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FORM NO. 609; 3,0,39; 8808.
DISCOURSES
Tracts and Poems,
ON THE
Following Subjects,
VIZ.
Wisdom the first Spring of Action in the Deity.
A Charge delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Haskoll.
A Charge delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. Mr. Harson.
Queries proposed to the consideration of all such as think it an Injury to Religion to shew the Reasonableness of it.
A Letter to the Rev. Mr. John Ball, of Honiton.
Four Essays, on Benevolence, Benevolence, Novelty, and the Human Soul.
Five Letters to the Author of the St. James's Journal.
Poems on several Occasions.

By the Reverend Mr. HENRY GROVE,
of Taunton.

V O L. IV.

L O N D O N:
Printed and Sold by JAMES WAUGH, at the Turk's Head in Gracechurch-street.
MDCCXLVII.
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THE
Wisdom the first spring of Action in the Deity.

A

Discourse,

In which,

Among other things,

The Absurdity of God's being acted by natural inclinations, and of an unbounded liberty, is shewn.

The moral attributes of God are explained.

The origin of evil is considered.

The fundamental duties of natural religion are shewn to be reasonable; and several things, advanced by some late authors, and others, relating to these subjects, are freely examined.

1734.

Vol. IV. B
Find, both from conversation, and several writings lately published, that it is growing more and more into fashion to run down all proofs a priori, of the moral attributes of God, as well as of his existence. Whether the Being of God is capable of this sort of proof, I shall not at present inquire. I will suppose that it is not, and that the only way of coming to the knowledge of a first cause is from effects. But then, I take leave to say, that we are not under the same necessity of proving the goodness, and other moral perfections of God in this way, exclusive of every other kind of argument.

That there exists some unoriginated Being, we are certain from the evident absurdity of an infinite series of Beings, every one depending upon a former, yet all of them together independent of any first cause. That this first Being is possessed of all wisdom and power, we gather from the frame of the universe in which are such numberless and most wonderful displays of both these attributes, as at once satisfy the understanding, and exceed its utmost
comprehension. So far we reason merely from effects. But here we shall be obliged to change our method of reasoning, if we intend to have any plain and invariable rule by which to guide our conceptions of God, as a moral agent, and our expectations from him. For how shall we know whether God be just and good? The sober and considering part of mankind, and indeed all whose minds have not been corrupted by vice, or prepossessed by established opinions, have universally agreed in ascribing justice and goodness to the supreme Governor of the world. And by what have they been led into this uniformity in their sentiments? Hath it been entirely by observing the traces of these perfections in the works of Creation and Providence? Or rather hath it not been because they judged the things themselves to be highly worthy of God, and such as the most perfect nature cannot want? Have they not apprehended an inherent, unchangeable excellence in these qualities, which hath been the ground of their concluding, that God can never be unjust or malevolent, because then he would not be himself; and that, therefore, whatever seeming contradiction there may be between some appearances in Providence, and the idea of perfect goodness, the contradiction is not in the things themselves, but wholly owing to our imperfect views of the ways and works of God? That this, which is the common notion of mankind, and that which most naturally offers
offers itself to the mind, concerning the intrinsic loveliness and excellence of those, which we call the moral perfections of the Deity, or their being necessarily and everlastingly fit, and becoming that Being whose understanding is infinite, and his majesty above all comparison; that this notion, I say, is absolutely right, and that, consequently, we need not search for any other principle of action in the divine Being but that boundless intelligence or wisdom, to which all the fitnesses and reasons of things, in all their varieties and degrees, are ever naked and open, this is what I have attempted to shew in the First Chapter of this Discourse; I hope, not without all success.

