Duties it enjoyns, are such as are  
most suitable to the excellent Wisdom of  
God; and most answerable to the natural  
Expectations of Men.*

*Of the  
acceptability  
of  
true Re-  
pentance,  
as a Mo-  
tive to O-  
bedience.*

I. *The Acceptableness of true Repen-  
tance, in the sight of God; and the  
certain Assurance of Pardon upon such  
Repentance; which the Christian Re-  
ligion affords us; is a most powerful  
and necessary Motive to frail and sinful  
Creatures; to incourage and support  
them effectually in the practise of their  
Duty. 'Tis indeed in general evi-  
dently more agreeable to right Reason  
as to Mens natural Notions of God,  
to believe him placable and merciful  
and willing to forgive. But since at  
the same time it cannot be proved  
by any Arguments from Reason, that  
God is absolutely obliged to forgive; and  
'tis confessedly evident, that it be-  
comes the Supreme Governour of the  
Universe, to vindicate the Honour and  
Authority*

Authority of his Laws and Government, to give some Evidences of his Hatred and Indignation against Sin, and sometimes by instances of Severity to prevent Sinners from abusing his Mercy and Patience; no less than that 'tis agreeable to his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, to suffer his Anger to be by some means appeased: No Motive in this Case can be imagined more expedient and powerful, to encourage Sinners to return to the practice of their Duty, and to persuade them to continue therein immoveable for the future; nothing can be imagined more reasonable and satisfactory to the Mind of Man, and more agreeable to the excellent Wisdom of God, and worthy of the supreme and infinitely merciful Governour of all Things; than such a positive Declaration of the *Acceptableness of sincere Repentance*, and such an authentick Assurance of *Pardon and Forgiveness* thereupon, as under the Christian Dispensation the Divine Goodness and Mercy has found means to afford unto us, in such manner as is at the same time abundantly consistent with the Honour and Dignity of the Laws of God, and with his irreconcilable Hatred against all Unrighteousness and Sin.

2. That



*of the di-  
vine Assist-  
ance, as  
another  
Motive to  
Obedience.*

2. *That divine and supernatural Assist-  
ance*, which, under the Christian Dis-  
pensation, they who sincerely endea-  
vour to obey the Will of God, have  
incouragement to hope for, upon all  
necessary occasions; is another power-  
ful *Motive*, to support Men effectually  
in the Practise of their Duty. The  
wisest of the Philosophers, were so  
far sensible of the great Corruption  
and Depravity of Humane Nature in  
its present State; they were sensible  
that such was the Carelessness, Stu-  
pidity, and Want of Attention, of  
the greater part of Mankind; so many  
the early Prejudices and false Noti-  
ons taken in by evil Education; so  
strong and violent the unreasonable  
Lusts, Appetites and Desires of Sense;  
and so great the Blindness, introduced  
by superstitious Opinions, vitious Cu-  
stoms, and debauched Practises through  
the World; that (as has been before  
shown,) they themselves openly con-  
fessed, they had very little hope of  
ever being able to reform Mankind  
with any considerably great and uni-  
versal Success, by the bare force of  
Philosophy and right Reason; but  
that, to produce so great a change,  
and enable Men effectually to conquer  
all their corrupt Affections, there was  
need of some supernatural and divine  
Assistance, or the immediate Inter-  
position

position of God himself. Now This *divine assistance* is vouchsafed to Men under the Christian Dispensation in such a manner, as (from what has been already said concerning the Judgment of the Wifest of the Antient Philosophers in this matter,) appears to be undeniably agreeable to the natural Expectations of right Reason, and suitable to the best and worthiest Notions that Men have ever by the Light of Nature been able to frame to themselves concerning the Attributes and Perfections of God. *If ye, says Luk. 11, our Saviour, being Evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?* The Effect of this divine Assistance, evidenced it self in a very visible and remarkable manner in the Primitive Times, by † the sudden wonderful and total Reformation of far greater Numbers of wicked Men, than ever were brought to Repentance by the Teaching and Exhortations of all the Philosophers in the World. And even at this Day, notwithstanding all the Corruptions introduced among Christians, I think it can hardly

† Da mihi virum, cui sit iracundus, medicus, effrenatus; paucissimis Deo verbis tam placidum, cum ovem, reddam. Di horum nosam. *Græc. Libanus. l. 3.*

Παρά μὲν τοῖς Ἑλλήνων ἦν πῶς, *Græc. Origen. advers. Cell lib. 1. See this Passage cited above, pag. 194.*

ly

ly be denied by any Unbelievers of Revelation, but that there are among us many more Persons of all conditions, who worship God in sincerity and simplicity of Heart, and live in the constant practise of all Righteousness, Holiness, and true Virtue; than ever were found in any of the most civilized Nations, and most improved by Philosophy in the heathen World.

*Of the clear Discovery of future Rewards and Punishments, as another Motive to Obedience*

3. *The Rewards and Punishments* which the Christian Religion proposes, to Obedience or Disobedience; are a *Motive*, perfectly agreeable to Mens natural Hopes and Fears, and worthy of God to make known by positive and exprefs Revelation. For since 'tis confessedly suitable to the divine Wisdom, to make variety of Creatures, endued with very different Powers and Faculties, and capable of very different kinds and degrees of Improvement; and since all rational Creatures, by reason of that natural Liberty of Will which is essentially necessary to their being such, cannot but be capable of exalting and improving their Nature by the practise of Virtue and the Imitation of God, and on the contrary of depraving and debasing their Nature by the practise of Vice and Alienation of themselves from God; It follows undeniably, (as has been before



fore shown by a more particular deduction,) that 'tis highly agreeable to the Light of Nature and to right Reason to suppose, that God, the Supreme Governour and Disposer of all things, will finally make a just and suitable distinction between his Creatures, by the distribution of proportionable Rewards and Punishments. Nevertheless, both the Truth it self of these final Rewards and Punishments, was so far called in question, and rendred doubtful and uncertain, by the Disputations even of the Wisest Philosophers that ever lived; and those who did in general believe the Truth and Certainty of them, had yet so very blind and obscure Notions of What Nature and Kind they were to be; having their Imaginations strangely prejudiced with poetical Fictions, and fabulous Stories; that the setting this matter clear and right, and the supplying this single defect in the Light of Nature, was a thing highly worthy of Divine Revelation: It being plainly a very different thing, and of very different Force as to the influencing Mens Actions, for Men to be able to argue themselves into a *reasonable Expectation* of future Rewards and Punishments; and to be *certainly assured* of the reality of them by express Testimony of Divine Revelation. And accordingly

accordingly by Divine Revelation in the Gospel, this defect of the Light of Nature *Is* now actually supplied in such a manner; Life and Immortality *are* so brought to Light; and the Wrath of God *is* so revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men; that this very thing, the clear and distinct and consistent Account which the Gospel gives us of these final Rewards and Punishments, (which, though indeed in themselves so absolutely necessary, that without them no tolerable Vindication could be made of the Attributes of God, yet neither by the Light of Nature, nor by any positive Institution of Religion, excepting only the Christian, were they ever so *clearly* and *plainly* represented to Mankind, as to have their full and proper effect upon the Hearts and Lives of Men;) This very thing (I say,) the clear, distinct, and consistent Account, which the Gospel gives us of these final Rewards and Punishments, is it self no contemptible Argument of the Truth and Divine Authority of the Christian Revelation. By the certain Knowledge of these Rewards and Punishments it is, that the practise of Virtue is now established upon a sure Foundation: Men have now abundantly sufficient encouragement, to support

support them in their Choice of Virtue, and in their constant adherence to it, in all Cases and under all Circumstances that can be supposed: There is now sufficient Weight on the side of Virtue, to enable Men to conquer all the Temptations of the Devil, the Flesh, and the World; and to despise the severest Threatnings, even Death it self: *This is the victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith.* The only Difficulty in this matter, arising from the *Duration* of the final Punishment of the Wicked, shall be considered when I come to discourse of the Articles of our *Belief.*

XII. Thirdly, *the peculiar Manner and Circumstances, with which the Christian Religion enjoyns the Duties, and urges the Motives before-mentioned; are exactly consonant to the Dictates of sound Reason, or the unprejudiced Light of Nature; and most wisely perfective of it.*

For, what can be more agreeable to the Light of Nature, and more evidently perfective of it; than to have those *Duties*, which Nature hints at *only in general*, explained *fully and largely*, and urged *in particular*, and inculcated upon the meanest Capacities with great *Weight and Authority*, and exemplified in the Lives of holy Persons

*The Proposition proved by particular instances.*



*The Evidences of Natural*

Persons proposed as Patterns for our Imitation? What can be more perfective of the Light of Nature, than to have those great *Motives* of Religion, the Rewards and Punishments of a Future State which Nature *only obscurely* points at, described to us most *plainly, affectionately, and lively*? What can be more perfective of the Light of Nature, than to have the *means of attoning for Sin*, which Nature discovers *only the want of*, plainly declared and exhibited to us? What can be more perfective of the Light of Nature, than such a discovery of *the heinousness of Sin* and the *necessity of Holiness*, as the *Death of Christ* and the *Purity of the Gospel* does make unto us? In fine, What can more effectually perfect the Religion of Nature, than the *gathering together the Worshippers of the True God, into One Body*? the *causing them to enter into solemn Obligations, to live suitably to their Holy Profession*? the *giving them gracious Assurances that true Repentance shall be accepted for what is past, and sincere renewed Obedience for the future*? the *uniting them by a few positive Rites in one Religious as well as Civil Communion, for mutual Assistance and Improvement*? and the *establishing a certain Order or perpetual Succession of Men, whose constant Business it may be, to explain the great Duties of Religi-*

on to persons of meaner Capacities; to urge and inforce the Practise of them; to set before Men the reasons of their Duty, and the Necessity of it; to shew them clearly and impartially the danger of neglecting it, and the great advantage of performing it sincerely; in a word, to instruct the Ignorant, and to admonish the Wicked; to reduce those that err, to comfort the doubting, to reprove the obstinate; and to be Instruments of conveying to Men all proper Assurances, to enable them to perform their whole Duty effectually?

If these things be the Ordinances of One, who came to contradict the dictates of right Reason, and not to perfect the Law of Nature, but to destroy it; then let all wise Men for ever forsake the Assemblies of Christians, and profess themselves again Disciples of the Philosophers. But if these things be perfectly agreeable to Nature and right Reason, and tend exceedingly to the supplying the Deficiencies thereof; then let none under pretense of maintaining Natural Religion, revile and blaspheme the Christian, lest they be found Liars unto God.

The many Contentions indeed, about Opinions of great Uncertainty and little Importance, which, to the very great Scandal of Christianity, have

D d

*An Answer  
to the Ob-  
jection  
drawn  
from the  
Divisions  
among  
Christians.*

in several Ages of the Church, been with unreasonable Zeal kept up, instead of promoting the universal Interest of true practical Religion and Virtue; have, it must be confessed, given some *Occasion* to the Enemies of our most holy Religion, to blaspheme and revile both It, and the Teachers of it. But though such things as these, have indeed afforded them too plausible an *Occasion*, yet they have not given them any just *Reason*, so to do. For the acknowledged corruption of a Doctrine or Institution in any particular *part* or respect, is by no means a weighty or real Objection against the Truth of the *whole*: And there has always been extant a sufficient Rule, to enable sincere Persons, in the midst of the greatest disputes and contentions, to distinguish the *Doctrine of God* from the *Opinions of Men*; The Doctrine of Christ having been plainly and fully delivered in our Saviour's own Discourses, and in the Writings of his immediate Followers the Apostles; who cannot with any Reason be imagined either to have misrepresented it, or to have represented it imperfectly. But besides: I think it can hardly be denied even by our Adversaries themselves, but that in all Times and Places, wherein Christianity



nity has been professed in any tolerable degree of Purity ; whatever contentions and disputes may have arisen about particular, and perhaps *unnecessary* Doctrines ; yet the great, the most necessary, and fundamental Doctrines of Religion ; concerning God, and Providence ; concerning the gracious Method, of God's Reconciliation with penitent Sinners, concerning the necessity of true Piety, Righteousness and Sobriety ; concerning a Judgment to come, and the final Reward of the Righteous, and the Punishment of wicked Men, in such a manner as will effectually vindicate both the Justice and Goodness, the Wisdom and Honour of God ; these things (I say) have notwithstanding all Differences concerning smaller Matters, been nevertheless at the same time universally and constantly taught, pressed and inculcated upon Persons of all Capacities, by the earnest and continual Preaching of all the Ministers of the Gospel ; with an effect infinitely more considerable and visible, both in Extent and Duration, than by the Teaching of any Heathen Philosophers that ever lived : Which shows undeniably the Excellency at least, if not the Divine Authority of the Christian Institution, in this particular respect.

## *The Evidences of Natural*

XIII. Fourthly, *All the* [Credenda or] *Doctrines, which the true, simple, and uncorrupted Christian Religion teaches; (that is, not only those plain Doctrines which it requires to be believed as fundamental and of necessity to eternal Salvation, but even All the Doctrines which it teaches as Matters of Truth;) are, though indeed many of them not discoverable by bare Reason unassisted with Revelation, yet, when discovered by Revelation, apparently most agreeable to sound unprejudiced Reason; have every one of them a natural Tendency, and a direct and powerful Influence, to reform Mens Minds and correct their Manners; and do together make up an infinitely more consistent and rational Scheme of Belief, than any that the wisest of the ancient Philosophers ever did, or the cunningest of modern Unbelievers can invent or contrive.*

*of the One  
Supreme  
God.*

I. *That there is One only living and true God; existing of himself, by the Necessity of his own Nature; absolutely Independent, Eternal, Omnipresent, Unchangeable, Incorruptible; without Body, Parts or Passions; of infinite Power, Knowledge, and Wisdom; of perfect Liberty, and Freedom of Will; of infinite Goodness, Justice and Truth, and all other possible Perfections; so as to be absolutely Self-sufficient to his own infinite and unalterable Happiness: This*  
is,

is, not only the first and principal Article of the Christian Faith, but also the first and most evident Truth that the Light of Nature itself teaches us; being clearly demonstrable, upon certain and undeniable Principles of right Reason.

2. *That this Supreme Self-Existent Cause and Father of all Things, did before all Ages, in an incomprehensible manner, by his Almighty Power and Will, beget or produce a Divine Person; stiled the Logos, the Word, or Wisdom, or Son, of God; \* God, of God; in whom dwells the fulness and perfection of Divine Attributes, excepting Independency or Self-Origination; being the Image of the Invisible God; the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person; having been in the beginning with God, partaker with him of his Glory before the World was; the Upholder of all things by the Word of his Power; and himself over all; by Communication of his Father's Glory) God blessed for ever: This Doctrine (I say,) though not indeed discoverable by bare Reason, yet, when made known by Revelation, appears plainly very consistent with right Reason, and (is manifest) contains nothing that implies any manner of Absurdity or Contradiction in it.*

*of the Only-begotten Son of God.*

\*  $\Theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma \ \epsilon\kappa \ \Theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ , in contradiction to  $\Theta\epsilon\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$ .

Col. 1, 15  
Heb. 1, 2.  
 $\Lambda\pi\alpha\lambda\upsilon\gamma\alpha\varsigma$   
 $\mu\alpha\ \tau\eta\varsigma \ \delta\iota-$   
 $\xi\eta\varsigma \ \alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\varsigma$   
Jon. 1, 2.  
17, 5.  
Heb. 1, 3.  
Rom. 9, 5.  
& Joh.  
1, 1.

D d 3

Indeed



Indeed if any Men, pretending to be *wise above and beyond what is written*, have at any time given such Explications of the *Manner* how the Son of God derived his Being from the Father, or have offered such Accounts of his *Nature and Attributes*, as can by any just and necessary consequence be reduced to imply or involve any Contradiction; (which

† It is not to be denied but that the Schoolmen, who abounded in Wit and Leisure, though very few among them had either exact Skill in the Holy Scriptures, or in Ecclesiastical Antiquity, and the Writings of the ancient Fathers of the Christian Church: I say, it cannot be denied but that these speculative and very acute Men, who wrought a great part of their Divinity out of their own Brains, as Spiders do Cobwebs out of their own Ewals, have started a thousand Subtilties a-

bout this Mystery, such as no Christian is bound to trouble his Head withal; much less is it necessary for him to understand those *Niceties*, which we may reasonably presume that they who talk of them did themselves never thoroughly understand; and least of all, is it necessary to believe them. *Arch-B. Tillotson, Sermon concerning the Unity of the Divine Nature.*

It were to be wished, that some *Religionists* did not here symbolize too much with the *Atheists*, in affecting to represent the *Mystery* of the Christian *Trinity*, as a thing directly contradictory to all humane Reason and Understanding. *Calaneo's System, pag. 520.*

perhaps many of the Schoolmen have but too justly been accused of doing;) such Explications are without all controversy False, and very injurious to Religion. But as this Doctrine is delivered in *Scripture*: I think, there is nothing in it in any degree contrary to Right Reason; as I have elsewhere endeavour'd to show in a *particular Discourse*, to which I refer the Reader.

Now the same that is said of the Son, may in like manner, with little Variation, be very agreeable to right Reason, understood concerning the Original Procession or Manner of Derivation of the Holy Spirit himself from the Father.

2. That the Universe, the Heavens and the Earth, and all things that are therein, were Created and Made by God; and this, through the Operation of his Son, That Divine Word, or Wisdom of the Father, by whom the Scripture says that God made the Worlds; that by him God created all things; that by him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in Earth, Visible and Invisible, whether they be Thrones or Dominions, or Principalities or Powers; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist; that all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made: All this likewise is very agreeable to sound unprejudiced Reason. For, that neither the whole, nor any part of the World; neither the Form, nor Motion, nor Matter of the World, could exist of it self, by any Necessity in its own Nature; is abundantly demonstrable from undeniable Principles of Reason; as has been shown in my former Discourse. Consequently, both the whole World,

and all the Variety of things that now exist therein, must of Necessity have received both their being it self, and also their form and manner of being, from God the alone Supreme and Self-existent Cause; and must needs depend upon his Good-pleasure every moment, for the continuance and preservation of that Being. Accordingly, if we set aside the *Epicureans*, (whose absurd Hypothesis has long since been given up even by all Atheists themselves;) and some very few others, who with no less Absurdity contended that the World was in its present Form Self-existent and Necessary; All the Philosophers of all Ages, (even † not excepting those who held the *Eternity* of the World,) have unanimously agreed in this great Truth, that the World evidently owes both its Being and Preservation to God the Supreme Cause and Author of all Things. And then, that God made the World by the Operation of his *Son*; though this could not indeed be known certainly without express Revelation; yet is it by no means incredible, or contrary to right Reason. For, to the judgment of Reason, it is the same thing, whether God made the World immediately by himself, or mediately by the Ministration of a Second Principle. And what *Plato* and his Follow-

† See for  
mer Vo-  
lum. Pag.  
34 & 35.



lowers have said concerning that Eternal Noûs, or Mind, whom they frequently stile *Δημιουργός*, the Minister or Workman by whom God framed all things; proves undeniably thus much at least, that the Doctrines delivered in Scripture concerning this Matter, cannot be rejected as inconsistent and irreconcilable with right Reason.

4. That, about the Space of 6000 *Of the For-* Years since, *the Earth was without Form* <sup>*mation of*</sup> *and Void,* that is, a confused *Chaos;* <sup>*the Earth.*</sup> out of which God framed this beau-*Gen. 1, 2.* tiful and useful Fabrick we now inhabit, and stocked it with the Seeds of all kinds of Plants, and formed upon it *Man,* and all the other Species of Animals it is now furnished with; is also very agreeable to right Reason. For though the precise Time indeed, when all this was done, could not now have been known exactly, without Revelation; yet even at this day, there are remaining many considerable and very strong rational Proofs, which make it exceedingly probable, (separate from the Authority of Revelation,) that this present Frame and Constitution of the Earth, cannot have been of a very much longer date. The universal *Tradition* delivered down from all the most antient Nations of the World, both learned and barbarous; The constant and agreeing *Doctrine* of all antient Philoso-

## *The Evidences of Natural*

Philosophers and Poets, concerning the Earth's being formed within such a Period of Time, out of Water or a Chaos; The manifold *Absurdities and Contradictions* of those few Accounts, which pretend to a much greater Antiquity; The *Number of Men*, with which the Earth is at present inhabited; The *late Original of Learning and all useful Arts and Sciences*; The *Impossibility*, that universal Deluges, or other Accidents, should at certain long Periods have oft-times destroyed far the greatest part of Mankind, with the Memory of all former Actions and Inventions, and yet never have happened to destroy them All; The changes that must necessarily fall out naturally in the Earth, in vast length of Time, by the Sinking and Washing down of Mountains, the Consumption of Water by Plants, and innumerable other such like Accidents; These (I say) and many more Arguments, drawn from Nature, Reason and Observation, make That account of the Time of the Earth's Formation exceedingly probable in itself, which from the Revelation delivered in Scripture-History we believe to be certain.

*Of the con-  
tinual Go-  
vernment  
of Provi-  
dence*

5. That the same God who created all things by the Word of his Power, and upholds and preserves them by his continual Concourse, does also by his All-wise *Providence* perpetually govern

govern and direct the issues and events of things; takes care of this lower World, and of all, even the smallest things, that are therein; disposes things in a regular order and Succession in every Age, from the beginning of the World to its final Period; and inspects, with a more particular and especial regard, the moral Actions of Men: This, as it is far more expressly, clearly, and constantly taught in Scripture, than in any of the Writings of the Philosophers; so it is also highly agreeable to right and true Reason. For, that an *Omnipresent* and infinitely Wise Being, cannot but know every thing that is done in every part of the Universe, and with equal ease take notice of the minutest things as of the greatest; That an infinitely *powerful* Being, must needs govern and direct every thing in such manner and to such ends, as he knows to be best and fittest in the whole; so far as is consistent with that Liberty of Will, which he has made essential to all rational Creatures; And that an infinitely *Just and Good* Governour, cannot but take more particular and exact notice of the moral Actions of all his rational Creatures, and how far they are conformable or not conformable to the Rules he has set them; All this (I say) is most evidently agreeable



able to right Reason, and, as has been before shown, deducible from it.

*Of Paradise, and the Loss of it by Sin.*

Gen. 3 17,  
18, & 19

6. That God, after the Formation of the Earth, created Man at first upright and innocent, and placed him in a happy and paradisiacal State, where he enjoyed plenty and abundance of all things without labour or sorrow; And that Sin was the original Cause, that now on the contrary the very ground is cursed and barren for our sake, and in sorrow we eat of it all the Days of our Life; that thorns also and thistles are brought forth to us, and in the sweat of our face we eat bread, till we return unto the ground; This likewise is very reasonable and credible in it self: As appears, not only from the abstract consideration of the nature of the thing; but also from the general Opinion that the antient learnedest Heathens entertained, upon very obscure and uncertain Tradition, that the original State of Man was innocent and simple, and the Earth

\* Το παλαιὸν πάντ' ἦν ἀγριῶν καὶ ἀλευρῶν πλήρη, καθάπερ καὶ νῦν κόνης καὶ κρήναι δ' ἔρρεον, αἱ μὲν ὕδατ', γάλακτ' δ' ἄλαι καὶ ὁμοίως αἱ μὲν μέλιτ', αἱ δ' οἶνοι, πνέες δ' ἐλαίαι ὑπὸ πλησμανῆς δ' οἱ ἀγροποι καὶ τευφῆς, εἰς ὕβριν ἐξέπεσον. Ζεὺς δ' ἠμισήτας τ' κατέσπειρε, ἠφάνιστε πάντα, καὶ διὰ πόρον τ' βίον ἀπέδειξε.

Callinus Indus apud Strabon. lib. 15.

whereon they dwelt, \* fruitful of it self, and abundant with all plenty; but that God, for the Sin of Man, changed this Happy Constitution of things, and made Labour necessary for the support of our Lives.

7. That

7. That in process of Time, after *Of the*  
the first entrance of Sin into the World, *Flood.*  
Men by degrees corrupted themselves  
more and more; till at length God,

for the † punishment of  
their Sin and incorrigi-  
bleness, brought upon  
them a general Flood,  
which destroyed them all,  
except a few Persons, pre-  
served for the restoration  
of humane Race; is a  
Truth delivered down to  
us, not only by Autho-  
rity of Scripture, but  
also by the concurrent  
Testimony of almost all  
Heathen Philosophers

† Ἐπεὶ ὁ ἦτορ Σεπίμ  
μοῖρα ἐξήπληθ' ἐργίε  
το ἐν αὐτοῖς, τολίω πῶ  
θνητῶ κ' ἐπιδάκας ἀνα-  
κεφανυμένη. τὸ ὅ ἀνέρω-  
πιον ἦθ' ἐπεκατέει,  
τίτε Θεός ὁ Θεῶν Ζεὺς,  
ἄτε δ'ωσίμθ' κατ' ἄρ  
τὰ πιαῶτα, ἐννοῶτας γέ-  
νθ' ἐπειχὲς ἀθάλας δια-  
πδέωμον. δ'ἰκλω αὐτῆς  
ἐπδείραι βεληθεῖς, &c.  
Plato in Civita sine At-  
lantico.

and Poets: And the Histories of all Na-  
tions backwards, terminate in it: And,  
(which is the most remarkable thing  
of all, because it is a demonstrative and  
ocular Proof of the *Universality* of some  
such kind of Dissolution;) the present  
visible Frame and Constitution of the  
Earth throughout; the Disposition and  
Situation of the several Strata of dif-  
ferent kinds of Matter, whereof it is  
composed; the numberless Shells of  
Fishes, Bones of other Animals, and  
parts of all kinds of Plants, which  
in every Country and in almost every  
place are at great variety of Depths  
found inclosed in Earth, in Clay, in  
Stones

Stones, and in all sorts of Matter; are such *apparent* Demonstration of the Earth's having been *some time or other* (the *whole Surface* of it at least) in a state of Fluidity; that whosoever has seen the Collections of this kind made by the very ingenious *Dr Woodward* and others, must in a manner abandon all Use both of his Senses and Reason, if he can in the least doubt of this Truth.

*Of Gods revealing himself to the Patriarchs, and giving the Law to the Jews.*

8. *That* God, after the Flood, made particular Revelations of himself and of his Will to the *Patriarchs*; is a Thing very credible in it self, for the same reasons that I have before shown in general, that the Expectation of some Revelation from God, was a reasonable and probable Expectation. *And* that, after this, God should vouchsafe by Express Revelation to give a *Law* to the whole Nation of the *Jews*, consisting very much in Sacrifices, and in external Rites and ceremonious Observances; cannot with any just reason be rejected as an incredible Fact; if we consider, *that* such a kind of Institution was necessary in those Times and Circumstances, to preserve that Nation from the Idolatry and Worship of false Gods, wherewith the Countries around them were overspread; *that* those Rites and Ceremonies were typical of, and preparative to, a higher and more excellent Dispensation; *that*



that the Jews were continually told by their Prophets, that their observance of those Rites and Ceremonies was by no means so highly acceptable to God, nor so absolutely and indispensably insisted upon by him, as Obedience to the Moral Law; and that the whole matter of Fact relating to that Revelation, is delivered down to us in a History, on which the Polity of a whole Nation was founded, at a time when no Body could be ignorant of the truth of the principal Facts, and concerning which we can now have no more reason to doubt, than of any History of any antient matter of Fact in the World. The most considerable and real difficulty, *viz.* why this Favour was granted to that *single* Nation only, and not to all the rest of the World likewise; is to be accounted for by the same Reasons, which prove (as *pag. 215.* has been before shown) that God was not obliged to make known the *Revelation of the Gospel*, to all Men alike.

9. That all the other particulars of *Scripture-History* contained in the *Old Testament*, are true Relations of Matter of Fact; (not to insist now on the many Arguments which prove in general the Antiquity, Genuineness, and Authority of the Books themselves;) will to a rational Inquirer appear

*of the other particulars of Scripture-History in the Old Testament.*

† lib. 1.  
c. 16. and  
lib. 3. c.  
16. where  
see the Ci-  
tations at  
large.

pear very credible from hence; that very many of the particular Histories, and some even of the minuter Circumstances also of those Histories, are confirmed by concurrent Testimonies of profane and unquestionably unprejudiced Authors. Of which *Grotius*, in his excellent Book of † the *Truth of the Christian Religion*, has given us a large Collection. As particularly; that the *manner of the Formation of the Earth* out of a *Chaos*, is mentioned by the Antientest *Phœnician, Ægyptian, Indian* and *Greek* Historians; the very Names of *Adam* and *Eve*, by *Sanchuniathon* and others; the *longevity* of the *Antediluvians*, by *Berosus* and *Manethos* and others; the *Ark of Noab*, by *Berosus*; many particulars of the *Flood*, by *Ovid* and others; the *Family of Noab*, and two of every kind of *Animals* entring into the *Ark* with him, mentioned by *Lucian* himself, as a *Tradition* of the *Antient Græcians*; The *Dove* which *Noab* sent out of the *Ark*, by *Abydenus* and \* *Plutarch*; the building of *Babel*, by *Abydenus*; the burning of *Sodom*, by *Diodorus Siculus* and *Strabo* and *Tacitus* and others; several particulars of the *History* of *Abraham* and the rest of the *Patriarchs*, by *Berosus*

\* Διχαλίωσί φασί θεωρεῖν ἐπὶ τῆ λαρρακῆ ἀδιεμένω δῆλωμα γυῖσαι, χειμῶνῆ μὲν εἰσω πάλιν ἐνδουμένω. εὐδίας δ' ἀποπταῖσαν. *Plutarch: utrum Terrestria an Aquatica animalia plus habeant solentia.*

of *Moses's* Life, by several ancient Writers; the eminent *Piety* of the most ancient Jews, by *Strabo* and *Justin*; divers Actions of *David* and *Solomon*, in the *Phœnician Annals*; some of the Actions of *Elijah*, by *Menander*, and confessed by *Julian* himself; the History of *Jonah*, under the name of *Hercules*, by *Lycophron* and *Aeneas Gazæus*; and the Histories of the following Times, by many more Authors. Besides that (as † learned Men have upon exceeding probable grounds supposed.) many of the most antient Scripture-histories are acknowledged and asserted in the Writings of the Poets, both Greeks and Latins; the true Histories being couched under *fictitious Names* and *fabulous Representations*.

† See *Strabon's Origin. lib. 3. c. 5.* And *Bocharti Exerc. & Vossius de Idololat.*

10. That God, in the fulness of Time; that is, at that time which his infinite Wisdom had fore-appointed, which all the Antient Prophecies had determined, and which many concurrent Circumstances in the state of the Jewish Religion, and in the disposition of the Roman Empire, had made a fit Season for the reception and propagation of a new Institution of Religion: that God (I say) at That Time, should send his Only-begotten Son. That Word or Wis-

dom of God's sending his Son into the World for the Redemption of Mankind.



*The Evidences of Natural*

*dom* of the Father, That Divine Person *by whom* (as has been before shown) He created the World, and by whom he made all former particular Manifestations of himself unto Men; *that* he should send him, to take upon him our humane Nature, and therein to make a full and particular Revelation of the Will of God to Mankind, who by Sin had corrupted themselves and forfeited the Favour of God, so that by the bare Light of Nature they could not discover any certain means by which they could be satisfactorily and absolutely secure of regaining that Favour; To preach unto Men Repentance and Remission of Sin, and, by giving himself a Sacrifice and Expiation for Sin, to declare the Acceptableness of Repentance, and the Certainty of Pardon thereupon, in a Method evidently consistent with all necessary Vindication of the Honour and Authority of the Divine Laws, and with God's irreconcilable Hatred against Sin; To be a Mediator and Intercessor, between God and Man; To procure the particular Assistance of God's Holy Spirit, which might be in Men a new and effectual Principle of a Heavenly and Divine Life; in a word, To be the Saviour and Judge of Mankind, and finally to bring them to Eternal Life. All this, when clearly

ly and expressly revealed, and by good Testimony proved to be so revealed; is apparently agreeable and very credible to right and true Reason. As (because it is the main and fundamental Article of the Christian Faith,) I shall endeavour to make out more largely and distinctly; by showing in particular, that none of the several Objections, upon which *Speculative Unbelievers* reject this Doctrine, do at all prove any inconsistency in the belief of it, with sound and unprejudiced Reason.

For, *First*, it cannot be thought unreasonable to be believed in the general, that God should make a *Revelation of his Will* to Mankind; since on the contrary, (as has been before proved at large,) it is very agreeable to the Moral Attributes of God, and to the Notions and Expectations of the Wisest and most rational Men that lived in the Heathen World.

*Secondly*, It cannot be thought unreasonable to be believed, that in such a Revelation, wherein God freely proclaims Remission of Sin, and the Acceptableness of Repentance, he should nevertheless have appointed such a *Sacrifice or Expiation for Sin*, as might at the same time be a sufficient Testimony of his irreconcilable Hatred against it. For though, by

*That it is not unreasonable to suppose God making a Revelation of his Will to Men.*

*That it is not unreasonable to believe, that God would appoint a Sacrifice or Expiation for Sin.*

*The Evidences of Natural*

the Light of Nature, it was indeed exceeding probable and to be hoped for, that God would forgive Sin upon true Repentance; yet it could not be proved, that he was absolutely obliged to do so, or that he *would* certainly do so: On the contrary, there was reason to suppose, that, in Vindication of the Honour and Dignity of his Laws, he would require some further Satisfaction and Expiation. And accordingly we find the Custom of *Sacrificing*, to have prevailed universally over the Heathen World in all Ages; Which, how unreasonable soever an expectation it was, to think that the Blood of Beasts could truly expiate Sin, yet thus much it plainly and undeniably shows, that it has been the common Apprehension of Mankind in all Ages, that God would not be appeased nor pardon Sin without some Punishment and Satisfaction; and yet at the same Time they had good Hopes, that upon the Repentance of Sinners, God would accept some other Satisfaction instead of the Destruction of the Offenders. 'Tis therefore plainly agreeable to right Reason, to believe that God, in Vindication of the Honour of his Laws, and for a Testimony of his Hatred against Sin, should appoint some Sacrifice or Expiation for Sin, at the same time



time that he forgives the Sinner upon his true Repentance.

Thirdly, It cannot be thought unreasonable to be believed, that a Mediatour or Intercessour should be appointed between God and Man, through and by whom the Prayers of Sinners may be offered up so as to be acceptable in the Sight of God. 'Tis well known, the generality of the wisest Heathens thought it agreeable to Reason, to make use of Subordinate Intelligences, Dæmons or Heroes, by whom they put up their Prayers to the Superiour Gods; hoping that by the Mediation of those Intercessours, the unworthiness of their own Persons, and the defects of these Prayers might be supplied; and they might obtain such merciful and gracious Answers to their Prayers, as they could not presume to hope for upon their own Account. Wherein though those Pgens laboured indeed under very great Uncertainty, in doing a thing for which they had no sufficient Warrant, and in using Mediatours whom they neither knew distinctly to have any Being, nor could they however have any good Security that such Mediation would be acceptable to the Supreme God; Yet at the same time this undeniably proves, that it is by no means inconsistent with right Reason, to be-

*That it is not unreasonable to believe, that a Mediatour should be appointed between God and Man.*

lieve that a Mediator may by Divine Authority be appointed between God and sinful Men, to be their Intercessor and Advocate with a justly offended God.

*Of the objection drawn from the Dignity of the Person whom we believe to be our Mediator and Redeemer.*

*Fourthly*, The greatest real Difficulty in this Matter, to the Judgment of right Reason, seems to arise from the consideration of the *Dignity of the Person*, whom we believe to have given himself a Sacrifice and Propitiation for the Sins of Mankind; *viz.* how it is possible, that the *Only-begotten Son of God* should be *Incarnate* and become *Man*; how it is conceivable that *God* should *condescend* so far as to *send*, and the *Son of God* condescend willingly to *be sent*, and do such great things for his Creatures; and above all, how it is consistent with Reason, to suppose God condescending to do so much for such *frail* and *weak* Creatures as Men, who, in all appearance, seem to be but a very small, low, and inconsiderable part of the Creation. And here indeed it must readily be acknowledged, that human Reason could never have discovered such a Method as this, for the reconciliation of Sinners to an offended God, without express Revelation. But then neither on the other Side, when once this Method is made known, is there any such Difficulty or Inconceivableness in it, as can reasonably make

a wise and considerate Man call in question the truth of a well-attested Revelation, merely upon that account; Which indeed, any plain Absurdity or Contradiction in the Matter of a Doctrine pretended to be revealed, would, it must be confessed, unavoidably do. For as to the *Possibility of the Incarnation of the Son of God*; whatever Mysteriousness there confessedly was in the *Manner* of it, yet, as to the thing it self, there is evidently no more unreasonableness in believing the possibility of it, than the believing the Union of the Soul and Body, or any other certain Truth which we plainly see implies no Contradiction in the thing it self, at the same time that we are sensible we cannot discover the *manner* how it is effected. Again: As to the incredibility of the *Doctrine*, that God should make so great a *Condescension* to his Creatures; and that a Person of such Dignity as the Only-begotten *Son* of God, should vouchsafe to give himself a Sacrifice for the Sins of Men: He that duly considers, how it is no diminution to the Glory and Greatness of the Creator of all things, to inspect, govern, and direct every thing by his All-wise Providence through the whole Creation; to take care even of the meanest of his Creatures, so that not



a Sparrow falls to the ground or a hair of our head perishes without his knowledge; and to observe exactly every Particle even of inanimate Matter in the Universe: he (I say) who duly considers This, cannot with Reason think it any real Disparagement to the Son of God, (though it was indeed a most wonderful and amazing Instance of Humility and Condescension,) that he should concern himself so far for sinful Men, as to appear in their Nature to reveal the Will of God more clearly to them, to give himself a Sacrifice and Expiation for their Sins, and to bring them to Repentance and Eternal Life. The greatest Enemies and Deriders of Christianity, have asserted things, *far more* incredible, to have been done upon *far less* Occasions: Witness what *Fu-*

\* Ὁ δὲ Ζεὺς ἑαυτὸν  
 ἄσκληπιον ἐγέννησεν  
 εἰς τὴν γλῶσσαν διὰ τῆς  
 ἡλίας γονίμης ζωῆς ἐνέφη-  
 νεν· ἔτι δὲ ἐπὶ γῆς ἐξ  
 ἄφαντος ποιησάμενος πρό-  
 δου ἐροειδῶς μὲν πρὸς τὴν  
 Ἐπίδαυρον ἐφάνη. *Fulian.*

*lian* the Apostate \* thought fit to believe concerning *Æsculapius's* coming down from Heaven, and conversing upon Earth in a visible Form, only to teach Men the Art of healing Diseases. And

*Modern* Unbelievers, who seem willing in the contrary Extreme, to deny God's having *any* regard, or taking *any* care in any respect, for the Welfare and Happiness of his Creatures: are forced, if they will go about to give any account or explication of things,

things, to invent much more incredible Hypotheses, dishonourable to God, and utterly inconsistent with his Divine Attributes. Indeed, if we will consider things impartially, so far is it from being truly any diminution of the Greatness and Glory of God, to send his Son into the World for the Redemption and Salvation of Mankind; that, on the contrary; it is a Means of bringing the very greatest Honour to the Laws and Government of God, that can be imagined. For what can be imagined more honourable, and worthy of the Supreme Lord and Governour of all things; than to show forth his Mercy and Goodness, in forgiving the Sins of frail and fallible Creatures, and suffering himself to be reconciled to them upon their true Repentance; and yet at the same time to cause such an Expiation to be made for Sin, by the Sufferings and Death of his own Son in their Nature, as might be an abundant Evidence of his irreconcilable Hatred against Sin, a just Vindication of the Authority and Dignity of his Laws, and a sufficient and effectual warning to deter Men from Sin, to create in them the greatest dread and detestation of it, and for ever to terrify them from venturing upon wilful Transgression and

Disobe-

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Disobedience? 'Tis true, no Man can pretend certainly to say, but God by his absolute Sovereignty and Authority, might, if he had so pleased, have pardoned Sin upon Repentance, without any Sacrifice or Expiation at all? But this Method of doing it by the Death of Christ, is more wise and fit, and evidently more proper and effectual to discountenance and prevent Presumption, to discourage Men from repeating their Transgressions, to give them a deep Sense of the heinous Nature of Sin, and to convince them of the excellency and importance of the Laws of God, and the indispensable Necessity of paying Obedience to them; Forasmuch as it shows us, that at the same time that God was willing to save the Sinner, yet, least encouragement should be given to Sin by letting it go unpunished, he did not think fit to forgive the Transgressions of Men without great Sufferings in our Nature, and to do away the guilt of our Sins but upon such difficult Terms as the Death of his own Son. So that in this Dispensation, Justice and *Mercy and Truth are met together, Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other.* And by how much the greater the Dignity of the Person was, who gave himself thus a Sacrifice for the Sins of Men; of



of so much the greater Weight and Force is this Argument to deter Men for the future from Sin, and to convince them of the Necessity of Obedience. Wherefore so far is it from being true, that the consideration of the Dignity of the Person suffering, is a real Objection against the credibility of the Doctrine; that on the contrary, that very Consideration contains the highest Vindication imaginable, of the Greatness and Honour and Authority of the Laws of God; and at the same Time, the greatest possible Instance or Expression of his Mercy and Compassion towards Men, agreeable to our Natural Notions of his Divine Attributes. And then, as to the *last* part of this Difficulty, *viz.* how it can be consistent with Reason, to suppose God condescending to do so very great Things for such *mean and weak* Creatures, as Men are; who, in all appearance, seem to be but a very *small, low* and *inconsiderable* part of the Creation; forasmuch as the whole Earth it self, is but a little Spot that bears no proportion at all to the Universe; and in all probability of Reason, the large and numberless Orbs of Heaven cannot but be supposed to be filled with Beings more capable, than we, to show forth the Praise and Glory of  
their

their Almighty Creator, and more worthy to be the Objects of his Care and Love: To this part of the Difficulty, I say, the Answer is very easy; *That* the Mercy and Love of the infinitely good God, is extended equally over all his Works; *That*, let the Universe be supposed as large, and the rational Creatures, with which it is furnished, as many and excellent, as any one can imagine; yet Mankind is plainly the chief, indeed the only Inhabitant, for whose sake 'tis evident this our Globe of Earth was formed into a habitable World; and this our Earth is, as far as we have any means of judging, as considerable and worthy of the Divine Care, as most other Parts of the System; and this our System, as considerable, as any other single System in the Universe: And finally, *That* in like manner as the same Divine Providence, which presides over the whole Creation, does particularly govern and direct every thing in this our lower World, as well as in every other particular part of the Universe; so there is no real Difficulty to right Reason, in conceiving that the same Divine *Logos*, the *Word* or *Messenger* of the Father, who in various Dispensations, according to the particular Needs and Exigencies of Mankind,

kind, has made various Manifestations of God, and Discoveries of the Divine Will, to us here upon Earth; may also, for ought we know, have to other Beings, in other parts of the Universe, according to their several Capacities or Wants, made different Manifestations of God and Discoveries of his Will, in ways of which we can know nothing, and in which we have no Concern: There being nothing in this, at all contrary to the Nature of God, or the Condition of things.

*Fifthly* and *Lastly*, If any one thinks it unreasonable to be believed, that God should send his Son into the World for the Redemption of Mankind; and yet that this appearance of the Son of God upon Earth, should not be till the *latter Ages* of the World; and after he has appeared, yet his appearance not be made known equally to *all Nations*: Such a one \* must likewise for the same Reason affirm, that 'tis unreasonable to believe the Necessity and Obligations even of Natural Religion it self, because 'tis plain all Men are not furnished equally with the same Capacities and Opportunities of understanding those Obligations; And consequently no Deist can, consistently with his own Principles, make this Objection against the Truth of Christi-

*Of the Ob-  
jection  
drawn  
from the  
Christian  
Revelation  
not being in  
the Uni-  
versal.*

\* See be-  
fore, pag.  
215.

anity.



Humanity. He must likewise for the same Reason affirm, that God is obliged in all other respects also to make all his Creatures equal; to make Men, Angels; to endue All Men with the same Faculties and Capacities, as Any; at least, to make all Men capable of the very same *Kind*, and the same *Degree* of Happiness, and to afford to All of them all the very same Means or Opportunities of obtaining it: In a word, he must assert, that infinite Wisdom cannot reasonably be supposed to have a Right of making variety of Creatures in very various Circumstances: Which is an Assertion palpably most absurd, in Experience false; and a very unjust diminution of God's Sovereignty in the World. But besides: Though the Redemption purchased by the Son of God, is not indeed actually made known unto All Men; yet as no Man ever denied, but that the Benefit of the Death of Christ extended backwards to those who lived *before* his Appearance in the World; so no Man can prove, but that the same Benefit may likewise extend it self forwards to those who never heard of his Appearance, tho' they lived *after* it.

*Of the other particulars of Scripture-history contained in*

II. *That the History of the Life of Christ, contained in the New Testament, is a true Relation of Matters of Fact, (not to insist here on the Testimony*

mony of his Disciples and Followers, <sup>the New Testament:</sup> which shall be considered hereafter in its proper place;) will to a rational Inquirer appear very credible from hence; that very many Particulars of that History, are confirmed by concurrent Testimonies of profane and unquestionably unprejudiced Authors.

That, before the coming of our Saviour, there was a general Expectation spread over all the Eastern Nations, that out of *Judæa* should arise a Person, who should be Governour of the World; is expressly affirmed by the Roman Historians, \* *Suetonius* and † *Tacitus*.

That there lived in *Judæa*, at the time which the Gospel relates, such a Person as *Jesus of Nazareth*; is acknowledged by all Authors, both Jewish and Pagan, who have written since that Time. The *Star* that

• Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus et constans opinio, esse in *Judæa* profecti rerum crederentur. *Sueton.*

† Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum libris contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valeceret Oriens, profectique *Judæa* rerum crederentur. *Tacit. lib. 21.*

appeared at his Birth, and the Journey of the *Chaldean* Wise Men, is mentioned

by \* *Chalcidius* the Platonist. *Herod's* causing all the Children in *Bethlehem* under two Years old

• See the Place cited by *Grotius* de *Veritate Christianæ Religionis*, lib. 3. c. 14.

to be Slain, and a Reflexion made upon him on that occasion by the Emperour

† Cum audisset [*Augustus*.] inter pueros quos in Syria *Herodes* Rex Judæorum intra limatam iussit interfici, filiumque eius occisum; ait, *Melius est Herodis porcum esse quam filium*. *Maer: b. lib. 2. cap. 4.* [A Testimony so very remarkable and pertinent, that 'tis strange how *Grotius* could omit to mention it in the place now cited.]

See the places cited by *Grotius, de Veritate Christ. Rel. lib. 2. cap. 5.*

|| *Ibid.*

Heathen Gods ceased after the coming of Christ, is acknowledged by || *Porphyry*, who attributes it to their being Angry at the setting up of the Christian Religion which he stiles impious and profane. Many Particulars of the collateral History, concerning *John Baptist*, and *Herod* and *Pilate*, (not to mention the famous Testimony concerning *Jesus* himself, because it is by Some suspected not to be genuine, notwithstanding it is found in all the ancient Copies;) are largely recorded by *Josephus*. The Crucifixion of Christ under *Pontius*

† *Tiberio* imperitante, per procuratorem *Pontium Pilatum*, supplicio affectus erat. *lib. 15.*

Emperour *Augustus*, is related by † *Macrobius*. Many of the *Miracles* that *Jesus* worked in his Lifetime, are, as to matters of Fact; (particularly his healing the Lame and the Blind, and casting out Devils;) expressly owned by the most implacable Enemies of Christianity, by \* *Celsus* and *Julian*, and the Authors of the *Jewish Talmud*. And how the Power of the Heathen Gods ceased after the coming of Christ, is acknowledged by || *Porphyry*, who attributes it to their being Angry at the setting up of the Christian Religion which he stiles impious and profane. Many Particulars of the collateral History, concerning *John Baptist*, and *Herod* and *Pilate*, (not to mention the famous Testimony concerning *Jesus* himself, because it is by Some suspected not to be genuine, notwithstanding it is found in all the ancient Copies;) are largely recorded by *Josephus*. The Crucifixion of Christ under *Pontius Pilate*, is related by † *Tacitus*: And diverse of the most remarkable Circumstances attending it, such as the *Earthquake* and miraculous *Darkness*, were recorded



ed in the \* publick Roman Registers, commonly appealed to by the first Christian Writers as what could not be denied by the Adversaries themselves; and are in a very particular manner attested by || Phlegon. Then, as to the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ; these depend on the general Proofs of the credibility of his Disciples Testimony, and other following Evidences; which will be considered hereafter in their proper place.

\* Eum mundi caelum relatum in Arcanis vestris habetis. Tertullian Apol.

|| Περὶ ὃ ἔπι Τιβερίου καίσαρος ἐκλείψεως, ἔβασιλεύοντος καὶ Ἰησοῦς ἔοικεν ἐσταυρωθῆναι καὶ περὶ τῶν μεγάλων τότε γενομένων σεισμῶν ἃ γὰρ ἀνέγραψε καὶ Φλέγων. Οριεν. αδυ. Cell. li. 2.

Τετάρτῳ δ' ἔπει τῆς Διακοσιοστῆς δευτέρας Ὀλυμπιάδος ἐγένετο ἐκλειψις ἡλίου, μεγίστη ἧμῶν ἐγνωρισμένων πρότερον καὶ εὖ ὥρα ἕκτη τῆς ἡμετέρας φανῆσαι καὶ σεισμῶς, &c.

ἐως ἐγένετο, ὡς καὶ ἀστέρας ἐκλειψῶν Phlegon.