I have only this single lemma to premise, viz. that there is a negative rectitude in the divine nature; by which I mean, that God hath no wrong bias upon him, no inclination to any thing, which to his wisdom, that is never deceived, appears unbecoming him to do. I might content myself with referring to what I have afterwards, I think, proved, that there are in God no inclinations or affections of any kind, properly so called; and to be sure then none that interfere with his immutable ideas of just and right. But I add this further consideration, that the existence of God being necessary, his wisdom infinite, his power equal to his wisdom, and his essence simple and uncompounded, there can be no room
room for an intestine war between wisdom and inclination. We can account for all the irregular desires of mankind, condemned by their own Reason, either from bodily temper and complexion, or mistaken and narrow notions of persons or things, or their having been crossed and baffled in their designs, or from the influence of custom and example; nothing of which, or a like nature, having place with regard to God, it is evident that he cannot be tempted with evil, nor by the same necessity of nature (which is a simple uniform idea) both discern that which is good, and be inclined to the contrary. From whence I conclude, that God hath no such inclinations or affections as oppose the dictates of his infinite wisdom.

The Author designs not by any thing he hath said, to make innovations in our common language, when we are speaking of the Deity. He is very well contented that certain expressions, consecrated by long use (such as decrees and purposes, kind affections and inclinations, compassion, &c.) should still keep possession. Only, he thinks that the old rule ought to be applied here, that what is spoken in compliance with human weakness, must be understood in a manner worthy of God. That such language is popular, not philosophical; fitted to strike the imagination and passions, and therefore used; not such as mere Reason would make choice of.
HEN I examine my notion of the self-existent, all-perfect Being, I find, among others, these two ideas, of infinite knowledge, and a correspondent energy, or active force included in it. The knowledge which this Being hath, of what is fit or unfit, to be chosen, or done in every supposable circumstance, is what we mean by the wisdom of God. These fitnesses and unfitnesses, are distinguished into natural and moral. Natural fitness is (chiefly at least) the fitness or subserviency of things and actions in their own nature, to some good end. Moral fitness is the fitness or congruity, that intelligent and free agents should make choice of certain ends preferably to others, and of certain actions, as means suited and adapted to these ends. That there are different moral kinds of action, some fit,
Sect. II. The will of God constantly to act after this or that manner, cannot be esteemed an excellence, if, on supposition, he had willed to act in a different and contrary way, the former manner would have had nothing great and excellent in it. The excellence or dignity, must be first in one way and method of acting above another, and from thence be transfered to the will, which, being steadily and complacently determined that way, is therefore said to have a rectitude in it, or to be holy and just and good. Otherwise the meaning and proof of God's moral perfections would be no more than this, that he wills what he wills, and doth every thing he doth; because his willing or doing it, makes that a perfection or excellence, which in its own nature is absolutely indifferent.

Sect. III. The wisdom of God is primarily conversant about ends, and secondarily only about the means. All ends are not morally indifferent, till God, by his arbitrary choice, establishes a difference between them. E.g. It is not a thing indifferent, whether the
end proposed by God in creating intelligent Beings, shall be the display of his sovereign and uncontrollable power in their everlasting misery, without the least thing done by them to deserve it; raising their expectations by express and solemn promises, and then disappointing them; whether God shall propose this as his end in their creation, or somewhat else, is not, I say, a thing morally indifferent. The sun in the heavens is not more visible by its own light, than the truth of this maxim, that whoever knowingly and wilfully hurts another without cause, is guilty of injustice; and the greater the hurt, the greater the injustice. What is without cause, or reason is without right, and what is without right in the present case, is contrary to it, even to that right which every Being hath, not to suffer those evils which no other Being hath a right to inflict. Now can any thing be more dreadful to the sufferer than eternal misery? Or more without a cause or reason, when he is able to plead his innocence? Such a proceeding would be at an infinite distance from all right, and therefore infinitely unworthy of the most excellent nature. To be taken out of a state of non-existence, and immediately condemn'd to a state of everlasting torment, much more after a life of the most exact obedience and submission to its Maker, is what the creature might justly complain of; and still more, if there was the security of a promise on God's part
part of a contrary treatment. Let any one, for argument's sake, make this his own case, and then say, whether he should not think himself to have just matter of complaint; and then let him consider further, whether the complaint being just, the thing complain'd of can be just too. So far then we are got, that there is an essential everlasting fitness in justice, and faithfulness. — Let us now see whether we cannot advance further.