12. That God has appointed a Day, Of the Day wherein he will judge the World in Righteousness, by That Person whom he has ordained, in order to reward every Man according to his Works; is a Doctrine perfectly agreeable to right Reason, and to our Natural Notions of the Attributes of God; As may appear more particularly from what has been before said concerning the Necessity and Certainty of another Life after this; and is evident

dent from the Opinion of all the wiser Heathens concerning this Matter. Neither may it perhaps be altogether impertinent to observe here, that the Poets both Greek and Latin have unanimoſly agreed in this one particular Circumſtance, that Men after Death ſhould not have Judgment paſſed upon them immediately by God himſelf, but by *juſt Men* appointed for that purpoſe.

*Of the Reſurrection of the Body.*

13. *That* in order to this final Judgment, not only the Soul ſhall ſurvive the Diſſolution of the Body, but the *Body it ſelf* alſo ſhall be *raiſed again*; This Doctrinè, though not indeed diſcoverable with any kind of certainty by the bare Light of Nature; becauſe the belief of the Soul's Immortality (for ought that appears to Reaſon alone) is ſufficient to answer all the purpoſes of a Future State, as far as is diſcoverable merely by the Light of Nature; Yet this Doctrinè (I ſay) *of the Reſurrection of the Body*, when made known by Revelation, evidently contains nothing in it in the leaſt contrary to right Reaſon. For, what reaſonable Man can deny, but that it is plainly altogether as eaſy for God to raiſe the Body again after Death, as to create and form it

\* Δὴλον ὡς ἔδεν ἀδύνατον ἢ ἡμᾶς μετὰ τὸ τελευτῆσας, πόλιν ὡσεύ-

at firſt? Some of the Stoical Philoſophers ſeem to have thought it not only

only possible, but even probable: And many of the Jews, who had no express Revelation concerning it, did yet believe it upon an ancient Tradition; as appears from all their Writings, and particularly from the Translation of the last Verse of the Book of Job, which according to the Seventy runs thus; So Job, died being old and full of Days; but 'tis written that he shall rise again with those whom the Lord raises up. The only real difficulty in this Doctrine, seems to arise upon putting the Supposition of one Body's being turned into the Nourishment, and becoming part of the Substance of another; so as that the same parts may equally belong to two Body's, to both of which it shall nevertheless be absolutely impossible that the same parts should be restored. But this Objection, as great and principal a Difficulty as it is, is really but a great Trifle. For there does not at all appear any absolute Necessity, that, to constitute the same Body, there must be an exact restitution of all and only the same Parts. And if there was any such Necessity; yet even still, without making that hard Supposition (which Grotius and others

δὲν πρὸν ἀλυσμένων γὰρ  
 12. εἰς ὃν ὄν ἐσμεν ἀπὸ  
 γὰρ ἀσκήσειαι γῆμα. Cicut  
 sicut citat. a Lactant.  
 lib. 7.

† Τέτραπλάσι ὁ ἀπὸ τῶν  
 πάλιν ἀναστήσει, μετ'  
 ὧν ὁ κύριος ἀρῆσεται. Job  
 42. 16.

\* De Veritate Re.  
 Cicut. 11.  
 2. c. 10.



have done) that God by a miraculous Providence always interposes to prevent the Parts of one humane Body from incorporating with and becoming the Nourishment of another; (for I cannot see any sufficient Ground to deny, but that it may be possible in Nature, for barbarous *Cannibals*, if any such there be, to subsist for some time and live wholly one upon another, if deprived of all other Sustenance :) Without any such hard Suppositions as these (I say,) it is easy to imagin many ways, by which the Resurrection of the same Body, properly speaking, shall nevertheless be very possible; and the whole Foundation of this, and all other Difficulties of this kind, concerning the Parts and Forms and Magnitudes and Proportions of our future Bodies, be entirely taken away.

*Of the Resurrection of the same Body.*

As, *First*; No Man can say it is improbable, and they who have been most and best versed in Microscopical Observations, think it more than probable,) that the *original Stamina*, which contain all and every one of the solid Parts and Vessels of the Body, not excepting even the minutest Nerves and Fibres, are themselves the *entire Body*; and that all the *extraneous Matter*, which coming in by way of Nourishment, fills up and extends the minute and insensible Vessels, of which

which all the visible and sensible Vessels are composed, is not strictly and properly *Part* of the Body. Consequently, while all this *extraneous Matter*, which serves only to swell the Body to its just magnitude, is in *continual Flux*, the *original Stamina* may continue *unchanged*; and so no Confusion of Bodies will be possible in Nature. There may be made many very considerable Observations, concerning the *determinate Figure* into which every respective Body unfolds itself by Growth; concerning the Impossibility of the Body's extending itself by any Nourishment whatsoever beyond *that certain Magnitude*, to which the original Vessels are capable of being unfolded; and concerning the *Impossibility of restoring* by any Nourishment any the smallest Vessel or solid part of the Body, that has at any time happened to be mutilated by any Accident: All which Observations, often and carefully made, will seem very much to favour some such Speculation as This.

*Secondly*: It may also be supposed otherwise, not without good probability, that \* in like manner as in every Grain of Corn there is contained a minute insensible seminal Principle, which is itself the en-

\* Ἡμεῖς αὐτοὶ οὐδ' ἐσμὲν τὸ δὲ ἀποδοτικὸν τῶν σπέρματων ἐπιπέφυκεν ἐν αὐτῷ ἀρχῆς οὐσίῳ. Ἔστι δὲ τὸ δὲ ἀποδοτικὸν τῶν σπέρματων τὸ κοκκίον τὸ σίτος λέγουμεν γὰρ οὐστὶς ἐστὶ τὸ κοκκίον τὸ σίτος ἐστὶ σπέρματι ἀρχῆς ἐπιπέφυκεν  
ture

τὸ ἔγχεται τῷ σώματι,  
 ἀπὸ τῆς φθαρτικῆς ἐξέρ-  
 γεται τὸ σῶμα ἐν ἀφθαρ-  
 τείᾳ. Origen. *advers. Cels.*  
 l. b. 5.

tire future Blade and Ear,  
 and in due Season, when  
 all the rest of the Grain  
 is corrupted, evolves and  
 unfolds it self visibly in-

to that Form; so our present mortal  
 and corruptible Body may be but the  
*Exuvia*, as it were, of some hidden  
 and at present insensible Principle,  
 (possibly the present Seat of the *Soul*,)  
 which at the Resurrection shall dis-  
 cover itself in its proper Form.  
 This way also, there can be no Con-  
 fusion of Bodies, possible in Nature.  
 And it is not without some Weight,  
 that the Antientest Writers of the Church  
 have always made use of this very  
 Similitude; that the Apostle St *Paul*  
 himself, alleges the same Comparison;  
 and that the Jewith Writers seem to  
 have had some obscure glimpse of this  
 Notion, when they talked of a cer-  
 tain *incorruptible* part of the Body;  
 Though these latter indeed explained  
 themselves very weakly and unphilo-  
 sophically.

Many other ways perhaps may  
 be imagined, by which the same  
 thing may be explained intelligibly.  
 but these Speculations are nice and  
 subtle, and neither needful nor pro-  
 per to be enlarged upon in this  
 place. Only the bare mention of  
 them, shows the manifold *possibili-  
 ty* of the Doctrine of the Refur-  
 rection;



rection; against the Objections of those who would have it seem *contradictory*.

14. Lastly; *That* after the Resur-  
 rection and the general Judgment, wherein every Man shall be judged according to his Works; they that have done well, shall go into everlasting *Happiness*; and they that have done evil, in o *everlasting Punishment*: is a Doctrine in it self very credible, and reasonable to be believed. Concerning the *everlasting Happiness* of the Righteous, there is no dispute; it being evident that God in his infinite Bounty may reward the sincere Obedience of his Creatures, as much beyond the Merit of their own weak and imperfect Works, as he himself pleases. *But the everlasting Punishment* threatned to the Wicked, has seem'd to Many a great difficulty; since it is certain from our Natural Notions of the Attributes of God, that no Man shall be punished beyond the just demerit of his Sins. Here therefore it is to be observed; *first*, that no Man can say it is unreasonable, that they who by wilful and stubborn Disobedience to their Almighty Creatour and most merciful Benefactor, and by the habitual Practise of unrepented Wickedness, have, during the State

*of the e.  
 t. nal  
 Happiness  
 of the  
 Blessed,  
 and the  
 eternal  
 Punish-  
 ment of the  
 Damned.*

of Trial, made themselves unfit for the enjoyment of that Happiness which God has prepared for them that love and obey him; should be *eternally rejected, and excluded* from it. Thus much, the wickedest of Men are willing enough to believe: And if bare *Deprivation of Happiness* was all the Punishment they had reason to fear, they would be well content to sit still in their Wickedness. But is it at all agreeable to Reason to believe, that the Punishment to be inflicted by the final Wrath of a provoked God upon his most obstinate and incorrigible Enemies, should be merely such a thing as is in its own Nature less dreadful and terrible, than even those Afflictions which by certain Experience we see in this present Life fall sometimes upon such Persons with whom God is not angry at all? Is it agreeable to reason to believe, that God, who, as is evident by experience, suffers the very best of his own Servants, for the Punishment of their Sins, or even only for the Tryal of their Virtue, to fall sometimes under all the Calamities and Miseries, which 'tis possible for the cruellest and most powerful Tyrants to invent and execute; should punish his most obstinately rebellious and finally impenitent Creatures, with nothing more than the

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the *Negation of Happiness*? There must therefore in the *next* place be some *sensible and positive Punishment*, besides the mere negative Loss of Happiness. And whoever seriously considers the dreadful Effects of God's Anger in this present World, in the Instance of the general *Deluge*, the overthrow of *Sodom and Gomorrha*, the amazing Calamities which befell the whole *Jewish Nation* at the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and other such like Examples; in some of which Cases, the Judgments have fallen upon mixt multitudes of good Men and bad together; (not to mention the Calamities which sometimes befall even good Men by themselves :) Whosoever, I say, seriously considers all this, cannot but frame to himself very terrible Apprehensions of the *Greatness* of that Punishment, which the despised Patience of God shall finally inflict on the impenitently Wicked and Incurable, when they shall be separated and be by themselves. And then, as to the *Duration* of this Punishment; no Man can presume in our present State of Ignorance and Darkness to be able truly to judge, barely by the strength of his own natural Reason, what in *this Respect* is or is not consistent with the Wisdom and Justice and Goodness of the Supreme Governour  
of



## *The Evidences of Natural*

of the World; since we neither know the *Place*, nor *Kind*, nor *Manner*, nor *Circumstances*, nor *Degree*, nor *All the Ends and Uses* of the final Punishment of the Wicked. Only this one thing we are certain of, that the Justice of God will abundantly vindicate it self, and all Mouths shall be stopped before him, and be forced to acknowledge the exact Righteousness of all his Judgments, and to condemn their own Folly and Wickedness; forasmuch as the *Degrees* or *Intenseness* of the Punishment which shall be inflicted on the Impenitent, shall be exactly proportionate to their Sins, as a Recompense of their Demerit, so that no Man shall suffer more than he has deserved. This being once clearly established; the Difficulty about the *Duration* of the Punishment, will not appear so insuperable to right Reason. For nothing can be more evident, than that God may justly banish the Wicked *eternally* from his Kingdom of Glory, and from that Happiness which is his Free and undeserved Gift to the Righteous: And the *positive* Punishment which shall be inflicted upon them in that State of Eternal Rejection, shall undoubtedly be such and so proportionated to Mens Deserts, as the Righteous Judge

judge will then make appear before Men and Angels, to be just and wise and necessary, and such only as becomes the infinitely Wise and Good Lord and Governour of the Universe to inflict. The Wisest of the Heathen Philosophers, without the help of Revelation, have taught, and did believe it agreeable to right Reason, that † the Punishment of the incorrigible should be [αἰώνως] without any determinate or known End. And We cannot tell how many Wise Designs God may serve thereby. We know not but that, as God has now discovered to Us in some measure the Fall and Punishment of evil Angels, to be a warning to Us; so he may hereafter use the Example of the Punishment of Wicked and incorrigible Men, to be a means of preserving other Beings in their Obedience. And many other Considerations there may possibly be, very necessary to enable us to judge rightly concerning this Matter; which, in this present State, we have no sufficient means of coming to the Knowledge of.

Rev. 14, 10. Shall be torment- ed with fire and Brimstone, in the presence of the Holy An- gels, and in the pre- sence of the Lamb.

\* Οἱ ὃ ἀν ἀθέουσι  
ἀνιδίας ἔχον εἰς τὴν  
μεγέθη τῆ ἀμαρτυρίας,  
τότες ἢ πρὸς ἡσ-  
σα μίση εἰπτε εἰς τὸν  
Τάρατον, ὅθεν ἔποτε  
ἐκβαίνου. Plat. in Phaed.

Ὡς περ σὺ καλέσας  
αἰωνίως νομίζεις. ἔτα ἔ  
οὐ τὸν ἱερῶν ἐκείνων ἔση-  
γνηταὶ τελευταὶ τῆ ἑμ-  
σαγαγί (ε. ἀπὸ Ὀ-  
rigen. lib. 8.

Οἱ ὃ εἰδικε τὰ πᾶν  
αἰωνίως κακοῖς σὺ ἔσει-  
τα. II. ibid.

Thus all the *Creedenda*, or *Doctrines*, which the Christian Religion teaches:

## The Evidences of Natural

(that is, not only those *plain* Doctrines which it requires to be believed as fundamental and of necessity to eternal Salvation, but even *All* the Doctrines which it teaches as Matters of Truth;) are in the *First* place, though indeed many of them not discoverable by bare Reason unassisted with Revelation, yet, when discovered by Revelation, apparently most agreeable to sound and unprejudiced Reason.

† Τα τῆς πίστεως ἡμῶν,  
ταῖς κοιναῖς ἐνοιαῖς ἀρ-  
χῆθεν συναγορεύοντα. O-  
rigen. advers. celsi lib. 3.

Every one  
of them  
has a di-  
rect Ten-  
dency and  
powerful  
Influence  
to reform  
Mens Man-  
ners.

In the *next* place, Every one of these Doctrines, has a natural *Tendency*, and a direct and powerful *Influence*, to reform Mens Lives, and correct their Manners. This is the Great End, and ultimate Design, of all true Religion; and 'tis a very great and fatal Mistake, to think that any Doctrine or any Belief whatsoever, can be any otherwise of any Benefit to Men, than as it is fitted to promote this main End. *There was none of the Doctrines of our Saviour*, (as an \* excellent Prelate of our Church admirably expresses this matter) *calculated for the gratification of Mens idle Curiosities, the busying and amusing them with airy and useless Speculations; Much less were they intended for an Exercise of our Credulity, or a Tryal how far we could bring our Reason*

\* Arch Bp.  
of York's  
Sermon  
before the  
Queen on  
Christ-  
mas Day.  
1704.



Reason to submit to our Faith: But, as on the one Hand they were plain and simple, and such as by their agreeableness to the rational Faculties of Mankind, did highly recommend themselves to our Belief; so on the other Hand they had an immediate relation to Practise, and were the genuine Principles and Foundation upon which all humane and divine Virtues were naturally to be superstructed. Particularly; What can be a more necessary and excellent Foundation of true Religion, than That Doctrine which the Christian Religion clearly and distinctly teaches us, concerning the Nature and Attributes of the *One only true God*; without any of that Ambiguity and Doubtfulness, those various and inconsistent Opinions and Conjectures, those uncertain and oft-times false Reasonings concerning the Nature of God, which, notwithstanding the natural possibility of discovering very many of the Attributes of God by the Light of true Reason, did yet in Fact overspread the greatest part of the Heathen World with Polytheism or Atheism? What can be so certain a Preservative against Idolatry, and the Worship of false Gods; as the Doctrine, that *the Universe, the Heavens and the Earth, and all things contained therein, are the Creatures and Workmanship of the One true God, and have a continual dependence upon him for the Preservation of their*  
Being?

*Being?* What can be so sure a Ground of true Piety and Reliance upon God, as the clear Christian Doctrine concerning *Providence*, concerning God's perpetually governing and directing the Issues and Events of all Things, and inspecting with a more especial regard the moral Actions of Men: which Doctrine was perplexed by the Philosophers with endless Disputes. What can be so just a Vindication of the Goodness of God, and consequently so necessary in order to our maintaining in our Minds worthy and honourable Notions concerning him; as the Doctrine, that *God created Man at first Upright*, and that *the Original of all Evil and Misery is Sin?* the want of a clear Knowledge of which Truth, extremely perplexed the Heathen World, and made Many recur to that most absurd Fiction of a Self-existent *Evil Principle*. What can be a more proper Motive to Piety, than the Doctrine that *the Deluge* and other Remarkable Calamities which have befallen Mankind, were sent upon them by God's immediate Direction, as *Punishments* for their Wickedness? What can be a greater encouragement to the Practice of Holiness, than the Doctrine, that *God has at several times vouchsafed to make several particular Revelations of his Will to Men*, to instruct and support them more effectually

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ally in that Practise? But above all; What Doctrine could ever have been imagined so admirably fitted in all respects to promote all the Ends of true Religion, as that of the *Incar-*  
*nation of the Son of God?* Which way could Men have been filled with so deep a Sense of the Mercy and Love of God towards them, and have been instructed in all divine Truths in a Method so well accommodated to their present Infirmities; as by God's *sending his Only-begotten Son, to take upon him our Nature, and therein to make a general Revelation of the Will of God to Mankind?* How could the Honour and Dignity and Authority of the Laws of God have been so effectually vindicated, and at the same time so satisfactory an assurance of Pardon upon true Repentance have been given unto Men; as by this Method, of *the Son of God giving himself a Sacrifice and Expiation for Sin?* What could have been a more glorious Manifestation of the Mercy and Compassion of God, and at the same time a more powerful means to discountenance Mens Presumption, to discourage them from repeating their Transgressions, to give them a deep Sense of the heinous Nature of Sin, and of God's extreme Hatred and utter Irreconcilableness to it, and to convince them of the Excellency and  
Imper-



Importance of the Laws of God, and the indispensable Necessity of paying Obedience to them; than this Expedient of *saving Sinners by the Sufferings and Death of the Son of God, and by establishing with them a new and gracious Covenant upon the Merits of that Satisfaction?* How could Men be better encouraged, to begin a religious Life; than by having such a *Mediator, Advocate, and Intercessor* for them with God, to obtain Pardon of all their Frailties; and by being assured of the *Assistance of the Spirit of God*, to enable them to conquer all their corrupt Affections, and to be in them an effectual Principle of a heavenly and divine Life? In fine; What stronger and more powerful Motives could possibly have been contrived, to persuade Men to live virtuously, and to deter them from Vice; than the clear Discovery made to us in the Gospel, of *God's having appointed a Day, wherein he will judge the World in Righteousness, every Man according to his Works; and that they who have done well, shall be adjudged to everlasting Happiness; and they that have done evil, to endless Punishment:* of which the Light of Nature afforded Men but obscure Glimpses? And may we not here, upon the whole, appeal now even to our Adversaries themselves, whether in all and every one  
of

of these Doctrines there be not a more powerful, a more effectual Method laid down, for the reforming humane Nature, and obliging the whole World to forsake their Sins, and to lead holy and virtuous Lives; than was ever taught before: nay, or than was possible to have been contrived by all the Wit of Mankind? This is the great and highest recommendation of the Christian Doctrine: This is what, to a well-disposed Mind, would well-nigh satisfactorily prove, even without the addition of any external Testimony, that the Revelation of Christianity could not possibly but come from God; Seeing that, not only all its practical Precepts, but even all its *Articles of Belief* also, tend plainly to this one and the same End, to make Men universally amend and reform their Lives; to recover and restore them to their original excellent State, from the Corruption and Misery which had been introduced by Sin; and to establish upon Earth the Practise of everlasting Righteousness, and entire and hearty Obedience to the Will of God: Which would have been the Religion of Men (had they continued Innocent) in Paradise, and now is the Religion of Angels, and for ever will be the Religion of Saints in Heaven. Vain Men may value themselves upon their speculative Know-

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ledge,

ledge, right Opinions, and True and Orthodox Belief, separate from the Practise of Virtue and Righteousness; But, as sure as the Gospel is true, no Belief whatsoever shall finally be of any Advantage to Men, any otherwise than only so far as it corrects their Practise, hinders them from being *Workers of Iniquity*, and makes them like unto God.

Luk. 13, 7

*And All of them Together, make up the most consistent and rational Scheme of Belief in the World.*

*Lastly*, All the Doctrines of the Christian Faith, do *Together* make up an infinitely more *consistent and rational Scheme of Belief*, than any that the wisest of the Antient Philosophers ever *did*, or the cunningest of Modern Unbelievers *can* invent or contrive. This is evident from a summary View of the forementioned Scheme of the Christian Doctrines; wherein every Article has a just dependence on the foregoing ones, and a close connexion with those that follow; and the whole account of the Order and Disposition of Things from the Original to the Consummation of all Things, is one intricate, regular, complete, consistent, and every way a most rational Scheme: Whereas the Wisest of the *Antient Philosophers*, that is, those of them who hit upon the greatest Number of single Truths, and taught the fewest  
Abur-



Aburdities; were yet \* never able to make out any universal, entire, and coherent System of Doctrines, and Scheme of the *Whole* State of Things, with any manner of probability: And the cunningest of *Modern Deists*, (besides that they must needs in their own Way believe some particular Things stranger and in themselves more incredible than any of the fore-mentioned Christian Doctrines,) cannot in the whole, as has been before shown, frame to themselves any fixt and settled Principles, upon which to argue consistently; but must unavoidably either be perplexed with inextricable Aburdities, or confessedly recur to down-right Atheism. There have indeed even among Christians themselves, been many Differences and Disputes about particular Doctrines: But, (excepting such as have intolerably corrupted the very fundamental Doctrines, and even the main Design it self of the whole Christian Dispensation; of which there are too many Instances in Writers of the Romish Church especially;) these Disputes among Christians, have not been, like those among the Philosophers, *de rerum summa*, concerning the whole Scheme and System of things, but only concerning particular Explications

\*Diversa ac diversa omnia protulerunt, non annectentes nec causas rerum, nec consequentias nec rationes; ut *Summam* illam. quæ continet universa, & compingent & complerent. *Lat. Etant. lib. 7.*

of particular Doctrines; which kind of Disputes do not at all \* affect the Certainty of the whole Religion it self, nor ought in reason to be any manner of hinderance to the † Effect which the plain and weightier and confessedly more important fundamental Doctrines ought to have upon the Hearts and Lives of Men.

\* Sed perturbat nos opinionum varietas, hominumque dissentio; & quia non idem contingit in sententiis hos natura certos putamus; illa, quæ aliis sic, aliis secus. nec iidem semper uno modo videntur, ficta esse dicimus. Quod est longe aliter. Cic. de Legib. lib. 1.

† See above, pag. 242.

XIV. Fifthly; *As this Revelation, to the Judgment of right and sober Reason, appears of it self highly credible and probable; and abundantly recommends it self in its native Simplicity, merely by its own intrinsic goodness and excellency, to the practise 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 us from God; by the many infallible Signs and Miracles, which the Author of it worked publickly as the evidence of his divine Commission; by the exact completion both of the Prophecies that went before concerning him, and of those that He himself delivered concerning things that were*

to happen after; and by the Testimony of his Followers; which in all its Circumstances was the most credible, certain, and convincing Evidence, that was ever given to any matter of Fact in the World,

First, The Christian Revelation is positively and directly proved, to be actually and immediately sent to us from God, by the many infallible Signs and Miracles, which the Author of it worked publicly as the Evidence of his Divine Commission.

Besides the great Excellency and Reasonableness of the Doctrine considered in it self, of which we have already treated; It is here of no small moment to observe, that the Author of it (separate from all external Proof of his Divine Commission) appeared in all his Behaviour, Words and Actions, to be neither an

\* Impostor nor an Enthusiast. His Life was Innocent and Spotless, spent entirely in serving the Ends of Holiness and Charity, in doing good to the Souls and Bodies of Men, in exhorting them to Repentance, and inviting them to serve and glorifie God. When his bitterest Enemies accused him, in order to take away his Life; they could not charge

of the Life and Character of our Saviour, as we shall see in the following Chapter.

\* Πνεύματι δὲ αἰσθητοῦ  
ἐν πνεύματι αἰσθητοῦ πνεύματι  
ἵνα πνεύματι αἰσθητοῦ  
πνεύματι αἰσθητοῦ πνεύματι  
σωφροσύνης πνεύματι αἰσθητοῦ  
ἀλλ' αἰσθητοῦ αἰσθητοῦ πνεύματι  
πνεύματι αἰσθητοῦ πνεύματι  
αἰσθητοῦ πνεύματι αἰσθητοῦ  
πνεύματι αἰσθητοῦ πνεύματι  
c. 3.



him with any appearance of Vice or Immorality; And so far was he from being guilty of what they *did* accuse him of, namely of Vain-glory and attempting to move Sedition; that once, when the admiring People would by force have taken him and made him their King, he chose even to work a Miracle to avoid that, which was the only thing that could be imagined to have been the Design of an *Impostor*. In like manner, whoever seriously considers the Answers he gave to all Questions whether moral or captious, his occasional Discourses to his Disciples, and more especially the Wisdom and Excellency of his Sermon upon the Mount, which is as it were the System and Summary of his Doctrine, manifestly surpassing all the moral Instructions of the most celebrated Philosophers that ever lived; cannot, without the extremest Malice and Obstinacy in the World, charge him with *Enthusiasm*.

*Of the Miracles of Christ, as the Evidence of his Divine Commission.*

These Considerations cannot but add great Weight and Authority to his Doctrine, and make his own Testimony concerning himself exceedingly credible. But the *positive and direct* proof of his Divine Commission, are the *Miracles* which he worked for that purpose: His healing the Sick: His giving Sight to the Blind

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His casting out Devils: His raising the Dead: The Wonders that attended his Crucifixion: His own Resurrection from the Dead; His Appearance afterwards to his Disciples: And his Ascension visibly into Heaven.

These, and the rest of his stupendous Miracles, were, *to the Disciples that saw them*, sensible Demonstrations of our Lord's Divine Commission. And *to those who have lived since that Age*, they are as certain Demonstrations of the same Truth, as the Testimony of those first Disciples who were Eye-witnesses of them, is certain and true.

To the *Disciples that saw them*, these Miracles were sensible and compleat Demonstrations of our Lord's Divine Commission; because they were so *great* and so *many* and so *publick* and so *evident*, that it was absolutely impossible they should be the Effect of any *Art of Man*, of any *Chance* or *Fallacy*: And the Doctrine they were brought to confirm, was of so good and holy a Tendency, that it was impossible he should be inabled to work them by the Power and Assistance of *Evil Spirits*: So that consequently, they must of necessity have been performed, either *immediately* or *mediately*, by God himself.

*Of Miracles in general,*

But here, because there have been many Questions raised, and some Perplexity introduced, by the Disputes and different Opinions of learned Men, concerning the *Power of Working Miracles*, and concerning the *Extent of the Evidence* which Miracles give to the Truth of any Doctrine; And because it hath been much controverted, whether true Miracles can be worked by any less Power, than the immediate Power of God; and whether to compleat the Evidence of a Miracle, the Nature of the Doctrine pretended to be proved thereby, is requisite to be taken into the Consideration, or no: It may not perhaps be improper, upon this Occasion to endeavour to set this whole Matter in its true Light, as briefly and clearly as I can.

*That in respect of the Power of God, all things are alike easy.*

1<sup>st</sup> then, In respect of the *Power of God*, and in respect to the *Nature of the things themselves* absolutely speaking, all things that are possible at all, that is, which imply not a direct contradiction, are *equally and alike easy* to be done. The Power of God, extends equally to great things, as to small; and to many, as to few: And the one makes no more Difficulty at all, or Resistance to his Will, than the other.



'Tis not therefore a right Distinction, to define or distinguish a *Miracle* by any *absolute Difficulty* in the Nature of the thing it felt to be done; As if the things we call *natural*, were absolutely and in their own Nature easier to be effected, than those that we look upon as *miraculous*. On the contrary 'tis evident and undeniable, that 'tis at least as great an Act of Power, to cause *the Sun or a Planet to Move at all*; as to cause it to *stand still at any Time*: Yet this latter, we call a *Miracle*; the former not. And, to *restore the dead to Life*, which is an Instance of an extraordinary *Miracle*; is in it self plainly altogether as easy, as to dispose matter at first into such order, as to *form a humane Body* in that which we commonly call a *natural way*. So that absolutely speaking, in *This strict and philosophical Sense*; either *nothing* is *miraculous*, namely if we have respect to the Power of God; or, if we regard our own Power and Understanding, then almost *every thing*, as well what we call *natural*, as what we call *supernatural*, is in *this Sense* really *miraculous*; and 'tis only *usualness* or *unusualness* that makes the distinction.

That therefore Miracles ought not to be defined by a subjective difficulty in the nature of the things themselves to be done.

2. What degrees of Power God may reasonably be supposed to have communicated

What degrees of Power, God

*may have communicated to Created Beings, is not possible for us to determine.*

communicated to *Created Beings*, to *subordinate Intelligences*, to *good or evil Angels*; is by no means possible for us to determine. Some Things absolutely impossible for *Men* to effect, 'tis evident may easily be within the natural Powers of *Angels*; and some Things beyond the Power of *inferiour Angels*, may as easily be supposed to be within the Natural Power of others that are *superiour* to them; and so on. So that, excepting the *original Power of Creating*, which we cannot indeed conceive communicable to Things which were themselves created; we can hardly affirm *with any Certainty*, that any particular Effect, how great or miraculous soever it may seem to us, is beyond the Power of all *Created Beings* in the Universe to have produced.

*That therefore a Miracle is not rightly defined to be such an effect, as could not have been produced by any less Power than the Divine Omnipotence.*

'Tis not therefore a right Distinction, to define a *Miracle* (as some very learned and very pious Men have done,) to be such an Effect, as could not have been produced by any less Power than the *Divine Omnipotence*. There is no Instance of any *Miracle* in Scripture, which to an ordinary Spectator would necessarily imply an immediate Creation of something out of nothing: And consequently such a Spectator could never be *certain*, that the miraculous Effect was beyond the Power of all created

ated Beings in the Universe to produce. There is one Supposition indeed, upon which the Opinion of *all Miracles being necessarily the immediate Effects of the Divine Omnipotence*, may be defended; And that is, if God, together with the natural Powers wherewith he hath indued all subordinate Intelligent Beings, has likewise given a Law or Restraint, whereby they be hindred from ever interposing in this lower World, to produce any of those Effects which we call miraculous or supernatural: But then, how certain soever it is, that all Created Beings are under some particular Laws and Restraints; yet it can never be proved, that they are under such Restraints universally, perpetually, and without exception: And without this, a Spectator that sees a Miracle, can never be certain that it was not done by some Created Intelligence. Reducing the natural Power of Created Beings to as low a degree as any one can desire to suppose, will help nothing in this matter; For, supposing (which is very unreasonable to suppose) that the natural Powers of the highest Angels, were no greater than the natural Powers of Men; yet since thereby an Angel would be inabled to do all That invisibly; which a Man can do visibly; he would even in  
this



this Supposition be naturally able to do numberless things, which we should esteem the greatest of Miracles.

All things that are done in the World, are done either immediately by God himself, or by created Intelligent Beings; Matter being capable of no Laws or Powers. And consequently there is, properly speaking, no such thing as the Course or Power of Nature.

FE 17.

3. All things that are Done in the World, are done either immediately by God himself, or by *created Intelligent Beings*: Matter being evidently not at all capable of any *Laws* or *Powers* whatsoever, any more than it is capable of Intelligence; excepting only this *One Negative Power*, that every part of it will, of it self, always and necessarily continue in that State, whether of *Rest* or *Motion*, wherein it at present is. So that all those things which we commonly say are the Effects of the *Natural Powers of Matter*, and *Laws of Motion*; of *Gravitation*, *Attraction*, or the like; are indeed (if we will speak strictly and properly) the Effects of *God's* acting upon Matter continually and every moment, either immediately by himself, or mediately by some created intelligent Beings: (Which Observation, by the by, furnishes us, as has been before noted, with an excellent natural Demonstration of *Providence*.) Consequently there is no such thing, as what Men commonly call the *Course of Nature*, or the *Power of Nature*. The *Course of Nature*, truly and properly speaking, is nothing else but the *Will of God* producing certain Effects

Effects in a continued, regular, constant and uniform Manner: Which Course or Manner of Acting, being in every Moment perfectly *Arbitrary*, is as easie to be *altered* at any time, as to be *preserved*. And if, (as seems most probable,) this continual Acting upon Matter, be performed by the subserviency of created Intelligences, appointed to that purpose by the Supreme Creator; then it is as easy for any of them, and as much within their natural Power, (by the Permission of God,) to *alter* the Course of Nature at any time, or in any respect; as it is to *preserve* or *continue* it.

'Tis not therefore a right Distinction, to define a *Miracle* to be That which is *against the Course of Nature*: meaning by the *Course of Nature*, the *Power of Nature*, or the *Natural Powers of Created Agents*. For, in this Sense, 'tis no more against the Course of Nature, for an Angel to *keep a Man from sinking in the Water*, than for a Man to *hold a Stone from falling in the Air*, by over-powering the Law of Gravitation; And yet the one is a *Miracle*, the other not so. In like manner, 'tis no more above the natural Power of a created Intelligence, to *stop the Motion of the Sun* or of a Planet, than to *continue to carry it on in its usual Course*; And

*That therefore a Miracle is not rightly defined to be That which is against the Course of Nature, or above the natural Powers of Created Agents.*

And yet the former is a Miracle, the latter not so. But if by the *Course of Nature*, be meant only (as it truly signifies) *the constant and uniform manner* of Gods acting either immediately or mediately in preserving and continuing the Order of the World; then, in that Sense, indeed a Miracle may be rightly defined to be an Effect produced contrary to the usual Course or Order of Nature, by the unusual Interposition of some Intelligent Being Superiour to Men; as I shall have occasion presently to observe more particularly.

*The unreasonableness of those who deny the Possibility of Miracles in general.*

And from this Observation, we may easily discover the Vanity and Unreasonableness of that obstinate Prejudice, which Modern Deists have universally taken up, against the Belief of Miracles in general. They see that things generally go on in a constant and regular Method; that the Frame and Order of the World, is preserved by things being disposed and managed in an Uniform manner; that certain Causes produce certain Effects in a continued Succession, according to certain fixed Laws or Rules; And from hence they conclude, very weakly and unphilosophically, that there are in *Matter* certain necessary *Laws* or *Powers*, the Result of which is That which they call the *Course of Nature*, which they think is impossible to be changed



changed or altered, and consequently that there can be no such thing as *Miracles*. Whereas on the contrary, if they would consider things duly; they could not but see, that dull and lifeless Matter is utterly incapable of obeying any *Laws*, or of being indued with any *Powers*; and that therefore That Order and Disposition of Things, which they vulgarly call the *Course of Nature*, cannot possibly be any thing else, but the *Arbitrary Will and Pleasure of God* exerting it self and acting upon Matter continually, either immediately by it self, or mediately by some subordinate Intelligent Agents, according to certain Rules of uniformity and proportion, fixed indeed and constant, but which yet are made such merely by Arbitrary Constitution, not by any manner of Necessity in the things themselves; as has been abundantly proved in my *former Discourse*: And consequently it cannot be denied, but that it is altogether as easy to *alter the Course of Nature*, as to *preserve* it; that is, that *Miracles*, excepting only that they are more unusual, are in *themselves*, and in the *Nature and Reason of the thing*, as credible in all respects, and as easy to be believed, as any of those we call natural Effects.

Some Effects prove the constant Providence of God, and Others prove the occasional Interposition either of God himself, or of some Intelligent Agent Superior to Man.

4. Those Effects which are produced in the World *regularly and constantly*, which we call the *Works of Nature*, prove to us in general, the Being, the Power, and the other Attributes of God. Those Effects, which, upon any *rare and extraordinary Occasion*, are produced in such manner, that 'tis manifest they could neither have been done by any *Power or Art of Man*, nor by what we call *Chance*, that is, by any Composition or result of those Laws which are Gods *constant and uniform* Actings upon Matter; These undeniably prove to us the immediate and *occasional* Interposition either of God himself, or at least of some intelligent Agent Superior to Men, at that particular Time, and on that particular Account. For example: The regular and continual Effects of the *Power of Gravitation*, and of the *Laws of Motion*; of the *Mechanick*, and of the *Animal Powers*; All these prove to us in general, the Being, the Power, the Presence, and the constant Operation, either immediate or mediate, of God in the World. But if, upon any particular Occasion, we should see a *Stone suspended in the Air*, or a *Man walking upon the Water*, without any visible support; a *chronical Disease cured with a word speaking*, or a *dead and corrupted Body restored to life in a moment*; We could not then

then

then doubt, but there was an *extraordinary* Interposition either of God himself; in order to signify his Pleasure upon that particular Occasion; or at least of some Intelligent Agent far superiour to Man, in order to bring about some particular Design.

5. Whether such an Extraordinary Interposition of some Power Superiour to Men, be the immediate Interposition of *God himself*, or of some *good Angel*, or of some *evil Angel*; can hardly be distinguished certainly, merely by the *Work or Miracle it self*: (except there be a plain *Creation* of something out of nothing, which, as I have said, there does not *certainly* appear to be in any of the Miracles recorded in Scripture:) Because it is impossible for Us to know with any *certainty*, either that the natural Power of good Angels, or of evil ones, extends not beyond such or such a certain Limit; or that God always restrains them from exercising their natural Powers in producing such or such particular Effects. Some singular Miracles, such as *Raising the Dead*, there is indeed all the Reason in the World to believe are absolutely beyond the power of evil Spirits to effect; because we have all Reason to believe, that the Souls of Men are in the Hand of God, and cannot be removed by the na-

*Whether such Interposition be the immediate Work of God, or of some Good or Evil Angel, can hardly be distinguished merely by the Work it self.*



tural Power of any inferior Beings: But there are not many other Instances, wherein we can *certainly* say or determine, that this or that particular thing is absolutely beyond the natural Power of Good or Evil Spirits.

*That there is no reason to suppose all the Wonders worked by Evil Spirits, to be mere Delusions.*

'Tis not therefore a right Distinction, to suppose the Wonders which the Scripture attributes to evil Spirits, to be meer *Præstigiæ*, *Sleights*, or *Delusions*. For if the Devil has any natural Power of doing any thing at all, even but so much as the meanest of Men; and be not restrained by God from exercising that natural Power; 'tis evident he will be able, by reason of his Invisibibility, to work *true and real Miracles*. Neither is it a right Distinction, to suppose the Miracles of Evil Spirits, not to be *real Effects* in the things where they appear, but *Impositions upon the Senses* of the Spectators: For to impose in this manner upon the Senses of Men, (not by Sleights and Delusions; but by really so affecting the Organs of Sense, as to make things appear what they are not;) is to all Intents and Purposes as *true* a Miracle, and as *great* an one, as making real Changes in the Things themselves.

*How we are to distinguish Miracles*

6. When therefore upon any particular Occasion; for instance, when at the Will of a Person who teaches some

some

ome new Doctrine as coming from God, and in Testimony to the Truth of that Doctrine, there is plainly and manifestly an Interposition of some *Superiour* Power, producing such miraculous Effects as have been before mentioned: The only possible ways, by which a Spectator may certainly and infallibly distinguish, whether those Miracles be indeed the Works either immediately of God himself, or, (which is the very same thing,) of some good Angel employed by him; and consequently the Doctrine witnessed by the Miracles, be infallibly true and divinely attested; Or whether, on the contrary, the Miracles be the Works of Evil Spirits, and consequently the Doctrine a Fraud and Imposition upon Men: The only possible ways (I say) of distinguishing this matter certainly and infallibly, are these. *If* the Doctrine attested by Miracles, be in it self *impious*, or manifestly *tending to promote Vice*; then without all question the Miracles, how great soever they may appear to Us, are neither wrought by God himself, nor by his Commission; because our natural Knowledge of the Attributes of God, and of the necessary difference between Good and Evil, is greatly of more force to prove any such Doctrine to be false, than any Miracles in the World can be to

wrought by  
God for the  
proof of any  
Doctrine,  
from the  
Frauds of  
Evil Spi-  
rits.

Deut. 13,  
1, &c.

prove it true: As for example, suppose a Man pretending to be a Prophet, should work any Miracle, or give any Sign or Wonder whatsoever, in order to draw Men from the Worship of the True God, and tempt them to Idolatry, and to the Practise of such Vices, as in all Heathen Nations have usually attended the Worship of False Gods; nothing can be more infallibly certain, than that such Miracles ought at first sight to be rejected as Diabolical. If the Doctrine attested by Miracles, be in it self indifferent, that is, such as cannot by the Light of Nature and right Reason alone, be certainly known whether it be true or false; and at the same time, in opposition to it, and in proof of the direct contrary Doctrine, there be wrought other Miracles, more and greater than the former, or at least attended with such Circumstances, as evidently show the Power by which these latter are worked, to be superiour to the Power that worked the former; then that Doctrine which is attested by the *Superiour Power*, must necessarily be believed to be Divine: This was the Case of *Moses*, and the *Ægyptian Magicians*: The *Magicians* worked several Miracles to prove that *Moses* was an Impostor, and not sent of God; *Moses*, to prove his Divine Commission,



Commission, worked Miracles *more* and *greater* than theirs; or else (which is the very same thing,) the Power by which *He* worked his Miracles, restrained the Power by which *They* worked theirs, from being able at that time to work all the same Miracles that *He* did; and so appeared evidently the *Superiour Power*: Wherefore it was necessarily to be believed, that *Moses's* Commission was truly from God. *If*, in the last place, the Doctrine attested by Miracles, be such as in its own Nature and Consequences tends to promote the Honour and Glory of God, and the practise of universal Righteousness amongst Men; and yet nevertheless be not in it self demonstrable, nor could without Revelation have been discovered to be actually true; (or even if it was but only indifferent in it self, and such as could not be proved to be any way contrary to, or inconsistent with these great Ends;) and there be no pretense of more or greater Miracles on the opposite Side, to contradict it; (Which is the Case of the *Doctrine* and *Miracles* of *Christ*;) Then the Miracles are unquestionably Divine, and the Doctrine must without all controversy be acknowledged as an immediate and infallible Revelation from God: Because, (besides Matt. 12. that it cannot be supposed that Evil 25.

Spirits would overthrow their own Power and Kingdom;) should God in such Cases as these, permit Evil Spirits to work Miracles to impose upon Men, the Errour would be absolutely invincible; and That would in all respects be the very same thing, as if God worked the Miracles to deceive Men himself. No Man can doubt, but Evil Spirits, if they have any natural Powers at all, have power to destroy Mens *Bodies* and *Lives*, and to bring upon Men innumerable other Calamities; which yet in Fact 'tis evident God restrains them from doing, by having set them Laws and Bounds which they cannot pass. Now, for the very same Reason, it is infinitely certain that God restrains them likewise from imposing upon Men's *Minds* and *Understandings*, in all such Cases where Wise and Honest and Virtuous Men would have no possible way left, by which they could discover the Imposition.

*The difference between those who teach that the immediate power of God is, or is not, necessarily requisite to the working of a Miracle;*

And here at last the difference between Those who believe that all Miracles necessarily require the immediate Power of God himself to effect them, and those who believe created Spirits able to work Miracles, is not very great. They who believe all Miracles to be effected only by the *immediate Power of God*, must do it upon this

Ground,

Ground, that they suppose God by a perpetual Law restrains all subordinate intelligent Agents from interposing at any time to alter the regular course of things in this lower World; (for to say that created Spirits have not otherwise a *Natural Power*, when *unrestrained*, to do what we call Miracles; is saying that those invisible Agents have no Power naturally to do any thing at all.) And they who believe that *subordinate Beings have Power* to work Miracles, must yet of necessity suppose that God restrains them in all such Cases at least, where there would not be sufficient Marks left, by which the Frauds of evil Spirits could be clearly distinguished from the Testimony and Commission of God.

*is not very great at bottom.*

And now from these few clear and undeniable Propositions, it evidently follows;

1<sup>st</sup>. That the true *Definition* of a *Miracle*, in the *Theological* Sense of the Word, is this; that it is a work effected in a manner *unusual*, or different from the common and regular Method of Providence, by the interposition either of God himself, or of some Intelligent Agent superiour to Man, for the Proof or Evidence of some particular Doctrine, or in attestation to the Authority

*The true Definition of a Miracle.*



rity of some particular Person. And if a Miracle so worked, be not opposed by some plainly superiour Power; nor be brought to attest a Doctrine either *contradictory* in it self, or *vitious* in its consequences; (a Doctrine of which kind, no Miracles in the World can be sufficient to prove;) then the Doctrine so attested must necessarily be lookt upon as Divine, and the Worker of the Miracle entertained as having infallibly a Commission from God.

*The strength of the Evidence of our Saviours Miracles.*

2. From hence it appears, that the compleat *Demonstration* of our Saviours being a Teacher sent from God, was, to the Disciples who *saw his Miracles*, plainly This: That the *Doctrine* he taught, being in it self possible, and in its consequences Tending to promote the Honour of God and true Righteousness among Men; and the *Miracles* he worked, being such, that there neither was nor could be any pretense of more or greater Miracles to be set up in opposition to them; it was as infallibly certain that he had truly a Divine Commission, as it was certain that God would not himself impose upon Men anecessary and invincible Error.

*Concerning the Objection, that*

3. From hence it appears how little reason there is, to object, as some have done, that we prove in a Circle

Circle the *Doctrines* by the *Miracles*, we prove in  
and the *Miracles*, by the *Doctrines*. a Circle  
the *Miracles*  
by the  
*Doctrines*,  
For the *Miracles*, in this way of  
reasoning, are not at all proved by  
the *Doctrines*; but only the *Possibility* and the  
*Doctrines* by  
the *Miracles*.  
and the good *Tendency*, or at least the  
*Indifferency* of the *Doctrines*, are a  
necessary Condition or Circumstance,  
without which the *Doctrines* is not  
capable of being proved by any  
*Miracles*. They are indeed the *Miracles*  
only, that prove the *Doctrines*;  
and not the *Doctrines*, that prove  
the *Miracles*: But then in order to  
this End, that the *Miracles* may prove  
the *Doctrines*, it is always necessarily  
to be first supposed that the *Doctrines*  
be such as is in its nature capable  
of being proved by *Miracles*. The  
*Doctrines* must be in it self *possible* and  
*capable to be proved*, and then *Miracles*  
will prove it to be *actually and*  
*certainly true*. The *Doctrines* is not  
first known or supposed to be *true*,  
and then the *Miracles* proved by it;  
But the *Doctrines* must be first known to  
be such as is *possible to be true*, and then  
*Miracles* will prove that it *actually*  
is so. Some *Doctrines* are in their  
own nature *necessarily and demonstrably*  
*true*, such as are all those which con-  
cern the obligation of plain *moral*  
*Precepts*; And these neither need nor  
can receive any stronger proof from  
Miracles,

Miracles, than what they have already (though not perhaps so clearly indeed to all Capacities,) from the Evidence of right Reason. Other Doctrines are in their own Nature necessarily false and impossible to be true; such as are all *Absurdities and Contradictions*, and all Doctrines that tend to promote *Vice*; And these can never receive any degree of proof, from all the Miracles in the World. Lastly, Other Doctrines are in their own Nature *indifferent*, or *possible*, or perhaps *probable* to be true; And these could not have been known to be positively true, but by the Evidence of Miracles, which prove them to be certain. To apply this to the *Doctrine and Miracles of Christ*. The moral part of our Saviours Doctrine would have appeared infallibly true, whether he had ever worked any Miracles or no. The rest of his Doctrine was what evidently Tended to promote the Honour of God, and the practise of Righteousness amongst Men: Therefore That part also of his Doctrine, was possible and very probable to be true; But yet it could not from thence be known to be certainly true, nor ought to have been received as a Revelation from God, unless it had been proved by undeniable *Miracles*. And the Miracles he worked, did indeed undeniably



ably prove it to be the Doctrine of God. Nevertheless, had his Doctrine in any part of it been either absurd and contradictory in it self, or vicious in its Tendency and Consequences; no Miracles could then possibly have proved it to have been true. 'Tis evident therefore that the Nature of the Doctrine to be proved, must be taken into the Consideration, as a necessary Circumstance; and yet, that only the *Miracles* are properly the Proof of the *Doctrine*; and not the *Doctrine*, of the *Miracles*.

4. From hence it follows, that the pretended Miracles of *Apollonius Tyaneus*, *Aristeas Proconnesius*, and some few others among the Heathens, even supposing them to have been *true Miracles*, (which yet there is no Reason at all to believe, because they are very poorly attested, and are in themselves very mean and trifling, as has been fully shown by *Eusebius* in his Book against *Hierocles*, and by many late Writers; but supposing them, I say, to have been *true Miracles*;) yet they will prove nothing at all to the disadvantage of Christianity; Because they were worked either without any pretense of confirming any new Doctrine at all; or else to prove absurd and foolish Things; or to establish Idolatry and the Worship of

*Of the pretended Miracles of Apollonius and others.*

of False Gods; And consequently they could not be done by the divine Power and Authority, nor bear any kind of \* comparison with the Miracles of Christ, which were worked to attest a Doctrine that tended in the highest degree to promote the Honour of God and the general Reformation of Mankind.