Sect. IV. Nothing whatsoever is of value but happiness, either the agent's own, or the happiness of other Beings; or that which hath some relation to happiness; either more immediate or remote, necessary or voluntary, to happiness itself, or to the capacities of it. A universe of unintelligent matter falling (if you please) by chance, into the most consummate order and regularity, but without any mind to discern and enjoy its beauties, is in effect nothing, because good for nothing. Nor is the case mended by adding intelligence and perception, if that intelligence and perception, be not attended with pleasure; perception without all pleasure, is no better than figure and magnitude without perception, as these are just equal in value to nothing. To perception add misery, and nothing will deserve the preference. From hence I proceed to argue thus — That which immediately and properly causes misery and not
not happiness, or less happiness than misery, is upon the whole evil or worse than nothing; that which causes neither happiness nor misery, either immediately or upon reflection, is neither good nor evil, and so will serve for no more, than to weigh against nothing. Beauty and order are, in their own nature, fitted to communicate pleasure to percipient Beings, that are proper judges of them; in the natural world as they are arguments of design and skill in the framer, and lead the thoughts to beauties of a higher kind; in the moral world, as they are the effects of the noblest faculties applied to their right use. When I say that these things are in their nature fitted to produce pleasure, my meaning is, that nothing is required to this pleasure, but a clearness of perception, without any bias or inclination, one way or the other. But now, on the contrary, were it supposeable (which it is not) that beauty and order had no more aptitude to give pleasure, than deformity and confusion, there would be nothing to chuse between them.

Sect. V. Let us apply this to the two accomplishments, so universally coveted, of knowledge and power; they can no otherwise be perfections, or things rather to be desired than the want of them, than as the Being who possesthes them is the happier for them himself, or more capable of promoting the happiness
happiness of others. We must therefore grant that end to be best for a knowing and powerful Being, in the pursuit of which, his knowledge and power will contribute to actual happiness, or to the capacities and opportunities of it. Why I add this restriction, will be seen presently. After this manner are we obliged to reason concerning the knowledge and power of God himself, the supreme and best of all Beings. Is the original design of God in exercising these attributes, the misery or happiness of his creatures? It cannot be their misery, for the reason before given; and because, if this be their intended effect, they are directed to no valuable end, and are, therefore, so far considered, at best of no use either in themselves, or to the possessor, unless his happiness be conceived to grow out of their misery; an imagination so contradictory to the notion of a perfect Being, that I presume no one who believes God to be such a Being, did ever expressly and directly entertain it. There is indeed a contradiction in the very supposition, that the misery of the creature makes the happiness of the Creator. As his own works he cannot hate them without hating himself; he must therefore hate them, if at all, for works done by them; therefore could not hate them before they were created; therefore could not create them to be miserable. Besides, what are the works for which God can hate his creatures? If for evil, these they
they might have avoided, and then would not have been miserable; if for good, or because they have done no evil, this would be injustice, which would cause as much pain by clashing with his clear and adequate ideas of right and wrong, as it could be supposed to afford pleasure, by feeding a malicious temper; not to add, that the same necessity cannot be the original of malice, and of that right judgment which discovers and condemns the evil of it.

Sect. VI. It is a very ingenious comparison of Bishop Cumberland *, "the greatest power that can be imagined, without wisdom and justice (add goodness too) implies no more of blessedness or of majesty, than what may be found in a mass of lead, supposed to be of an infinite weight; for, as those who understand Mechanics know very well, there may be a weight equivalent to any power." We might otherwise resemble power, separate from moral attributes, to a resistless tempest, that carries all before it; which agrees with the notion the famous Earl of Rochester owned himself to have had of the Deity †, as a vast power, that wrought every thing, by the necessity of its nature. † From all

* De Legib. Nat. p. 226. 4°. † See His Life by Bishop Burnet.