\* Διὰ τὴν ἐχὶ καὶ βεβαιω-  
σασμένως τὰς ἐπαγγελ-  
λουμένας τὰς δυνάμεις ἐξ-  
ετάσμεν ἀπὸ τῶν βίβ. καὶ  
τῶν ἡθῶν καὶ τῶν ἐκκολλῶ-  
σάντων ταῖς δυνάμεισιν,  
ἢ τὴν εἰς βλάβην τῶν ἀν-  
θρώπων, ἢ εἰς ἡθῶν ἐπα-  
ρόσητον; Origen. advers.  
Cels. lib. 2.

Μέτρον τίνω σαυτὸν  
εἴπας τῶν περὶ τῶν Ἄρειέκ γνομῶν, καὶ τῶν περὶ τῶν Ἰησοῦ  
ἰσορρομῶν, ἴδε εἰ μὴ ἐκ τῶν ἀποβάντων, καὶ τῶν ὠφελεσκύων  
εἰς ἡθῶν ἐπανόρθωσιν καὶ εὐλαβίαν τὴν πρὸς τὸ ἐπὶ πᾶσι θεῶν,  
εἶπεν εἶπεν ὅτι πᾶσι μὴ ὡς ἐκ ἀθεῖ γνομένοις τοῖς  
κατὰ Ἰησοῦ ἰσορρομοῖς, ἐχὶ τῶν τοῖς περὶ τῶν Προκορησικῶν Ἄρει-  
έκ. Τὸ μὲν γὰρ βελομένη ἢ πρὸς τὸν Ἄρειέκ  
περὶ τῶν ἐπαγγελμάτων, καὶ τὴν ὠφελεσκύων τῶν ἀνθρώπων  
γίνεται βελομένη, τὰ τηλικαῦτα (ὡς αἰεὶ) ἐπεδείκνυτο, ἐκ ἑχῆς  
ἀέγειν. Id. lib. 3.

To return therefore to the Argument. The Miracles (I say) which our Saviour wrought, were, *to the Disciples that saw them*, sensible Demonstrations of his Divine Commission. And *to those who have lived since that Age*, they are as certain Demonstrations of the same Truth, as the *Testimony* of those first Disciples who were Eye-witnesses of them, is certain and true: *Which I shall have occasion to consider presently.*

Secondly,

Secondly, The Divine Authority of the Christian Revelation, is positively and directly proved, by the *Exact Completion* both of all those Prophecies that went before concerning our Lord, and of those that He Himself delivered concerning things that were to happen after.

*Of the fulfilling the Prophecies, as an Evidence of our Saviour's Divine Commission.*

Concerning the Messiah it was foretold, (Gen. 49, 10,) that he should come, before the Scepter departed from Judah: And accordingly Christ appeared a little before the Time, when the Jewish Government was totally destroyed by the Romans. It was foretold that he should come before the Destruction of the second Temple, (Hagg. 2, 7;) *The Desire of all Nations shall come, and I will fill this House with Glory, saith the Lord of Hosts; The Glory, of this latter House shall be greater than of the former:* And accordingly Christ appeared, some time before the Destruction of the City and Temple. It was foretold that he should come at the End of 490 Years, after the rebuilding of Jerusalem which had been laid waste during the Captivity, (Dan. 9, 24;) and that he should be cut off; and that, after That, the City and Sanctuary should be destroyed and made desolate: And accordingly, at what time soever the beginning of the four hundred and ninety Years can, according

*Of the Prophecies that went before, concerning the Messiah.*



## *The Evidences of Natural*

ding to any Interpretation of the Words, be fixt; the End of them will fall about the Time of Christ's appearing; and 'tis well known how entirely the *City and Sanctuary* were *destroyed* some Years after *his being cut off*. It was foretold that he should do many great and beneficial Miracles; that *the Eyes of the Blind* (Isai. 35, 5,) *should be opened, and the Ears of the Deaf unstopped; that the lame Man should leap as an Hart, and the Tongue of the Dumb sing*: And this was literally fulfilled in the Miracles of Christ; *The Blind received their Sight*, (Matt. 11. 5,) *and the Lame walked; the Deaf heard, &c.* It was foretold that he should die a violent death, (Isai. 53, throughout,) and *That not for himself*, (Dan. 9. 26,) *but for our Transgressions*, (Isai. 53; 5, 6, & 12,) *for the Iniquity of us all, and that he might bear the Sin of many*: All which, was exactly accomplished in the Sufferings of Christ. It was foretold, (Gen. 49, 10,) *that to him should the gathering of the People be*, and (Psal. 2, 8,) *that God would give him the Heathen for his Inheritance, and the utmost Parts of the Earth for his Possession*: which was punctually fulfilled by the wonderful Success of the Gospel, and its universal spreading through the World. Lastly, Many minuter Circumstances were

were foretold of the Messiah; that he should be of the *Tribe of Judah*, and of the *Seed of David*; that he should be born in the *Town of Bethlehem* (*Mic. 5, 2*;) that he should *ride upon an Ass* in humble *Triumph* into the *City of Jerusalem*, (*Zech. 9, 9*;) that he should be *sold for thirty pieces of Silver*, (*Zech. 11, 12*;) that he should be *Scourged, Buffeted, and Spit upon*, (*Isai. 50, 6*;) that his *Hands and Feet* should be *pierced*, (*Psal. 22, 16*;) that he should be *numbered among Malefactors*, (*Isai. 53, 12*;) that he should have *Gall and Vinegar* offered him to drink, (*Psal. 69, 21*;) that they who saw him crucified, should *mock at him*, and at his *trusting in God to deliver him*, (*Psal. 22, 8*;) that the *Soldiers* should *cast Lots for his Garments*, (*Psal. 22, 18*;) that he should *make his Grave with the Rich*, (*Isai. 53, 9*;) and that he should *rise again without seeing Corruption*, (*Psal. 16, 10*.) All which *Circumstances* were fulfilled to the greatest possible exactness, in the *Person of Christ*: Not to mention the numberless *typical Representations*, which had likewise evidently their complete *Accomplishment in Him*. And 'tis no less evident, that none of these *Prophecies* can possibly be applied to any other *Person*, that ever pretended to be the *Messiah*.

Further;

*of the Prophecies that Christ himself delivered concerning things that were to happen after.*

Further; The Prophecies or Predictions which Christ delivered Himself, concerning things that were to happen *after*; are no less strong Proofs of the Truth and Divine Authority of his Doctrine, than the Prophecies were, which went *before* concerning Him. He did very particularly and at several times foretell his own Death, and the Circumstances of it, (*Matt. 16, 21;*) that the *chief Priests and Scribes should condemn him to Death, and deliver him to the Gentiles, that is, to Pilate and the Roman Soldiers, to mock and scourge and crucify him, (Matt. 20, 18 & 19;)* that he should be *betrayed* into their Hands, (*Matt. 20, 18;*) that *Judas Iscariot* was the person who would *betray him*, (*Matt. 26, 23;*) that all his Disciples would *forsake him and flee*, (*Matt. 26, 31;*) that *Peter* particularly, would *thrice deny him in one Night*, (*Mar. 14, 30.*) He foretold further, that he would *rise again the third Day*. (*Matt. 16, 21;*) that after his Ascension, he would send down the Holy Ghost upon his Apostles, (*Joh. 15, 26;*) which should enable them to work many Miracles, (*Mar. 16, 17.*) He foretold also *the Destruction of Jerusalem* with such very particular Circumstances, in the whole 24th Chapter of *St Matthew*, and the 13th of *St Mark*, and 21st of *St Luke*; that



no Man who reads *Josephus's* History of that dreadful and unparalleled Calamity, can, without the greatest Obstinacy imaginable, doubt of our Saviours divine Fore-knowledge. Lastly, He foretold likewise many particulars concerning the future Success of the Gospel, and what should happen to several of his Disciples: He foretold what Opposition and Persecution they should meet withal in their preaching, (*Matt.* 10, 17;) He foretold what particular kind of Death *St Peter* should die, (*Joh.* 21, 18;) and hinted, that *St John* should live till after the destruction of Jerusalem, (*Joh.* 21, 22;) and foretold, that notwithstanding all Opposition and Persecutions, the Gospel should yet have such Success, as to spread it self over the World, (*Matt.* 16, 18; 24, 14; 28, 19.) All and every one of which particulars, were exactly accomplished, without failing in any respect.

Some of these things are of permanent and visible Effects, even unto this Day. Particularly the captivity and dispersion of the Jews, through all Nations, for more than 1600 Years; and yet their continuing a distinct People, in order to the fulfilling the Prophecies of things still future: This (I say) is particularly a permanent Proof of the Truth of the Antient Prophecies. But the greatest part of the Instances above-mentioned, were *sensible and ocular Demonstrations* of the Truth of our Lords Doctrine, only to

*Of the Testimony of our Saviours Disciples, as an Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Revelation.*

*What things are requisite to make the Testimony of our Saviours Disciples a complete Evidence.*

*That the Apostles could not be imposed upon, themselves.*

those persons who lived at the Time when they happened. Wherefore,

*Thirdly,* The chief Evidence of the Facts on which the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Revelation depends, to *Us who live now at this distance of Time,* is the *Testimony of our Saviours 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.

To make the Testimony of our Saviours Followers a sufficient Evidence to Us in This Case, there can be required but these three things. 1<sup>st</sup>. That it be certain, the Apostles could not be imposed upon *Themselves.* 2. That it be certain, they neither had nor could have any design to impose upon *Others.* And 3. That it be certain, their Testimony is *truly conveyed down* to us, unto this Day. All which things are indeed abundantly certain, and clear enough to satisfy any reasonable and unprejudiced Person.

For 1. That the Apostles could not be imposed upon *Themselves,* is evident from what has been already said concerning the *Nature* and *Number* and *Publickness* of our Saviours *Miracles.* They conversed from the beginning with our Saviour himself; They *heard* with their Ears, and *saw* with their Eyes; they *looked upon,* and they *handled with their Hands* of the *Word of Life,* as St *John* expresses it,

it, *John* 1, 1. They saw all the *Prophecies* of the Old Testament precisely fulfilled in his *Life* and *Doctrine*, his *Sufferings* and *Death*. They saw him confirm what he taught, with such *mighty* and *evident* Miracles, as his bitterest and most malicious Enemies could not but confess to be supernatural, even at the same time that they obstinately blasphemed the Holy Spirit that wrought them. They saw him *alive* after his *Passion*, by many *infallible Proofs*; he appearing, not only to one or two, but to all the Eleven, several times, and once to above five hundred together. And this, not merely in a transient manner; but they conversed with him familiarly for no less than forty Days; and at last they beheld him ascend visibly into Heaven; and quickly after, they received the Spirit, according to his Promise. These were such sensible *Demonstrations* of his being a Teacher sent from Heaven, and consequently that his Doctrine was an immediate and express Revelation of the Will of God; that if the Apostles, even though they had been Men of the *weakest* Judgments and *strongest* Imaginations that can be supposed, could be all and every one of them deceived in all these several Instances; Men can have no use of their Senses, nor any possible Proof of any Facts whatsoever; nor any means to distinguish the best attested Truths in



the World, from Enthusiastick Imaginations.

*That the Apostles could have no design of imposing upon others.*

2. It is certain, the Apostles neither had nor could have any design of imposing upon Others. This is evident both from the Nature of the things they did and suffered, and from the Characters of the Persons themselves. They confirmed what they taught, by *Signs and Miracles*: they *lived* according to the Doctrine they *preached*, though manifestly contrary to all the Interests and Pleasures of this present World; and, which Deceivers can never be supposed to do, they *died* with all imaginable cheerfulness and joy of Mind, for the Testimony of their Doctrine, and the confirmation of their Religion. They were innocent and plain Men, Men that had no bad *Ends* to serve, nor *Preferment* to hope for in the World. Their Religion it self taught them to expect, not dominion and glory, not the praise of Men, not riches and honour, not power and ease, not pleasure nor profit; but poverty and want, trouble and vexation, persecution and oppression, imprisonments, banishments and death. These things are not the marks and tokens of Impostors. Besides; the *Success and Event* of their Undertaking; that plain and illiterate Men should be able to preach their Doctrine

ctrine

Strine to many different Nations of different Languages, and prevail also in establishing the Belief of it; that they should all agree exactly in their Testimony, and none of them be prevailed upon either by Hopes or Fears to desert their Companions and discover the Imposture, if there had been any; These things plainly show, that their Doctrine was more than Humane, and not a Contrivance to impose upon the World. This Argument is excellently urged by Eusebius; Is it a thing possible to be conceived, saith \* he, that Deceivers and unlearned Men, Men that understood no other Language but their Mother-tongue, should ever think of attempting so extravagant a thing, as to travel over all Nations? and not only so, but that they should be able also to accomplish their design, and establish their doctrine in all parts of the World? Consider moreover how remarkable a thing it is, that they should in no respect disagree one from another, in the Account they gave of the Actions of Christ. For if in all Questions of Fact, and in all

\* Καὶ κεῖνο ὃ πῶς ἔμεσον ἐκ πλήξεως, τὸ πλεονες ἀνδρας καὶ ἰδιώτας μήτε λαλεῖν μήτε ἀκούειν πλέον τῆς ματρίας φωνῆς ὀπίσθια μένους, μὴ μόνον διὰ νοηθῆναι τολμήσαι παρελθεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν τῶν ἐθνῶν ἀπάντων περίοδον, ἀλλὰ καὶ παρελθόντας κατορθώσαι τὸ ἐπιήδευμα; σκέψαι ὃ, ὅποῖον ἔστι, καὶ τὸ μηδένα μηδαμῶς διαφωνοῦν ἐξενεγκεῖν πρὸς τῶν προφητῶν Ἰησοῦ λόγον εἰ καὶ ἐπὶ πάντων ἀμφιγνωσμένων πραγμάτων, ἔστω τοῖς κατὰ νόμους δικαστηρίοις, καὶ ἐν ταῖς κοιναῖς ἀμφισβηήσεσι, τῶν μαρτύρων συμφωνία κυρτὴ τὸ ἀμφιγνωσόμενον πῶς ἔστι ἀνὴρ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν δεσυσταῖν, δώδεκα μὲν ὄντων Ἀποστόλων, ἐβδμή.

κον τα ἡ Μαθητῶν, μυρία  
 τὲ πλῆθος τέκνον ἐκτός,  
 ἀπ' ὧτων θαυμαστῶ συμ-  
 φωνίαν ἐπιδειγμένων,  
 καὶ μαρτυρησάντων γε τοῖς  
 ὑπο τῷ Ἰησοῦ πετραγμέ-  
 νοις, ἐκ ἀνιδρωτῆ, διὰ  
 τῆ βασιλῆων ὑπομονῆς καὶ  
 πάσης αἰκίας καὶ θανάτου;  
 Euseb. Demonstrat. Evang.  
 lib. 3. cap. 2.

Trials at Law, and in all  
 ordinary Disputes, the agree-  
 ment of several Witnesses  
 is always accounted suffici-  
 ent to determine satisfacto-  
 rily the Matter in Questi-  
 on; is it not an abun-  
 dant Evidence of the Truth  
 in This case, that Twelve  
 Apostles, and Seventy Dis-  
 ciples, and innumerable other Believers,  
 have born witness to the Actions of Christ,  
 with the most exact and perfect Agree-  
 ment among themselves; and not only so,  
 but have endured also all kinds of Tor-  
 ments, and even Death it self, to con-  
 firm their Testimony: Again; That illi-

† Κηρύττειν δ' ἀγχι-  
 ζῆς ἀνδρας εἰς πάντα τὸ  
 τὸ Ἰησοῦ ὄνομα, καὶ τὸς  
 μὲν αἰσίων πῶ Ρωμαίων  
 ἀρχὴν καὶ αὐτὴν τε τὴν  
 βασιλικὴν πόλιν νεϊ-  
 μαδαί τὸς ἡ τῶ Περ-  
 σῶν, τὸς ἡ τῶ Ἀρμε-  
 νίων, ἑτέρες ἡ τῶ Παρ-  
 θιον ἔθνη, καὶ αὐ πα-  
 λιν τὸ Σκυθῶν, πῶας ἡ  
 ἡδὴ καὶ ἐτ' αὐτὰ τῆς οἰκῆ  
 μένες ἐλθεῖν τὰ ἄκρῃ, ἐπὶ  
 τὸ τῶ Ἰνδῶν φθάσαι  
 χώραν, καὶ ἑτέρες ὑπερ-  
 τὴν Ὠκεανὸν παρελθεῖν  
 ἐπὶ τὰς κελυμένους Βρεί-  
 τανικὰς νήσους· ταῦτα ἐκ  
 ἐτ' ἔγω γε ἠγῆμαι καὶ  
 ἀκρωτῶπον εἶ. μήτι γε καὶ  
 εὐσεβεῖς καὶ ἰδιώτας, πολ-  
 κῆ δὲ καὶ γλῶσσας καὶ γόν-  
 τας Id. ibid. cap. 7.

terate Men, saith † he,  
 should preach the Name of  
 Christ in all parts of the  
 World; some of them in  
 Rome it self, the imperial  
 City; others, in Persia;  
 others, in Armenia; others,  
 in Parthia; others, in Sey-  
 thia; others, in India and  
 the furthest Parts of the  
 World; and others, beyond  
 the Sea, in the British  
 Isles: This I cannot but  
 think to be a Thing far  
 exceeding the Power of Man;  
 much more, the Power of  
 ignorant and unlearned Men;  
 and still much more, the  
 Power of Cheats and De-  
 ceivers



ceivers. And again: No one of them, faith \* he, being ever terrified at the Torments and Deaths of others, forsook his Companions, or ever preached contrary to them, and detected the forgery. Nay, on the contrary, That One, who did forsake his Master in his Life-time, and betray him to his Enemies; being Self-condemned, destroyed himself with his own Hands. And much more to the same purpose, may be found excellently said by the same Author, in the Seventh Chapter of the Third Book of his *Demonstratio Evangelica*.

\* Ουδεις τε αὐτῶν  
παρῆκε τὰ συμβάλλει τῆς  
προσωνομασίας τῆς ἐξουσίας  
ἐξῆν τῆς ἐπιείκειας, εἰς ἀν-  
ταρξουξὲ τῆς ἀληθείας εἰς  
φῶς ἀγαγὼν τὸν οὐκ ἐπι-  
μύνα. ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ ἑστὶς  
προσδῶναι τὸν οὐκ ἐπι-  
μύνα ἀπολογησάμενος ἐν  
τῷ ἑσθῆρα τῆς δι-  
κῆς ἐπὶ τὸν αὐτὸν. ἰδ.  
101d.

5. It is very certain, that the A-  
postles Testimony concerning the  
Works and Doctrine of Christ, is tru-  
ly and without corruption conveyed down  
to Us, even unto this Day. For they  
left this their Testimony in their Wri-  
tings: Which Writings have been de-  
livered down to us by an uninter-  
rupted Succession through all inter-  
mediate Ages. Their Books were all  
translated very early into several  
Languages, and dispersed through all  
parts of the World; and have most  
of them been acknowledged to be  
the genuine Writings of those whose

That the  
Apostles  
Testimony  
has been  
truly con-  
veyed down  
to Us.

Names they bear, even by the bitterest Enemies of Christianity in all Ages. Passages, containing the most material Doctrines, have been cited out of them by numberless Authors, who lived in every Age from the very Days of the Apostles unto this time: So that there is no room or possibility of any considerable *corruption*, such as might in any wise diminish our certainty of the Truth of the whole. In Summ; There is no matter of Fact in the World, attested in any History, with so many circumstances of credibility, with so many collateral Evidences, and in every respect attended with so many Marks of Truth; as This concerning the Doctrine and Works of Christ.

*Of the Authority of the Books of Holy Scripture.*

And here, by the by, it is to be observed, that the peculiar *Authority* which we attribute to the Books of *Holy Scripture* contained in the *New Testament*, is founded in this; that they were written or dictated by the *Apostles themselves*. The Apostles were indued with the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost, at *Pentecost*: And this not only inabled them to preach the Doctrine of Christ with Power, but also effectually secured them from making any error, mistake, or false representation of it. And the very same Authority that by this singular Priviledge was added to their *Preaching*,

'tis manifest ought for the same reasons to be equally attributed to their *Writings* also. Now all the Books of the New Testament were either *written* by the Apostles: or, which is the very same thing, *approved and authorized* by them. Most of the Books were uncontrovertedly written by the *Apostles themselves*; St Paul having been made one of that number by a Commission from Heaven, no less visible and sensible, than that which was granted to the rest at *Pentecost*: And those Books which were written by the *Companions* of the Apostles, were either dictated or at least approved and authorized by the Apostles Themselves. Thus *Eusebius* expressly tells us, that *St Peter* reviewed and approved the Gospel of *St Mark*, and that \* it was this approbation that authorized it to be received by the Churches. And *Irenæus*; that † what *St Mark* wrote, was dictated by *St Peter*; and that ‖ the Gospel of *St Luke*, was only a Transcript of *St Paul's* preaching. And *Tertullian* in like manner; that \* *St Mark* was only *St Peters* Scribe, and *St Luke* *St Pauls*. And *Eusebius*; that *St John*

\* Κουρῶσαι τε τὴν γρά-  
φην εἰς ἑπτέουσιν ταῖς ἐκ-  
κλησίαις. *Euseb. Hist.*  
l. 2. c. 15.

† Marcus discipulus &  
interpretas Petri, quæ a  
Petro annunciata erant,  
edidit. *Iren. lib. 3. c. 1.*

‖ Lucas testator Pau-  
li, quod ab illo prædica-  
batur Evangelium in li-  
bro condidit. *Id. Ibid.*  
Vide & *Tertullian. adv.*  
*Marcion. lib. 2.*

\* Licet & Marcus quod  
edidit, Petri adfirmetur  
cujus interpretas Marcus;  
alio



nam & Luca Digestum,  
Paulo adscribere solent.  
Tertull. adv. Marcion.  
lib. 4.

† Ἡ δὲ τῶν Μάρκου καὶ  
Λουκᾶ τῶν κατ' αὐτοὺς εὐαγγε-  
λίων ὅτι ἐκδόσαν πε-  
ποιημένων, Ἰωάννην ἀπο-  
δεξάσθαι μὲν φασιν, ἀλή-  
θειαν αὐτοῖς ἐπιμαρτυρή-  
σαντα. Euseb. Hist. l. 3.  
c. 24.

† also reviewed the Gospels of  
St Mark and St Luke,  
and confirmed the Truth of  
them. And, to mention  
no more, the same Histo-  
rian tells us, that (besides  
some smaller reasons drawn  
from some mistaken Pas-  
sages in the Book it  
self) the chief reason why  
the Authority of the

Epistle to the Hebrews was questioned  
by some, was || because

|| Τινὲς ἠδὲ τῶν κατὰ πῶ-  
σθαι Ἐβραίων, πρὸς τῆς  
Ῥωμαίων Ἐκκλησίας ὡς μὴ  
Παύλου εἶσαν αὐτὴν ἀνπλα-  
γεῖσθαι φησάντες. Id. lib. 3.  
c. 3.

they thought it not to be  
written by St Paul him-  
self.

XV. Lastly, They who will not, by  
the Arguments and Proofs before-men-  
tioned, 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  
Practise and reform their Lives,) by  
any other Evidence whatsoever; no not  
though one should rise on purpose from  
the Dead to endeavour to convince them.

That the  
Evidence  
which God  
has af-  
forded us  
of the  
Truth of  
our Reli-  
gion, is a  
abundantly  
sufficient.

From what has been said upon the  
foregoing Heads, it is abundantly  
evident that Men are not called up-  
on to believe the Christian Religion  
without very reasonable and sufficient  
Proof;

Proof; much less are they \* required, to set up *Faith* in opposition to *Reason*; or to believe any thing for that very reason, because it is incredible. On the contrary, God has given us all the Proofs of the Truth of our Religion, that the Nature of the Thing would bear, or that were reasonable either for God

\* Ἄλλοις δὲ, ὅση δὲ οὐκ ἀ-  
 ρισ, ἀπιδεικτικῶς διέφο-  
 τήτων ἢ ἀποδείξεων ἀρ-  
 σαρξέμεθα. Οὐδὲ λέγει-  
 μὲν τὸ κατὰ τὴν φύσιν  
 ὑπὸ τοῦ κρείσσε ἐπιμαρτυ-  
 ρῶν Πιστάσεν, ὅτι ἐπιμαρ-  
 τυνται σὺν τῷ τῶτον ἔτι οὐκ  
 Θεῷ καὶ ὁ δεδεδεικται  
 ἀπὸ τὰτα, ἢ κατὰ λαο-  
 μένθ' ἀποδείξαι. — Ἄλλοι  
 δὲ φαμέν ταύτην ἢ μάλ-  
 λον ἀποδείξαι. Origen. adv.  
 Cels. lib. 1.

to give, or Men to expect. And unless God should work upon Men by such Methods, as are wholly inconsistent with the Design of Religion and the Nature of Virtue and Vice; which we are sure he will never do; nothing could have been done more, than has already been done, to convince Men of the Truth of Religion, and to persuade them to embrace their own Happiness. And indeed no reasonable Man can fail of being persuaded by the Evidence we now have. For if in other Cases, we assent to those Things as certain and demonstrated, which, if our Faculties of judging and reasoning do not necessarily deceive us, do upon the most impartial view appear clearly and plainly to be true; there is the same reason why in Moral and Religious Matters we should look upon those things likewise

likewise to be *certain* and *demonstrated*, which upon the exactest and most deliberate Judgment we are capable of making, do appear to us to be as clearly and certainly true, as 'tis certain that our *Faculties* do not *necessarily* and *unavoidably* deceive us, in all our *Judgments* concerning the *Nature of God*, concerning the *proper Happiness of Man*, and concerning the *Difference of Good and Evil*. And if in *other* cases, we always act without the least hesitation, upon the Credit of good and sufficient *Testimony*; and look upon that Man as foolish and ridiculous, who sustains great Losses, or lets slip great Opportunities and Advantages in Business, only by distrusting the most credible and well-attested things in the World; 'tis plain there is the same reason, why we should do so also in Matters of Religion. So that unless our Actions be determined by some other thing, than by Reason and right Judgment; the Evidence which we have of the great Truths of Religion, ought to have the same effect upon our Lives and Actions, as if they were proved to us by any other sort of Evidence that could be desired.

*That the Cause of Mens Unbelief, is*

'Tis true; the Resurrection of Christ, and his other mighty Works, must after all be confessed not to be such  
ocular



ocular Demonstrations of the Truth of his Divine Commission to After-Generations, as they were to those Men who then lived and saw him and conversed with him. But since the Matters of Fact are as clearly proved to Us, as 'tis possible for any matter of Fact at that distance of time to be; since the Evidence of *This*, is as great and greater, than of most of those Things on which Men venture the whole of their secular Affairs, and on which they are willing to spend all their time and pains: Since (I say) the case is thus; He that will rather venture all that he can possibly enjoy, or suffer; he that will run the hazard of losing Eternal Happiness, and falling into Eternal Misery, rather than believe the *most credible and rational* thing in the World, merely because he does *not see it with his Eyes*; 'tis plain that That Man does not disbelieve the thing because he thinks the *Evidence of it not sufficiently strong*, but because 'tis *contrary to some particular Vice of his*, which makes it his *Interest* that it should not be true; and for *that* reason he *might* also have disbelieved it, tho' he had seen it himself. Men may invent what vain pretenses they please, to excuse their Infidelity and their Wickedness; But certainly That Man who can despise  
the

*not want  
of better  
Evidence  
to prove  
the great  
Truths of  
Religion.*

the Authority both of Reason and Scripture in conjunction; who can elude the plainest Evidence of matter of Fact; who can be deaf to all the promises and kind admonitions of the Gospel, and to all the threatenings and terrible denunciations of the wrath of God, made known in good measure by the Light of Nature, and confirmed by the addition of express Revelation; Certainly (I say) That Man must have some *other Reason* for his unbelief, than the pretended Want of sufficient Evidence. Did Men follow the unprejudiced judgment of their own Minds, and the impartial dictates of natural Reason; the least possibility of obtaining eternal Happiness, or the least suspicion of falling into endless Misery, would immediately determine them to make it the great study and business of their Lives, to obtain the one and to avoid the Other. If then we see Men act directly contrary to this natural principle, and almost wholly neglect these things, not only when there is a fair appearance and *Probability* of their being true, which the Light of Nature itself affords; but also when there is all reasonable Evidence given, of their being *Certainly* true, by express Revelation in the Gospel; Is it not very plain, that such Men

are governed, not by reason and the force of Evidence, but by some *Other* very different Cause of their Actions?

What *that Cause* is, is very apparent from the Lives and Actions of most of those persons, who pretend want of Evidence to be the ground of their Infidelity. Their *Lusts*, their *Appetites*, their *Affections* are interested: They are Lovers of Vice and Debauchery, and Slaves to Evil Habits and Customs: And therefore they are not willing to discern the Evidence, which would compel them to believe That, which yet they cannot believe with any Comfort, so long as they resolve not to part with their beloved Vices. Their hearts and affections are habitually fixt upon things here *below*; and therefore they will not attend to the force of any Argument, that would raise their Affections to things *above*. They are inflav'd to the sensual Pleasures and sinful Injoyments of *Earth*; and therefore they will not hearken to any reasonable conviction, which would persuade them to relinquish these present Gratifications, for the future and more Spiritual Joys of *Heaven*. The Love of this present World has \* *blinded* their Eyes; and therefore they *receive not the Things of the Spirit*

But that Wickedness and un-governed Lusts, are the only Causes of obstinate Infidelity.

1 Cor. 2. 14.  
\* Ἐπιμαρτυροῦντες  
of



ἔχουσι τὰς ὀφθαλμὰς, καὶ  
 μὴ βλέποντας τὸ ὄψος τῆς  
 ἡλίου "Οὕτω καὶ σὺ ὡς  
 ἄνθρωπε, ἔχεις ὀφθαλμο-  
 χυμένους τὰς ὀφθαλμὰς  
 τῆς ψυχῆς σου ὑπὸ πάντων  
 αμαρτιμάτων καὶ τῶν πρῶ-  
 ξένων σου τῶν πονηρῶν.  
 Theophil. Antioch. l. i.

And so long as Men are under the Dominion of their Lusts, they would not be convinced, though the evidence of Religion was even much stronger than it is.

of God; For they are foolishness unto them; neither can they know them, because they are spiritually discerned. In a Word: The true and only reason, why Men love darkness rather than light; is, because their Deeds are evil.

And This reason, affords a sufficient Account indeed, why Men should be very unwilling to believe the Doctrines of Christianity. If they are resolved not to reform their Lives, 'tis no wonder they care not to discern the Evidence of those Truths, which must needs make them very uneasy in the midst of the enjoyment of all their sinful Pleasures. In this case, were the Proofs of the Truth of our Religion much stronger than they are, or than they can be imagined or desired to be; yet still these Men would be in the very same case, and perpetually want stronger and stronger Evidence. 'Tis true; many Men, who Now are conscious and willing to acknowledge, that they act contrary to all the reasonable Evidence and Convictions of Religion; are nevertheless very apt to imagine within themselves, that if the great Truths of Religion were proved to them by some stronger Evidence, they should by that means be

he wrought upon to act otherwise than they do. But if the true reason why these Men act thus foolishly, is not because the *Doctrines of Religion* are not sufficiently evidenced, but because *They themselves* are, without allowing themselves time for Consideration, hurried away by some unruly Passions to act directly contrary to all Reason and Evidence; 'tis plain (unless God should irresistibly compel them) they might well continue to act as they do, though the Evidence of these things were really greater than it is. They are willing fondly to imagine, that if they had lived in our Saviour's time; if they had heard his Preaching, and seen his Miracles; if they had had the advantage of beholding those mighty Works, which he wrought for the proof of his Divine Commission; as the Jews then had: they should not like them have *rejected the counsel of God against themselves*, but with all cheerfulness have believed his Doctrine, and embraced his Religion. They fancy, they should immediately have become Disciples of Christ; and that the Truths which he taught, would have had a most powerful Influence upon the whole course of their Lives. And if their Hearts and Affections were not set upon *This World*, more than upon *the next*; if they valued not the *present enjoyments of Sense*, above the *expectation of the Glory that shall be revealed*; most certainly they would do the same now. But if

K k                      their

their Hearts *be* set upon earthly things, and their Passions *be* stronger than all the Arguments of Reason; if they *do* indeed love the Pleasures of Sin now, as that they cannot persuade themselves by all the Motives of Religion to live like Christians; we need not question to affirm, that they might very well have been in the same case, though they *had* lived in our Saviour's time. The *Jews* are a notorious and standing Instance, how far Prejudice, Envy, Pride and Affectation, are able to prevail over the strongest Convictions. When our Saviour began to preach that he was sent from God to instruct them in their Duty, they required a *Sign* of him, and they *would believe him*; but when he had wrought so many Miracles, that *even the World it self could not contain the Books* if they should all be written, they persisted still in their Infidelity. When they saw him hanging upon the Cross, and thought themselves secure of him, they said, *Let him now come down from the Cross, and we will believe him*: But when he arose out of the Grave, wherein he had lain three Days, which was a much greater and more convincing Miracle; they grew more hardened and obstinate in their Unbelief.

Mat 27,  
42.

*Nay, not even tho' one should rise on purpose from the Dead to convince them.*

Others there are who imagine, that if they could but be convinced of the Truth of another World by the appearance of one sent directly from that unknown State, they would immediately become new Creatures: But if God should satisfy



satisfy their unreasonable Demands by sending one on purpose from the Dead to convince them; there is little Room to doubt, but as they hearkened not to *Moses and the Prophet*, to Christ and his *Apostles*; so neither would they be persuaded by one rising on purpose from the Dead. They might indeed be at first surprized and terrified, at the Appearance of so unusual and unexpected a Messenger: But as wicked Men upon a Bed of Sickness, at the amazing approach of Death and Eternity, resolve in the utmost anguish of Horrour and Despair, to amend their Lives and forsake their Sins; but as soon as the Terrour is over, and the danger of Death past, return to their old Habit of Sin and Folly; So it is more than probable, it would be in the present Case. Should God send a Messenger from the Dead, to assure Men of the Certainty of a future State, and the Danger of their present Wickedness; as soon as the fright was over, and their present terrible Apprehensions ceased, 'tis by no means impossible or improbable that their old vicious Habits and beloved Sins should again by degrees prevail over them. Some there are in our present Age, who pretend to be convinced of the Being of Spirits by the powerful demonstration of their own Senses; And yet we do not observe, that their Lives are more remarkably eminent for exemplary Piety, than other good Mens, who being convinced by the rational Evi-

dence of the Gospel, go on in a sober, constant, and regular Exercise of Virtue and Righteousness.

*That therefore, to make Men judge rightly of the Evidence of Religion, it is absolutely necessary in the first place, that laying aside Prejudice, Lust and Passion, they become impartially willing to embrace all Truth, and to obey all reasonable Obligations, which shall at any Time be made known to them.*

'Tis not therefore for want of sufficient Evidence, that Men disbelieve the great Truths of Religion; but plainly for want of Integrity, and of dealing ingenuously and impartially with themselves; that they suffer not the Arguments of Religion to have that Weight and Influence upon them, which in the judgment of right reason they ought manifestly to have. So long as Men permit their Passions and Appetites to overrule their Reason, it is impossible they should have due Apprehensions in matters of Religion, or make any right and true Judgment concerning these things. Men that are strongly biassed and prejudiced even in *worldly affairs*, 'tis well known how hard and difficult it is for them to judge according to reason, and to suffer the Arguments and Evidences of truth to have their due Weight with them. How much more in *matters of Religion* which concern things future and remote from Sense, must it needs be, that Mens present Interests, Lust and Passions, will pervert their judgment, and blind their understandings! Wherefore, Men that pretend to be followers of right Reason, if they will judge truly of the reasonableness and credibility of the Christian Revelation, it is absolutely necessary that in the first Place, in order to that End, they become impartially willing

ling to embrace whatever shall upon the whole appear to be agreeable to Reason and Truth, and grounded upon good Evidence, without interesting their Lusts and Appetites in the judgment; and that before all Things they resolve to be guided in all their Actions, by whatever Rule shall at any time be well proved to them to be the Will of God. And when they have put themselves into this Temper and Frame of Mind; then let them try if they can any longer reject the Evidence of the Gospel. *If any Man will do his will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God. For, them that are meek, God will guide in judgment; and such as are gentle, them he will learn his Way.* *Joh. 7, 17. Ps. 25, 2.*

Indeed, Men that are of this good Disposition, willing to be governed by Reason, and not prejudiced by Lusts and Vicious Appetites; could not but give their Assent to the Doctrines of Christianity, upon account of the very intrinsic Excellency and Reasonableness of the Things themselves, even though the external Evidence of their Certainty had been much less than it at present is. Nay, were there hardly any other Evidence at all, than barely the Excellency and Reasonableness and natural Probability of the great Truths of Religion, together with the Consideration of the vast Importance of them; yet even in That Case it would be infinitely wisest and most agreeable to Reason, for Men to live according to the Rules of the Gos-

*That Men of free Disposition would think it their great Wisdom to be truly religious, even though the Evidences of Religion were much less than they are.*



pel: And though their Faith extended no further, than only to a Belief of the Possibility of the Truth of the Christian Revelation; yet even This alone ought in all reason to have weight enough to determine reasonable Creatures, to live *solely, righteously and godly.* For, is it not *plainly most reasonable,* as \*

\* Non purior ratio est, ex duobus incertis & in ambigua expectatione pendentibus, id potius credere, quod aliquas spes fert, quam quod nullas habet. In illo enim, periculum est, si, eved dicitur minere, casum sit & vacuum; in hoc, cum in casu maximum (id est, salutis amissio) si, cum tempus advenit, aperitur hoc fuisse mendacium. *Job. 42. 6. Gen. 1. 5. 2.*

an ancient Writer expresses it, if each of the opposite Opinions were equally doubtful and uncertain, yet by all means to embrace and entertain That which brings some Hope along with it, rather than that which brings none? For on one side of the Question there is no danger at all of incurring any Calamity, if that which we believe and expect, should at last prove false; But on the other side, there is the

*greatest Hazard in the World, the loss of eternal Life, if the Opinion which Unbelievers rely upon, should at last prove an Error.*

† Quid dicitis o nefarii, etiam metu & miseratione dignissimi? ita non tam exumeicitis, ne forte hæc vera sint, quæ sunt despectui vobis & præbent materiam risus? nec saltem vobiscum sub obscuris cogitationibus volvitis, ne, quod hoc die credere obstinata renuicis perversitate, redar-

And † again: *What say ye, O ye ignorant Men, ye Men of miserable and most deplorable Folly? Can ye forbear fearing within your selves, that at least those things may possibly prove true, which ye now despise and mock at? Have ye not at least some misgivings of mind, least possibly That which ye now per-*

*cefully*

versely and obstinately refuse to believe, ye should at last be convinced of by sad experience, when it will be too late to repent? Neither is this the judgment of Christian Writers only, but also of the wisest and more considerate Heathens. We ought to spare no pains, saith || Plato, to obtain the Habits of Virtue and Wisdom in this present Life; For the Prize is noble, and the Hope is very great. And \* Cicero: They have gained a great Prize indeed, who have persuaded themselves to believe, that when Death comes, they shall perish utterly; What comfort is there, What is there to be boasted of, in that Opinion? And again: If after Death, saith † he, as some little and contemptible Philosophers think, I shall be nothing; yet there is no danger, that when we are all dead, those Philosophers should laugh at me for my Error.

quæ seram tempus & irrevocabilis poenitentia castiget? Id. ibid.

|| Χρὴ πάντα τὰ ἐν ᾧ εἰσὶ ἀρετῆς καὶ σοφίας ἐν τῷ βίῳ μεταχειρῆσαι καλὸν γὰρ τὸ ἀδιόν, καὶ ἡ ἐλπὶς μεγάλη. Πλάτων Πηδ.

\* Præclarum nescio quid adenti sunt, qui didicerunt se, cum tempus mortis venisset, tot esse perituros. — Quid habet ista res aut lætibile aut gloriosum? Cic. Tusc. Qu. lib. 1.

† Sin mortuus, ut quidam minuti Philosophi cenient, nihil sentiam; non vereor ne hæc errorem meum mortui philosophi irrideant. Cic. 4 Senecæ.

But this is not Our Case. God has afforded Us, as has been largely and particularly shown in the foregoing Discourse, many and certain Proofs of the Truth of our Religion; even as certain, as any matter of Fact is capable of having. And we now exhort Men to believe, not

what is barely possible, and excellent, and probable, and of the utmost Importance in itself; but what moreover they have all the positive evidence, and all the reason in the World to oblige them to believe.

*That God may require us to take notice of certain things, and to inquire into them and consider them, at our peril.*

To conclude, No Man of reason can pretend to say, but God may require us, to take notice of some things at our peril, to inquire into them, and to consider them thoroughly. And pretense of want of greater Evidence will not excuse Carelessness or unreasonable Prejudices; when God has vouchsafed us all That Evidence, which was either Fit for him to grant, or Reasonable for Men to desire; or indeed which the Nature of the Thing itself to be proved, was capable of.

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F I N I S.



S E V E R A L

LETTERS

T O T H E

Reverend D<sup>r</sup>. CLARKE,

F R O M A

Gentleman in *Glocestershire*,

Relating to the

F I R S T V O L U M E

O F T H E

Foregoing SERMONS;

W I T H T H E

D<sup>r</sup>'S ANSWERS

T H E R E U N T O .

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*The Second Edition.*

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L O N D O N :

Printed for *James Knapton*, at the *Crown*  
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The F I R S T

LETTER.

Reverend Sir,

“ I Suppose you will wonder at the present  
“ trouble from one who is to you a perfect  
“ Stranger, tho’ you are not so to him; but  
“ I hope the Occasion will excuse my  
“ Boldness. I have made it, Sir, my Business  
“ ever since I thought my Self capable of such  
“ sort of Reasoning, to prove to my Self  
“ the *Being* and Attributes of *God*; And being  
“ sensible that it’s a matter of the last conse-  
“ quence, I endeavoured after a *demonstrative*  
“ Proof; not only more fully to *satisfy* my own  
“ Mind, but also in order to *defend* the great  
“ Truths of Natural Religion, and those of  
“ the Christian Revelation which follow from  
“ them, *against all Opposers*: But must own with  
“ concern, that hitherto I have been unsuccess-  
“ ful; and tho’ I have got very probable Ar-  
“ guments, yet I can go but very little way  
“ with *Demonstration* in the proof of those  
“ things. When at first your Book on those  
“ Subjects (which by all, whom I have dis-  
“ coursed with, is so justly esteemed,) was re-  
“ commended to me; I was in great hopes of  
“ having all my Enquiries answered: But since  
“ in some places, either thro’ my not under-  
“ standing

## The first Letter,

“ standing your Meaning, or what else I know  
 “ not, even *That* has failed me ; I almost de-  
 “ spair of ever arriving to *such a Satisfaction* as  
 “ I aim at, unless by the method I now use.  
 “ You can’t but know, Sir, that of *two* diffe-  
 “ rent *expressions* of the *same* thing, tho’ equally  
 “ clear to *some* Persons, yet, to *others*, *one* of  
 “ them is sometimes very obscure, tho’ the  
 “ *other* be perfectly intelligible. Perhaps this  
 “ may be my Case here ; and could I see those  
 “ of your Arguments, of which I doubt, dif-  
 “ ferently proposed, possibly I might yield a  
 “ ready assent to them. This, Sir, I cannot  
 “ but think a sufficient Excuse for the present  
 “ Trouble ; it being such an one as I hope may  
 “ prevail for an Answer, with one who seems  
 “ to aim at nothing more than that good Work  
 “ of instructing others.

\* Pag. 45, Edit. 4th. “ In your *Demonstration of the Being and At-*  
 “ *tributes of God*, Prop. VI. \* [Edit. 2d. p. 69 and  
 “ 70,] you propose to prove the *Infinite* and  
 “ *Omnipresency* of the Self-existent Being. The  
 “ *former* part of the proof, seems highly proba-  
 “ ble ; but the *latter* part, which seems to aim  
 “ at Demonstration, is not to me convincing.  
 “ The *latter* part of the Paragraph is, if I  
 “ mistake not, an *entire Argument of it self*,  
 “ which runs thus ; “ To suppose a finite Being  
 “ to be Self-Existent, is to say that it is a Contradiction  
 “ for that Being not to exist, the absence of  
 “ which may yet be conceived without a Contradiction ;  
 “ which is the greatest absurdity in the World.  
 “ The sense of these Words [*the absence of which*]  
 “ seems plainly to be determined by the follow-  
 “ ing Sentence, to mean its absence from any  
 “ particular Place : which Sentence, is to  
 “ prove it to be an Absurdity ; and is this : ”  
 “ For if a Being can, without a Contradiction, be  
 absent



absent from one place; it may, without a Contradiction, be absent from another place, and from all places, “ Now, supposing this to be a “ Consequence; all that it proves is, that if “ a Being can without a Contradiction, be “ absent from one place at *one time*, it may “ without a Contradiction be absent from a- “ nother place, and so from all places, at *dif- “ ferent times*; (for I cannot see, that if a Be- “ ing can be absent from *one place* at *one time*, “ therefore it may without a Contradiction be “ absent from *all places* at the *same time*, i. e. “ may *cease to exist*.) Now, if it proves no “ more than this, I cannot see that it reduces “ the Supposition to any Absurdity. Suppose “ I could *demonstrate*, that any particular Man “ should live a Thousand Years; this Man “ might without a Contradiction be absent from “ *one*, and from *all places*, at *different times*, but “ it would not from thence follow, that he “ might be absent from *all places* at the *same “ time*, i. e. that he might *cease to exist*. No; “ this would be a Contradiction, because I am “ supposed to have *demonstrated* that he should “ live a Thousand Years. It would be exactly “ the same, if instead of a *Thousand Years*, I “ should say, *for ever*; and the proof seems the “ same, whether it be applied to a *Self-Exi- “ stent* or a *Dependent* Being.

“ What else I have to offer, is in relation to “ your proof of the Self-Existent Being, that “ he must of necessity be but *One*. Your proof “ is as follows, in *Prop. VII*, \* [Edit. 2d. “ p. 74.] \* *Pag 42. Edit. 4to.*  
 To suppose two or more different Natures ex-  
 isting of themselves, necessarily and independent  
 from each other, implies this plain Contradiction;  
 that each of them being independent from the other,  
 they may either of them be supposed to exist *Alone*;

so that it will be no Contradiction to imagine the  
 other not to exist, and consequently neither of them  
 will be necessarily existing. “ The Supposition  
 “ indeed implies, that since each of these Beings  
 “ are Independent from the other, they may either  
 “ of them exist Alone, i. e. without any rela-  
 “ tion to or dependence on the other: But  
 “ Where is the third Idea, to connect this Pro-  
 “ position and the following one, viz. so that it  
 “ will be no Contradiction to imagine the other not  
 “ to Exist? Were this a Consequence of the  
 “ former Proposition, I allow it would be De-  
 “ monstration, by the first Corollary of Prop. III,  
 “ \* [2d Edit. p. 26.] But since these two Pro-  
 “ positions, [they may either of them be supposed  
 “ to exist alone,] and, [so that it will be no Contra-  
 “ diction to imagine the other not to exist,] are  
 “ very widely different; since likewise it is no  
 “ immediate Consequence, that because Either  
 “ may be supposed to exist independent from the  
 “ other, therefore the other may be supposed  
 “ not to exist at all; how is what was proposed,  
 “ proved? That the Propositions are different,  
 “ I think it plain; and whether there be an im-  
 “ mediate connexion, every Body that reads  
 “ yours must judge for themselves. I must say,  
 “ for my own part, the Absurdity do’s not ap-  
 “ pear at first sight, any more than the Absur-  
 “ dity of saying that the Angles below the Base  
 “ in an Isoceles Triangle are unequal; which  
 “ tho’ it is absolutely false, yet I suppose no  
 “ one will lay down the contrary for an *Axiom*;  
 “ because, tho’ it is true, yet there is need of  
 “ a Proof to make it appear so.

\* Pag. 16,  
 17. Edit.  
 4th.

“ Perhaps it may be answered, that I have  
 “ not rightly explained the words, *to exist alone*;  
 “ And that they do not mean only, to exist  
 “ independent from the other; but that existing  
 “ Alone

“ *Alone*, means that *nothing exists with it*. Whe-  
 “ ther this or the other was meant, I cannot  
 “ determine: But, which ever it was; what  
 “ I have said, will hold. For if this *last* be  
 “ the Sense of those Words, [*They either of them*  
 “ *may be supposed to exist alone*;] it indeed im-  
 “ plies that it will be no Contradiction to sup-  
 “ pose the *other not to exist*: But then I ask how  
 “ come these two Propositions to be *connected*;  
 “ that to suppose *two different Natures existing*  
 “ *of themselves necessarily and independent from*  
 “ *each other*, implies that *each* of them may be  
 “ supposed to *exist Alone* in *This* Sense? Which  
 “ is exactly the same as I said before, only ap-  
 “ plied to different Sentences. So that if *Exist-*  
 “ *ing Alone*, be understood as I *first* took it; I  
 “ allow it is implied in the *Supposition*; but can-  
 “ not see that the *Consequence* is, that it will be  
 “ no Contradiction to suppose the other not to  
 “ exist. But if the Words, *Existing Alone*, are  
 “ meant in the *latter* Sense; I grant that if  
 “ either of them may be *supposed* thus to *exist*?  
 “ *Alone*, it will be no Contradiction to *suppose*  
 “ the other not to exist: But then I cannot see,  
 “ that to suppose *two different Natures existing*,  
 “ *of themselves necessarily and independent from*  
 “ *each other*, implies that *either* of them may  
 “ be supposed to *exist Alone* in *This* Sense of the  
 “ Words; but only, that *either* of them may be  
 “ supposed to exist *without* having any *relati-*  
 “ *on* to the *other*, and that there will be no  
 “ *need of the existence of the One in order to the*  
 “ *existence of the other*. But tho’ upon this  
 “ account, were there no other Principle of its  
 “ existence, it might cease to exist; yet on  
 “ the account of the necessity of its own Na-  
 “ ture, which is quite distinct from the other,



*The first Letter.*

“ ’tis an absolute Absurdity to suppose it not  
 “ to exist.

“ Thus, Sir, I have propos’d my Doubts,  
 “ with the Reason of them. In which if I have  
 “ wrested your Words to another Sense than  
 “ what you design’d them, or in any respect  
 “ argu’d unfairly, I assure you it was without  
 “ design. So I hope you will impute it to mi-  
 “ stake. And, if it will not be too great a  
 “ Trouble, let me once more beg the favour  
 “ of a Line from you, by which you will lay me  
 “ under a *particular* Obligation to be, what,  
 “ with the the rest of the World, I now am,

*Reverend Sir,*

*Your much Obliged Servant, &c.*

November the 4th

1713.

T H E

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The A N S W E R

T O

*The First Letter.*

S I R,

**D** I D Men who publish controversial Papers, accustom themselves to write with that Candour and Ingenuity, with which you propose your Difficulties; I am persuaded almost all Disputes might be very amiably terminated, either by Men's coming at last to agree in Opinion, or at least finding Reason to suffer each other friendly to differ.

Your *Two Objections* are very ingenious, and urged with great Strength and Acuteness. Yet I am not without hopes, of being able to give you *Satisfaction* in *Both* of them. To your *first* therefore, I answer. What ever may without a Contradiction, be absent from any one Place at *any one Time*; may also without a Contradiction, be absent from *all Places* at *all Times*. For, whatever is *absolutely necessary* at all, is absolutely necessary in every part of *Space*, and in every point of *Duration*. Whatever can at any time be conceived *possible* to be absent from any *One part* of *Space*, may for the same Reason, [*viz.* the implying no Contradiction in the nature of Things,] be conceived *possible* to be absent from every *Other part* of *Space* at the *same time*; either by *ceasing* to be, or by supposing it *never* to have begun to be.

L l

Your

Your Instance about *demonstrating* a Man to live 1000 Years, is what (I think) led you into the Mistake; and is a good Instance to lead you out of it again. You may suppose a Man shall live 1000 Years, or God may reveal and promise he shall live 1000 Years; And upon that Supposition, it shall not be possible for the Man to be absent from all Places in any part of that time. Very true: But why shall it not be possible? Only because 'tis contrary to the Supposition, or to the Promise of God; but not contrary to the absolute Nature of Things; which it would be, if the Man existed necessarily, as every part of Space does. In Supposing you could demonstrate, a Man should live 1000 Years, or one Year; you make an impossible and contradictory Supposition. For tho' you may know certainly, (by Revelation suppose,) that he will live so long; yet This is only the Certainty, of a thing True in Fact, not in itself necessary: And Demonstration is applicable to nothing but what is necessary in itself, necessary in all Places and at all Times equally.

To your second Difficulty, I answer, What exists necessarily, not only must so exist Alone, as to be independent of any thing else; but (being Self-sufficient,) may also so exist Alone, as that every thing else may possibly (or without any Contradiction in the Nature of Things) be supposed not to exist at all; And consequently, (since That which may possibly be supposed not to exist at all, is not necessarily existent,) No other thing can be necessarily existent. Whatever is necessarily Existing, there is Need of its existence in order to the supposal of the existence of any other thing; so that nothing can possibly be supposed to exist, without presupposing and including antecedently the existence of that which is necessary.



For instance, the Supposal of the existence of *any thing whatever*, includes necessarily a *Presupposition* of the existence of *Space* and *Time*; and if any thing could exist *without Space* or *Time*, it would follow that *Space* and *Time* were not *necessarily-existing*. Therefore, the supposing any thing *possibly to exist Alone*, so as *not necessarily to include the presupposal of some Other Thing*, proves demonstrably that *That Other Thing* is not *Necessarily-existing*; because, *Whatever has Necessity of existence*, cannot possibly, in *Any* conception whatsoever, be supposed *Away*. There cannot possibly be *Any* Notion of the *existence of any Thing*, there cannot possibly be *Any* Notion of *existence at all*, but what shall necessarily *preinclude* the Notion of *That which is Necessarily-existent*. And consequently the *Two* Propositions which you judged *independent*, are really *necessarily connected*. These sorts of things are indeed very difficult to *express*, and not easie to be *conceived* but by very *Attentive Minds*: But to such as *can* and *will* attend, nothing (I think) is more demonstrably convictive.

If any thing still sticks with you in *This*, or any *Other Part* of my Books; I shall be very willing to be informed of it; who am,

*SIR, Your assured Friend,*

*Nov, 10.*

*and Servant, S. C.*

1713.

*P. S.* Many Readers, I observe, have misunderstood my *Second General Proposition*; as if the Words [*Some One unchangeable and independent Being.*] meant [*One Only — — Being.*] Whereas the true Meaning, and all that the Argument there requires, is, [*Some One at least*] That there can be *But One*, is the thing proved *afterwards* in the *Seventh Proposition*.

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The SECOND  
LETTER.

*Reverend Sir,*

“ I Have often thought that the *chief* Occasi-  
 “ ons of Mens so much differing in their O-  
 “ pinions, were, either their not understanding  
 “ each other; or else, that instead of ingenu-  
 “ ously searching after *Truth*, they have made  
 “ it their business to find out Arguments for  
 “ the Proof of what they have once asserted.  
 “ However, it is certain there may be *other*  
 “ Reasons for Persons not agreeing in their  
 “ Opinions: And where it is so, I can’t but  
 “ think with you, that they will find reason  
 “ to suffer each other to *differ* friendly; every  
 “ Man having a way of Thinking, in some re-  
 “ spects, peculiarly his own.

“ I am sorry I must tell you, your Answers  
 “ to my Objections are not satisfactory. The  
 “ *Reasons* why I think them not so, are as fol-  
 “ lows.

“ You say;” *whatever is absolutely necessary at  
 all, is absolutely necessary in every part of Space,  
 and in every point of Duration.* “ Were this evi-  
 “ dent, ’twould certainly prove what you bring  
 “ it for;” *viz. that whatever may without a  
 Contradiction, be absent from one place at one  
 time, may also be absent from all places at all  
 times.* “ But I do not conceive, that the Idea  
 “ of *Ubiquity* is contained in the Idea of Self-Ex-  
 “ istence,

“istence, or *directly follows from it*; any other-  
“wise than as, whatever exists, must exist  
“*somewhere*. You add;” *Whatever can at any*  
“*time be conceived possibly to be absent from any one*  
“*part of Space, may for the same reason [viz. the*  
“*implying no Contradiction in the nature of things,]*  
“*be conceived possibly to be absent from every o-*  
“*ther part of Space at the same time.*” Now I can-  
“not see, that I can make these two *Suppositi-*  
“*ons for the same reason, or upon the same ac-*  
“*count.* The reason why I conceive this Being  
“may be absent from *one place*, is because it  
“doth not contradict the former Proof [drawn  
“from the nature of things,] in which I *only*  
“*proved* that it must necessarily exist. But the  
“*other* Supposition, *viz.* that I can conceive  
“it possible to be absent from every part of  
“*Space at one and the same time*, directly con-  
“tradiets the Proof that it *must exist*  
“*SOMEWHERE*; and so is an Express  
“Contradiction. Unless it be said, that  
“*as* when we have proved the three Angles  
“of a Triangle equal to two Right ones, That  
“relation of equality to two Right ones, will  
“be *where-ever* a Triangle exists; *so*, when  
“we have proved the necessary Existence of a  
“Being, this Being must exist *every where*.  
“But there is a great difference between these  
“two: The *one* being the Proof of a certain  
“relation, upon *Supposition* of such a Being’s  
“Existence, with such particular Properties;  
“and consequently where-ever this Being and  
“these Properties exist, this relation must  
“exist too: But from the Proof of the *necessi-*  
“*ry Existence* of a Being, ’tis no evident con-  
“sequence that it exists *Every where*. My u-  
“sing the Word *Demonstration*, instead of *Proof*,  
“*which leaves no room for doubt*, was thro’ neg-



## The Second Letter.

“ ligence ; For I never heard of strict demon-  
 “ *stration* of Matter of Fact.

“ In your Answer to my *Second Difficulty*, you  
 “ say ; ” *wha' sever is necessarily-existing, there is*  
 “ *Need of its Existence, in order to the supposal of the*  
 “ *Existence of another thing.* “ All the Consequen-  
 “ ces you draw from this Proposition, I see pro-  
 “ ved demonstrably; and consequently, that the  
 “ two Propositions I thought independent, are  
 “ closely connected. *Eu. how, or upon what ac-*  
 “ *count is the e Need* of the Existence of what-  
 “ ever is necessarily-existing, *in order* to the  
 “ Existence of any other thing? Is it *as there*  
 “ *is Need of Space and Duration*, in order to the  
 “ Existence of any thing; or *is it needful only*  
 “ *as the Cause* of the Existence of all other  
 “ things? if the *former* be said, as your In-  
 “ stance seems to intimate: I answer; *Space*  
 “ and *Duration* are very *abstruse* in their Na-  
 “ tures, and I think, can't properly be called  
 “ *Things*, but are considered rather as *Affections*  
 “ *which belong, and in the order of our Thoughts*  
 “ *are antecedently necessary, to the Existence of*  
 “ *all Things*: And I can no more conceive how  
 “ a *necessarily-existent Being* can, on the *same*  
 “ *account, or in the same manner as Space and*  
 “ *Duration are*, be needful in order to the Ex-  
 “ istence of any other Being; than I can con-  
 “ ceive *Extension* attributed to a *Thought*: *That*  
 “ *Idea* no more belonging to a *Thing existing*,  
 “ than *Extention* belongs to *Thought*. But if the  
 “ *latter* be said, that there is *Need* of the Exist-  
 “ ence of whatever is a necessary Being, *in or-*  
 “ *der* to the Existence of any other thing; or-  
 “ *ly as this Necessary Being must be the Cause of*  
 “ *the Existence of all other things*: I think this  
 “ is plainly begging the Question; for it *sup-*  
 “ *poses* that there is *no Other Being* exists, but  
 “ *what*

“ *what is Casual, and so not necessary: And on*  
“ *what Other account, or in what Other manner*  
“ *than one one of these two, there can be Need*  
“ *of the Existence of a necessary Being in order*  
“ *to the Existence of any thing else, I cannot*  
“ *conceive.*

“ Thus, Sir, you see I entirely agree with  
“ you in all the *Consequences* you have drawn  
“ from your *Suppositions*, but cannot see the  
“ *Truth of the Suppositions themselves.*

“ I have aimed at nothing in my *Stile*, but  
“ only to be *intelligible*; being sensible that  
“ 'tis very difficult, as you observe, to express  
“ ones self on these sorts of Subjects, especi-  
“ ally to one who is altogether unaccustomed  
“ to write upon them.

“ I have nothing at present more to add,  
“ but my sincerest Thanks for your Trouble  
“ in answering my Letter, and for your pro-  
“ fessed readiness to be acquainted with any  
“ other Difficulty that I may meet with in a-  
“ ny of your Writings. I am willing to inter-  
“ pret this, as somewhat like a Promise of an  
“ Answer to what I have now written, if there  
“ be any thing in it which deserves one.

*I am,*

*Reverend SIR,*

*Your most Obliged Humble Servant.*

Nov. 23,  
1713.

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 The A N S W E R

T O

*The Second Letter.*

S I R,

IT seems to *Me*, that the Reason why you do not apprehend *Ubiquity* to be necessarily connect'd with *Self-Existence*, is, because in the order of your *Idea's*, you *first* conceive a *Being*. (a *Finite Being*, suppose;) and then conceive *Self-existence* to be a *Property* of *That Being*; as the *Angles* are *Properties* of a *Triangle*, *When a Triangle* exists: Whereas, on the contrary, *Necessity of Existence*, not being a *Property* *Consequent upon* the *Supposition* of the *Thing's* existing, but *Antecedently* the *Cause* or *Ground* of *That Existence*; 'tis evident *This Necessity*, being, not *limited* to any *Antecedent Subject*, as *Angles* are to a *Triangle*; but being itself *Original*, *Absolute*, and (in order of Nature) *antecedent* to all *Existence*; cannot but be *every where*, for the same Reason that it is *any where*. By applying this Reasoning to the Instance of *Space*; you will find that by *Consequence* it belongs truly to *That Substance*, whereof *Space* is a *Property*, as *Duration* also is. What you say about a *Necessary Being* existing *Somewhere*, supposes it to be *Finite*; and being *Finite*, supposes some *Cause* which determined that such a *certain Quantity* of *That Being* should exist, neither more or less: And *That Cause*, must either be a *Voluntary Cause*; or  
 else



else such a *necessary Cause*, the *Quantity* of whose *Power* must be *determined* and *limited* by some *Other Cause*. But in *original absolute Necessity*, antecedent (in order of Nature) to the existence of any thing; nothing of all This, can have place; but the Necessity is, *necessarily every where alike*.

Concerning the *Second Difficulty*, I answer. *That which exists necessarily, is needful to the existence of any other thing*; Not considered Now as a *Cause*, (for that indeed is begging the Question) but as a *sine qua non*; in the Sense as *Space* is necessary to every thing, and nothing can possibly be conceived to exist, without thereby presupposing *Space*: Which therefore I apprehend to be a *Property* of the Self-existent Substance; and that, by being evidently necessary *itself*, it proves that the *Space*, of which it is a *Property*, must also be *necessary*; *Necessary* both in *itself*, and needful to the existence of *any thing else* whatsoever. Extension indeed does not belong to *Thought*, because *Thought* is not a *Being*; But there is *Need* of Extension to the existence of every *Being*, to a *Being* which has or has not *Thought*, or any other *Quality* whatsoever.

*I am, Sir,*

*Your real Friend and Servant.*

*London, Nov.*

*28. 1713.*

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The T H I R D  
L E T T E R.

*Reverend Sir,*

“ I Don't very well understand your Meaning,  
 “ I when you say that you think, *in the order*  
 “ *of my Idea's I first conceive a Being, (finite sup-*  
 “ *pose,) to exist, and then conceive Self-existence*  
 “ *to be a Property of that Being. If you mean*  
 “ *that I first suppose a finite Being to ex-*  
 “ *ist I know not why; affirming necessity of Ex-*  
 “ *istence, to be only a consequent of its Exi-*  
 “ *stence; and that, when I have supposed it*  
 “ *Finite, I very safely conclude it is not Infinite;*  
 “ *I am utterly at a loss, upon what Expressi-*  
 “ *ons in my Letter this Conjecture can be*  
 “ *founded. But if you mean, that I first*  
 “ *of all prove a Being to Exist from Eternity,*  
 “ *and then from the reasons of things, prove*  
 “ *that such a Being must be eternally Necessary;*  
 “ *I freely own it: Neither do I conceive it to*  
 “ *be irregular or absurd; for there is a great*  
 “ *difference between the order in which things*  
 “ *exist, and the order in which I prove to my*  
 “ *self that they exist. Neither do I think my*  
 “ *saying a necessary Being exists Somewhere,*  
 “ *supposes it to be finite; it only supposes that*  
 “ *this Being exists in Space, without determi-*  
 “ *ning whether here, or there, or everywhere.*

“ To my second Objection, you say: *That*  
 “ *which exists necessarily, is useful to the Exi-*  
 “ *stence*

“ence of any other thing, as a *sine qua non*; in the  
 “sense Space is necessary to every thing: It hath  
 “is proved (you say, by *This Consideration*, that  
 “Space is a property of the *Self-existent Substance*;  
 “and, being both Necessary in itself, and need-  
 “ful to the Existence of every thing else, conse-  
 “quently the Substance, of which it is a property,  
 “must be so too. Space, I own, is in one Sense  
 “a property of the *Self-existent Substance*;  
 “but, in the same Sense, ’tis also a property  
 “of all other Substances. The only difference  
 “is in respect to the Quantity. And since e-  
 “very part of Space, as well as the whole,  
 “is necessary; every Substance consequently  
 “must be *Self-existent*, because it hath this  
 “*Self-existent property*. Which since you will  
 “not admit for true; if it directly follows  
 “from your Arguments, they cannot be con-  
 “clusive.

“What you say under the *first Head*, proves  
 “(I think) to a very great probability, tho’  
 “not to Me with the evidence of *Demonstra-*  
 “*tion*: But your Arguments under the *second*,  
 “I am not able to see the force of.

“I am so far from being pleased, that I can  
 “form Objections to your Arguments; that,  
 “beside the *Satisfaction* it would have given  
 “me in my own Mind, I should have thought  
 “it an *Honour* to have entered into your Rea-  
 “sonings, and seen the force of them. I can-  
 “not desire to trespass any more upon your  
 “better employed Time; so shall only add  
 “my hearty Thanks for your Trouble on my  
 “account, and that I am with the greatest re-  
 “spect,

Reverend Sir,

Dec. the 5<sup>th</sup>.  
1713.

Your most Obligated Humble Servant.

The



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# The ANSWER

T O

## *The Third Letter.*

S I R,

THOUGH, when I turn my Thoughts every way, I fully persuade my self there is no defect in the *Argument it self*; yet in my *manner of Expression* I am satisfied there must be some want of clearness, when there remains any Difficulty to a Person of your Abilities and Sagacity. I did not *mean* that your saying a necessary Being exists *Somewhere*, does *necessarily* suppose it to *be finite*; but that the *manner of Expression* is apt to excite in the Mind an Idea of a *Finite Being*, at the same time that you are thinking of a *Necessary Being*, without accurately attending to the *Nature of That Necessity* by which it exists. Necessity *absolute*, and *antecedent* (in order of Nature) to the Existence of Any Subject, has nothing to *limit* it; but, if it operates at all, (as it must needs do,) it must *operate* (if I may so speak,) *every where* and *at all times* alike. *Determination* of a *particular Quantity*, or *particular Time* or *Place* of Existence of any thing, cannot arise but from somewhat *external* to the thing itself. For Example: Why there should exist just  
such

such a small determinate Quantity of *Matter*, neither *more* nor *less*, interspersed in the immense Vacuities of Space; no reason can be given: Nor can there be any thing in Nature, which could have *determined* a thing so indifferent in it self, as in the *Measure of that Quantity*, but only the *Will* of an *Intelligent* and *free Agent*. To suppose *Matter*, or any Other Substance, *Necessarily-existing* in a *Finite determinate Quantity*; in an Inch-cube, for instance; or in *Any* certain number of Cube-Inches, and *no more*; is exactly the same Absurdity, as supposing it to exist *Necessarily*, and yet for a *Finite Duration* only: Which every one sees to be a plain Contradiction. The Argument is likewise the same, in the Question about the Original of *Motion*. *Motion* cannot be *necessarily-existing*; because, it being manifest that *All Determinations* of Motion are *equally possible* in themselves, the Original *Determination* of the Motion of any particular Body *this way* rather than the *contrary way*, could not be *necessary in it self*, but was either caused by the *Will* of an *Intelligent* and *Free Agent*, or else was an *Effect* produced and determined without *Any Cause at all*; Which is an express Contradiction: As I have shown in my *Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God*, pag. 24. [Edit. 4th.]

To the *Second Head* of Argument, I answer. *Space*, is a Property of the Self-existent Substance; but not of any other Substances. All other *Substances* are *IN Space*, and are *penetrated by it*; but the Self-existent Substance is not *IN Space*, nor *penetrated by it*, but is it self (if I may so speak) the *Substratum* of *Space*, the *Ground* of the Existence of *Space* and *Duration it self*. Which [*Space and Duration*]

*The Answer to the Third Letter.*

*ration* | being evidently *necessary*, and yet  
 Themselves not *Substances*, but *Properties*; show  
 evidently that the *Substance*, without which  
 these *Properties* could not subsist, is itself  
*much more* (if that were possible) *Necessary*.  
 And as *Space* and *Duration* are *needful*, (i. e.  
*sine qua non*.) to the Existence of *every thing*  
*else*; so consequently is the *Substance*, to which  
 these *Properties* belong in that peculiar man-  
 ner which I before mentioncd.

I am, Sir,

Decem. 10.

1713.

Your Affectionate Friend,

and Servant.

T H E



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The F O U R T H  
L E T T E R.

Reverend Sir,

“ W HATEVER is the Occasion of my not  
 “ seeing the Force of your Reasonings,  
 “ I cannot impute it to (what you do) the want  
 “ of *Clearness* in your Expression. I am too  
 “ well acquainted with my self, to think *my*  
 “ *not understanding* an Argument, a sufficient  
 “ Reason to conclude that it's either impro-  
 “ perly expressed, or not conclusive; unless  
 “ I can clearly *Show* the *Defect* of it. 'Tis  
 “ with the greatest Satisfaction I must tell  
 “ you, that the more I reflect on your *first*  
 “ Argument, the more I am convinced of the  
 “ Truth of it; and it now seems to me alto-  
 “ gether unreasonable to suppose *Absolute*  
 “ *Necessity* can have any Relation to *one Part*  
 “ of *Space* more than to *Another*; and if so,  
 “ an *Absolutely-necessary Being* must exist every  
 “ *where*.

“ I wish I was as well satisfied in respect to  
 “ the *other*. You say; *all Substances, except the*  
 “ *Self-existent one, are In Space, and are penetra-*  
 “ *ted by it.* All Substances doubtless whether  
 “ Body or Spirit, exist *in Space*: But when I  
 “ say that a *Spirit* exists *in Space*, were I put  
 “ upon telling my meaning, I know not how  
 “ I

“ I could do it any other way than by say-  
 “ ing, such a particular quantity of Space  
 “ terminates the *Capacity of acting* in finite Spi-  
 “ rits *at one and the same time*; so that they can-  
 “ not act beyond that determined Quantity.  
 “ Not but that I think there is *somewhat* in the  
 “ manner of Existence of *Spirits* in respect of  
 “ *Space*, that *more directly answers* to the man-  
 “ ner of the Existence of *Body*; but *what That*  
 “ *is, or of the Manner of their existence*, I cannot  
 “ possibly form an Idea. And it seems (if  
 “ possible) much *more* difficult to determine  
 “ what relation the *Self-existent Being* hath to  
 “ *Space*. To say he exists *In Space*, after the  
 “ *same manner* that *other Substances* do, (some-  
 “ what like which I too rashly asserted in my  
 “ last,) perhaps would be placing the *Creator*  
 “ too much on a level with the *Creature*; or  
 “ however, it is not *plainly and evidently*  
 “ *true*: and to say the *Self-existent Substance*  
 “ is the *Substratum* of *Space*, in the *common*  
 “ *sense* of the Word, is scarce intelligible, or  
 “ at least is not evident. Now tho’ there may  
 “ be an hundred Relations *distinct* from *either*  
 “ of these; yet how we should come by *Ideas*  
 “ of them, I cannot conceive. We may  
 “ indeed have *Ideas to the Words*, and not al-  
 “ together depart from the *common sense* of  
 “ them, when we say the *Self-existent Substance*  
 “ is the *Substratum* of *Space*, or the *Ground* of  
 “ its existence: But I see no Reason to think  
 “ it *True*; because *Space* seems to me to be as  
 “ *absolutely Self-existent* as ’tis possible any thing  
 “ can be: So that, make what *other* Supposi-  
 “ tion you please, yet we cannot help sup-  
 “ posing *Immense Space*; because there must  
 “ be either an *Infinity of Being*, or (if you ill-  
 “ allow the Expression) an *Infinite Vacuity of*  
 “ *Being*,

“ *Being*. Perhaps it may be objected to this,  
 “ that tho’ Space is really Necessary, yet the  
 “ *reason* of its being Necessary, and its being a  
 “ *Property* of the Self-existent Substance; and  
 “ that *It* being so *manifestly Necessary*, and its  
 “ *dependence on the Self-existent Substance* not so  
 “ *evident*, we are ready to conclude it *absolutely*  
 “ *Self-existent*, as well as *necessary*; and that  
 “ this is the reason why the *Idea of Space*  
 “ forces itself on our Minds, antecedent to,  
 “ and exclusive of, as (to the Ground of its  
 “ existence) all other things. Now this, tho’  
 “ it is really an *Objection*, yet is no direct *An-*  
 “ *swer* to what I have said; because it *sup-*  
 “ *poses* the only thing to be *proved*, viz. that  
 “ the *reason* why Space is necessary, is its be-  
 “ ing a *Property* of a Self-existent Substance.  
 “ And supposing it *not to be evident* that Space  
 “ is *absolutely Self-existent*; yet, while it is  
 “ *doubtful*, we cannot argue as tho’ the contra-  
 “ ry were *certain*, and we were *sure* that Space  
 “ was only a *Property* of the Self-existent  
 “ Substance. But now, if Space be not *abso-*  
 “ *lutely Independent*, I don’t see what we can  
 “ conclude *is so*: For ’tis manifestly *Necessary*  
 “ *Itself*, as well as *antecedently needful* to the ex-  
 “ istence of all other Things, not excepting (as  
 “ I think) even the Self-existent Substance.

“ All your Consequences I see follow de-  
 “ monstrably from your Supposition; and  
 “ were *That* evident, I believe it would serve  
 “ to prove several other things as well as what  
 “ you bring it for. Upon which account, I  
 “ should be extremely pleas’d to see it proved  
 “ by any one. For as I design the Search  
 “ after Truth as the Business of my Life,  
 “ I shall not be ashamed to learn from any



*The Fourth Letter.*

“ Person ; tho’ at the same time I can’t but  
“ be sensible, that Instruction from some  
“ Men, is like the Gift of a Prince, it  
“ reflects an Honour on the Person on whom  
“ it lays an Obligation.

*I am, Reverend Sir,*

*Your Obliged Servant.*

Decemb. the 16<sup>th</sup>,  
1713.

T H E

The A N S W E R

T O

*The Fourth Letter.*

S I R,

**M**Y being out of Town most part of the Month of *January*, and some other accidental Avocations, hindred me from answering your Letter sooner. The Sum of the Difficulties it contains, is (I think) this: That 'tis difficult to determine, what Relation the Self-existent Substance has to Space: That to say It is the Substratum of Space, in the common Sense of the Word; is scarce intelligible, or, at least, is not evident: That Space seems to be as Absolutely Self-Existent, as 'tis possible any thing can be: And that its being a Property of the Self-existent Substance; is, supposing the thing that was to be Proved. This is entering indeed into the very bottom of the Matter, and I will endeavour to give you as brief and clear an Answer as I can.

That the Self-Existent Substance is the Substratum of Space, or Space a Property of the Self-Existent Substance, are not perhaps very proper Expressions; nor is it easy to find such. But what I mean, is This. The Idea of Space, (as also of Time or Duration,) is an *Abstract* or *Partial* Idea; An Idea of a certain Quality or Relation, which we evidently see to be *essentially*

*rily-existing*; and yet which (not being itself a *Substance*,) at the same time necessarily *presupposes* a *Substance*, without which it could not exist; Which *Substance* consequently, must be itself (much *more*, if possible,) *necessarily-Existing*. I know not how to explain this so well, as by the following Similitude. A *Blind Man*, when he tries to frame to himself the *Idea* of *Body*, his *Idea* is nothing but that of *Hardness*. A *Man* that had *Eyes*, but no power of *Motion*, or sense of *Feeling* at all; when he tried to frame to himself the *Idea* of *Body*, his *Idea* would be nothing but that of *Colour*. Now as, in these cases, *Hardness* is not *Body*; and *Colour* is not *Body*; but yet, to the Understanding of these Persons, those Properties necessarily *infer* the Being of a *Substance*, of which *Substance itself* the Persons have no *Idea*: So *Space* to *Us*, is not itself *Substance*, but it necessarily *inferred* the being of a *Substance*, which effects none of our *present Senses*; And being *itself Necessary*, it follows that the *Substance* which it *inferred*, is (much more) *Necessary*.

*I am, Sir,*

*Your affectionate Friend*

*Jan. 29.*

1713.

*and Servant.*

THE



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The F I F T H  
L E T T E R.

*Reverend Sir,*

“ YOU have very comprehensively ex-  
 “ pressed in six or seven Lines, all the  
 “ Difficulties of my Letter; which I should  
 “ have endeavoured to have made Shorter,  
 “ had I not been afraid an improper Expressi-  
 “ on might possibly occasion a mistake of my  
 “ Meaning. I am very glad, the Debate is come  
 “ into so narrow a compass; For I think  
 “ now it entirely turns upon This, whether  
 “ our *Ideas* of *Space* and *Duration* are *partial*,  
 “ so as to *presuppose* the existence of some o-  
 “ ther Thing. Your Similitude of the Blind  
 “ Man, is very *apt*, to explain your Meaning,  
 “ (which I think I fully understand;) but  
 “ does not seem to come entirely up to the  
 “ Matter. For what is the reason that the  
 “ Blind Man concludes there must be *Some-*  
 “ *what external*, to give him that Idea of *Hard-*  
 “ *ness*? 'Tis because he supposes it impossible  
 “ for him to be thus affected, unless there  
 “ were some Cause of it; which Cause, should  
 “ it be removed, the Effect would immediatly  
 “ cease too, and he would no more have the  
 “ Idea of *Hardness*, but by Remembrance.  
 “ Now to apply this, to the Instance of *Space*  
 “ and *Duration*. Since a Man, from his having  
 “ these *Ideas*, very justly concludes that there  
 “ must be *somewhat External*, which is the

“ Cause of them ; consequently, should This  
 “ Cause ( whatever it is ) be taken away,  
 “ his Ideas would be so too : Therefore, if  
 “ *what is supposed to be the Cause* be removed,  
 “ and yet the *Idea* remains, *That Supposed*  
 “ *Cause* cannot be the *Real one*. Now, grant-  
 “ ing the Self-Existent Substance to be the  
 “ *Substratum* of these Ideas ; could we make  
 “ the *Supposition* of its *ceasing to be*, yet Space  
 “ and Duration would still *remain unaltered* :  
 “ Which seems to show, that the Self-Exi-  
 “ stent Substance is not the *Substratum* of Space  
 “ and Duration. Nor would it be an Answer to  
 “ the Difficulty, to say that *every Property* of  
 “ the Self-Existent Substance, is *as necessary*  
 “ as the *Substance itself* ; since That will only  
 “ hold, *While the Substance itself exists* : For  
 “ there’s implied in the Idea of a *Property*, an  
 “ impossibility of subsisting without it’s *Sub-*  
 “ *stratum*. I grant the *Supposition* is *absurd* :  
 “ But how otherwise can we know whether  
 “ any thing be a *Property* of such a Substance,  
 “ but by examining whether it would *cease to*  
 “ *be*, if its supposed Substance should do so ?  
 “ Notwithstanding what we have now said, I  
 “ cannot say that I believe your Argument  
 “ *not conclusive* ; for I must own my Ignorance,  
 “ that I am really at a loss about the nature  
 “ of *Space* and *Duration*. But did it plainly  
 “ appear that they were *Properties* of a *Sub-*  
 “ *stance*, we should have an *easy* way with the  
 “ *Atheists* : For it would at once prove de-  
 “ monstrably an *Eternal, Necessary, Self-existent*  
 “ *Being* ; that there is *but One* such ; and that  
 “ he is *needful* in order to the existence of all  
 “ other Things. Which makes me think, that  
 “ tho’ it may be *true*, yet ’tis not *obvious* to  
 “ every Capacity : Otherwise ’twould have  
 “ been

“ been generally used, as a fundamental Argument for a proof of the Being of God.

“ I must add one thing more ; that your Argument for the *Omnipresency* of God, seemed *always* to me *very probable*. But being very desirous to have it appear *demonstratively conclusive*, I was sometimes forced to say what was *not altogether my Opinion*: Not that I did this for the sake of *disputing*, (for besides the particular disagreeableness of this to my own Temper, I should surely have chosen another Person to have trifled with ; ) but I did it to set off the Objection to Advantage, that it might be more fully answered. I heartily wish you as *fair Treatment* from your Opponents in Print, as I have had from you: Tho’ I must own, I cannot see, in those that I have read, That unprejudiced Search after Truth, which I would have hoped for.

*I am, Reverend Sir;*

*Your most Humble Servant.*

Feb. 3.

1713.



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 The ANSWER

TO

## The Fifth Letter.

S I R,

I N a multitude of Business, I mislaid your last Letter; and could not answer it, till it came again to my Hands by Chance. We seem to have pushed the Matter in question between us, as far as it will go; and upon the whole, I cannot but take notice, I have very seldom met with Persons so reasonable and unprejudiced as your self, in such Debates as these.

I think, all I need say in Answer to the Reasoning in your Letter, is; that your granting the *Absurdity* of the *Supposition* you were endeavouring to make, is consequently granting the *necessary Truth* of my *Argument*. If

\* Ut partium *Temporis* ordo est immutabilis, sic etiam Ordo partium *Spatii*. Moveantur hæc de locis suis, & movebuntur (ut ita dicam) de seipsis. NEWTON. Princip. *Mathemat. Schol. ad Definit. 8.*

† Deus non est *Æternitas* vel *Infinitas*, sed *æternus* & *infinitus*; non est *Duratio* vel *spatium*, sed *Durat* & *Adest*. *Durat semper*, & *Adest ubique*; & *existendo*

\* *Space* and *Duration* necessarily remain, even after they are supposed to be taken away; and be not (as 'tis plain they are not) *Themselves Substances*; then the † *Substance* on whose Existence they depend, will necessarily remain likewise, even after it is supposed to be taken away: Which shows it to be an *impossible and contradictory Supposition*.

As

As to your Observation at the End of your Letter; that the Argument I have insisted on, if it were *obvious* to every Capacity, should have more frequently been used as a Fundamental Argument for a Proof of the Being of God: The *True Cause* why it has been seldom urged, is, I think, This: That the Universal Prevalency of *Cartes's* absurd Notions, (teaching that *Matter* is necessarily *Infinite* and necessarily *Eternal*, and ascribing all things to mere *Mechanick* Laws of *Motion*, exclusive of *final* Causes, and of all *Will* and *Intelligence* and *Divine Providence* from the *Government* of the *World*;) hath incredibly blinded the *Eyes* of *Common Reason*, and prevented Men from discerning *Him* in whom they live and move and have their *Being*. The like has happened in some *Other* Instances. How universally have Men for many Ages believed, that *Eternity* is no *Duration* at all, and *Infinity* no *Amplitude*? Something of the like kind has happened in the matter of *Transubstantiation*, and (I think) in the *Scholastick* Notion of the *Trinity*, &c.

*I am, Sir,*

*Your Affectionate Friend and Servant.*

Apr. 8.  
1713.

*semper & ubique, Durationem & Spatiū, æternitatem & infinitatem, constituit. Cum unaquæque Spiritus particula, sic Semper & unumquodque Durationis indivisibile momentum, Verge; certe rerum omnium Fabricator ac Dominus, non est Nunquam Nusquam. Omnipotens est, non per Virtutem solam, sed etiam per substantiam: nam virtus sine substantia subsistere non potest. In ipso continentur & moventur Universa, &c. N. E. W. I. O. N. Princip. Mathemat. Schol. general. sub finem.*

*|| Puto implicare contradictionem, ut Mundus [meaning the Material World] sit finitus. Cartes. Epist. 69. Partis prime.*

Part of a

# LETTER

Writ to *Another Gentleman,*  
who had proposed several of  
the same *Objections* with the  
foregoing.

S I R,

Y O U will give me leave, without any Pre-  
face or Apology, to propose directly the  
best *Answer* I can, to the *Objections* you have  
offered.

† Rom. 1,  
20; The  
invisible  
things of  
Him from  
the Creation  
of the  
World are  
clearly  
seen, being  
understood  
by the  
things that  
are made;  
even his

There are but *Two* ways, by which the *Be-  
ing*, and *All* or *Any* of the *Attributes* of *God*  
can possibly be proved. The one, *a priori*; the  
other, *a posteriori*. The *Proof a posteriori*, † is  
*level* to *All Mens Capacities*: Because there is  
an endless *gradation* of *wise and useful* phæno-  
mena of *Nature*, from the most *obvious* to the  
most *abstruse*; which afford (at least a *moral*  
and *reasonable*) *Proof* of the *Being* of *God*, to  
the *several Capacities* of *All unprejudiced Men*,  
who have any *Probity* of *Mind*. And this is  
what (I suppose) *God* expects (as a *Moral*  
*Governour*;) that *Moral Agents* should be de-  
termined by.

*Eternal Power and Godhead.*



The Proof *a priori*, is (I fully believe) strictly *demonstrative*; but (like numberless *Mathematical Demonstrations*;) capable of being understood by only a few attentive Minds; because 'tis of Use, only against *Learned and Metaphysical Difficulties*. And therefore it must never be expected, that this should be made obvious to the *Generality* of Men, any more than *Astronomy* or *Mathematicks* can be.

This being premised in general, I proceed to Particulars.

Concerning the Notion of *Self-Existence*, I explain my self thus. Of every thing that *Is*, there is a *Reason* which now does, or Once or Always did, *determine* the *Existence* rather than the *Non-existence* of That Thing. Of That which derives not its Being from Any Other thing, this *Reason* or *Ground* of Existence, (whether we can attain to any *Idea* of it, or no,) *must* be *In* the Thing itself. For though the bare proof by *Ratiocination*, that *there cannot but exist such a Being*; does not indeed give us any distinct *Notion* of *Self-existence*, but only shews the *Certainty* of the thing: Yet when once a thing is known, by reasoning *a posteriori*, to be *Certain*; it *unavoidably follows* that there *Is in Nature* a Reason *a priori*, (whether we can discover it or no,) of the Existence of That which we know cannot but exist. Since therefore, in that which derives not its being from any Other Thing, the *Ground* or *Reason why it exists* rather than *not exists*, must be in the thing it self; and 'tis a plain Contradiction to suppose its own *Will*, by way of *efficient Cause*, to be the reason of its Existence; it remains that *absolute Necessity* (the same Necessity that is the Cause of the

unalterable *Proportion* between 2 and 4,) be by way of *Formal Cause*, the *Ground* of That Existence. And this Necessity is indeed *antecedent*, though not in *Time*, yet in the *Order of Nature*, to the Existence of the Being itself: Whereas on the contrary, its own *Will*, is, in the *Order of Nature*, *subsequent* to the Supposition of the Existence of the Being; and therefore cannot be the *formal Cause* of that Existence.

Nothing can be more *absurd*, than to suppose that any thing (or any Circumstance of any thing) *is*; and yet that there be absolutely *no reason Why* it is, rather than *not*. 'Tis easy to conceive, that *We* may indeed be utterly ignorant of the *reasons*, or *grounds*, or *causes* of many things. But, that any thing *is*, and that there is a *real reason* in Nature *why* it is, rather than *is not*; these two are as necessarily and essentially connected, as any two *Correlates* whatever, as *Height* and *Depth*, &c.

The Scholastick way of proving the Existence of the Self-existent Being, from *the absolute perfection of his Nature*; is ὁσερόν περτέ-  
εω. For *All* or *Any Perfections*, *presuppose* Existence; Which is *Petitio Principii*. But *bare Necessity of Existence* does not *presuppose*, but *infer* Existence. That which exists by *absolute Necessity of Nature*, will always (whether you will or no) be *supposed* or *included* in any possible Idea of Things, even where you never expressly *indcavour* to *exclude* it: Just as the *Proportion* between 2 and 4, remains *included* in the very Terms, wherein any Man would *embavour* expressly to *deny* it.

To *exist at all*, and to *exist every where*, are the very same thing, where the *Cause* or  
Ground

*Ground* of the Existence, is not either *confined to*, or *operates only in*, some *particular Place*. For 2 and 4 to have *at all* a certain proportion to each other, and to have That same Proportion *every where*; is the very same thing. And the like is true, of every thing that is *necessary in itself*. To suppose (as you suggest) that the Self-existent may be *limited* by its own *Nature*; is *præsupposing* a *Nature*, or *limiting Quality*: Whereas in this case, here must nothing be *præsupposed*; no *Nature*, no *Quality* whatsoever, but what *arises* (and consequently *every where alike*) from a *Necessity absolute in itself*, and antecedent (in the Order of our Ideas) to any *Nature*, *Place*, *Quality*, *Time* or *Thing* whatsoever.

When I say, that *Necessity absolutely such in itself*, has no relation to *Time* or *Place*: My meaning is, that it has no relation to, or dependence upon, any *particular Time* or *Place*, or *any thing in any particular Time* or *Place*; but that it is the same in *All Time* and in *All Place*. What you mean by *Time* and *Place* being *finite*, I understand not. The Schoolmens Notion of *Time's* depending on the *Motions* or *Existence* of the Material World, is as *Senseless*, as the supposing it to depend on the *turning* or *not turning* of an *Hour-glass*. The same also is true of *Place*.

*Infinite Space*, is *infinite Extension*: and *Eternity*, is *infinite Duration*. They are the Two first and most obvious and simple Ideas, that every Man has in his mind. *Time* and *Place*, are *the sine qua non* of all other things, and of all other *Idea's*. To suppose Either of them *Finite*, is an express *Contradiction* in the *Idea* itself. No Man *does* or *can* possibly imagine Either of them to be *finite*; but only, either  
by



by *non-attention*, or by *choice*, he attends perhaps to part of his Idea, and *forbears attending* to the remainder. All the Difficulty that has ever arisen about this Matter, is nothing but *Dust* thrown by Mens using *Words* (or rather *Sounds only*) in their Philosophy, instead of *Ideas*. And the Arguments drawn from the *Fargon* of the Schoolmen, will equally prove every *Axiom* in *Euclid*, to be *uncertain* and *unintelligible*.

They who *remove* the Idea of *Infinity*, (or of a *Being* whose Attribute *Infinity* is) by supposing *Space* to be nothing but a *relation between two Bodies*; are guilty of the *Absurdity* of supposing *That*, which is *Nothing*, to have *real Qualities*. For the *Space which is between two Bodies*, is always unalterably just what it was; and has the very same *Dimensions*, *Quantity*, and *Figure*; whether *These* or *any other Bodies* be *there*, or *any where else*, or *not at all*:

Just as *Time* or *Duration* is the  
\* same, whether you turn your  
*Hour-Glass*, or no; or whether  
the *Sun* moves, or stands still;  
or whether there *was*, or *was*  
*not any Sun*, or *any Material*  
*World* at all.

\* Eadem est *Duratio* seu  
perseverantia *Existentia* re-  
rum; sine *Motus* sine *celle-*  
*ret*, sine *tardi*, sine *nulli*.  
NEWTON *Princip Mathem.*  
*Schol. ad Definit. 3.*

The Schoolmens Distinctions, about *Spirits* existing in *Ubi*, and not in *loco*; are *mere empty Sounds*, without any manner of *signification*.

To set *Bounds* to *Space*, is to suppose it *bounded* by something which itself *takes up Space*; And *That's* a *Contradiction*: Or else that 'tis *bounded by Nothing*; and then the Idea of *That Nothing*, will still be *Space*: Which is another *Contradiction*. Beings which exist in *Time* and in *Space*, (as every *finite* thing must needs do,) *presuppose* *Time* and *Space*: But *That Be-*

ing, whose Existence makes Duration and Space, must be *infinite* and *eternal*, because *Duration* and *Space* can have *no Bounds*. Not, that *Duration* and *Space* are the *Formal Cause* of *That Existence*; but, that *necessary Attributes* do *necessarily* and *inseparably infer*, or *show* to us a *Necessary Substance*; of which *Substance itself* we have *no Image*, because 'tis the *Object* of *none of our Senses*: But we perceive its *Existence* by its *Effects*; and the *Necessity* of that *Existence*, by the *Necessity* of certain *Attributes*. and by *other Arguments* of *Reason* and *Inference*. To suppose *Space removed, destroyed, or taken away*; amounts to the absurd *Supposition* of *removing a thing away from itself*. That is: If in your *imagination* you *annihilate* the *Whole* of *Infinite Space*, the *Whole Infinite Space* will still remain; and if you *annihilate* any *Part* of it, *That Part* will still *necessarily* remain; as appears by the *unmoved situation* of the *Rest*. And to suppose it *divided* or *Divisible*, amounts to the same *Contradiction*.

The *Objection*, of *Immensity* being *inconsistent* with *Spirituality* and *Simplicity*; arises merely from the *Fargon* of the *Schoolmen* Who (in order to help out *Transubstantiation*) have used themselves to speak of *His* and of many other things, in *Phrases* which had no *Meaning* or *Ideas* belonging to them. By denying the *real Immensity* and the *real Eternal Duration* of *God*, they in *true Consequence* (though 'tis reasonable to suppose they saw *not* *That Consequence*.) denied his *Being*. The *Immensity* of *Space*, (it being throughout *absolutely uniform* and *essentially indivisible*.) is no more *inconsistent* with *Simplicity*, than the *uniform successive flowing* of the *Parts* of *Duration*,

ration, (as you most rightly observe,) are inconsistent with *Simplicity*. There is no Difficulty at all in This Point, but a mere *Prejudice*, and *False Notion* of *Simplicity*.

As to *Spirituality*: The individual Consciousness of the One Immense Being, is as truly *One*; as the present Moment of Time is *individually One*, in all Places at once: And the One can no more properly be said to be an *Ell* or a *Mile* of *Consciousness*, (which is the Sum of your Objection,) than the other can be said to be an *Ell* or a *Mile* of *Time*. This Suggestion, seems to deserve *particular* consideration.

To the Objection, that the supposing God to be really and *substantially* Omnipresent, is supposing him to be the *Soul of the World*: I answer; This is a great Mistake. For the Word, *Soul*, signifies a *Part* of a *Whole*, whereof *Body* is the *Other Part*; And they, being united, *mutually affect* each other, as *Parts* of the same *Whole*. But *God* is present to every part of the Universe, not as a *Soul*, but as a *Governour*; so as to *act upon* every thing, in what manner he pleases; himself *being acted upon* by Nothing.

What you suggest about *Space* having *no Parts*, because 'tis *Infinite*; is a mere *Quibble* indeed, and has nothing in it. The meaning of *Parts*, (in Questions of this Nature,) is, *separable, compounded, un-united Parts*, such as are the *Parts of Matter*: Which, for That reason, is always a *Compound*, not a *simple Substance*. No *Matter* is *One Substance*, but a *Heap of Substances*. And That I take to be the Reason, why *Matter* is a Subject *incapable of Thought*. Not because 'tis *extended*; but because its *Parts are distinct Substances un-united, and independent on each other*. Which (I suppose) is not the Case of *Other Substances*. The  
Kinds



*Kinds of Substance* may perhaps be *more* and *more different* from each other, than we (at present,) for want of *more Senses*, are aware of. *Matter* and *Spirit*, is no other Division, than *Matter* and *not-Matter*: Just as if one should divide the Species of Animals, into *Horses* and *not-Horses*.

As to the Question, why *Absolute Necessity* will not admit of the Existence of *Two distinct Independent Beings*, as well as of *different Attributes and Properties* in *One Independent Being*: I answer; *Absolute Necessity*, in which there is no where any *Variation*, cannot be the *Ground of Existence* of a *Number of Finite Beings*, however agreeing and harmonious; because That (viz. *Number*, or *Finiteness*,) is itself a manifest *Deformity of Inequality*. But it may be the *Ground of Existence* of *One Uniform infinite Being*. The *different Attributes* of which *One Uniform Being*, are not a *Variety of Parts*, or an *un-Uniformness* (if I may so speak) of the *Necessity* by which it exists; but they are *All* and each of them *Attributes* of the *Whole Attributes of the One simple infinite Being*: Just as the Powers of *Hearing* and *Seeing*, are not *Inequalities* or *Difformities* in the *Soul of Man*; but each of them, Powers of the *Whole Soul*.

As to the *Last Argument* you refer to: My Meaning therein is This; that 'tis a *Contradiction* to suppose *Two* (or more) *necessarily-existing Beings*; because *Each* of them, by the *Supposition*, being independent, and *sufficient* to itself, tho' the *Other* were supposed *not to exist*; they thereby *Each* of them *mutually destroy* the *supposed necessity* of the *Others Existence*; and consequently *Neither* of them indeed will be *necessary* or *Independent*. For instance; If *Matter*, or *Spirit*, or any *Other Substance*,

stance, could as possibly be conceived to exist without *That in which they all exist*, as *That in which they all exist* can be conceived to exist without *Them*; then there would be *necessary-Existence* on *Neither* part.

As to the Question concerning the possible *Plurality of Infinites*: 'Tis certainly true that the Infinity of Space, neither excludes *finite Bodies* nor *finite Spirits*, nor *infinite Body*, nor *infinite Spirit*. But it excludes every thing of the *same Kind*, whether *finite* or *infinite*. Which is all that my Argument requires. There can be but *One Infinite Space*, and but *One Infinite Time*, and but *One Infinite Spirit*, (taking *Spirit* to mean a particular *positive distinct Substance*, and not the mere negative *non-matter*, of which there may be innumerable Kinds;) And (if *Matter* could be infinite) there could likewise be but *One infinite Body*; and so on. For *One Infinite* in all dimensions, exhausts always the whole possibility of *That Kind*, though it excludes not *Other*.

The *Ubi* of *Spirits*, being their *Perception* only; and the *Omnipresence* of God, being his *infinite Knowledge* only; are mere *Words*, without *any Sense* at all. And by the like *Confusion*, *any thing* may be said to be *any thing*; and we have in us no *Principles of Knowledge* at all, nor any *Use* either of *Words* or *Ideas*.

*I am, Sir,*

*Your assured Friend*

*and Servant, &c.*

*F I N I S.*

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