† The Divinity excels in three things; immortality, power, and virtue; of these the most venerable and divine
all this I infer, that the end or design of God in the Creation, must be happiness; as to the degree, and manner of attaining it, suited to the faculties, and dependence, and the freedom of his reasonable creatures; or to speak more strictly, a capacity of happiness, which must be valuable, for the same reason that happiness itself is so. It is fit that reasonable creatures should be made free, that they may freely acknowledge their dependence on the First Cause, and act according to it. And it is fit that the happiness of a creature, whose actions are free, should be the effect of the right use of his own freedom. With this only limitation, the happiness of his creatures must always be designed by the Creator. The fitness of punishment is deducible from what hath been now said of happiness, and is not to be explained in any other way. For, because happiness hath enough in its idea, to awaken the active powers of an intelligent Being; because it is very plain, wherein the happiness of such a Being must principally consist, even in the satisfaction of its largest and most exalted faculties, and that the only means conducing to such a happiness, is the love and practice of universal goodness, which is the immediate

divine is virtue. For the elements and vacuum have immortality; earthquakes, thunders, storms and torrents have great power; but as for justice and equity, nothing participates thereof, except what is divine. Plutarch's Life of Aristides. vid. loc.
in the DEITY.

immediate source of very great pleasure to a well-disposed mind: and because further, it is in the power of this Being, to use these means with success, therefore it is fit, that this Being should exert his faculties in an agreeable course of actions, and that, if he does not, he should be punished with the loss of that happiness which he neglects and despises.

Sect. VII. The sum is — That a reasonable creature should not be made miserable, before he hath deserved it, is the first and most apparent fitness; that he should be made for happiness is the next; the next to which is, that every reasonable Being should be obliged to choose Reason for his guide in the search of happiness; which is followed with a fourth, that he who will not be persuaded to take the right way to be happy, should be left to the consequences of his own wrong choice. But then the fitness that this or that particular person should be punished with the loss of happiness, is only accidental, and beside the primary design of God, and therefore wholly to be ascribed to the creature's own perverseness.

Sect. VIII. Another argument for fitness, in the choice of the end, is, that if there were no fitnesses but with relation to the means, after God had first fixed his end, then what we call the moral perfections of God, (e.g. justice, goodness, and truth) are only so many
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many inclinations, propensions, or affections in the Divine Nature, to certain ways of acting, (or, if you please, one inclination branching itself into several streams) not flowing from his wisdom, but immediately from the same original proper necessity as that of his being eternal and immense. Now should we grant affections in God answering to inclinations of instinct in mankind, yet it cannot be known what they are, unless answerable fitnesses of action, arising from the natures and essences of things, be presupposed, and it be further determined what those fitnesses are. Then, indeed, necessity being a uniform self-consistent thing, the necessary propensions and affections of the Divine Being, if there are any such, must fall in with the natures of things, which are founded in the same necessity. On the contrary; deny any such antecedent fitnesses, and you leave no possible way of knowing, with any certainty, what the propensions of the self-existent nature are; the mere agreement of actions to his inclinations, whatever these inclinations, or those actions be, making them to be good and eligible. It must therefore, after all the assurances which God hath given, or can give us, whether from the frame of the world, or by a supervening revelation, that he is so and so disposed towards us, and intends to do, or obliges himself to do this and that for us; it must, I say, after all this, remain uncertain, whether he is so kindly affectioned as he declares,
in the DEITY. 17

clares, and will do as he promises; if so be a false declaration of his affection and intention, or a manifest breach of promise have nothing in them unworthy of the Deity; or only as they would be contradictory to his inclination; for how do I, how shall I know that he is so inclined? Or, that if he be so at present, the stream will not change its course, and his inclination turn to another point? In which case, what was before unworthy of him, will become highly worthy. The result is, admitting such antecedent affections, yet the moral fitness, or unfitness of actions cannot be the effect of their agreement or disagreement with these affections, but is an inseparable adjunct to the nature of things; between which and the supposed affections there will be a harmony and conspiration, as being both resolvable into the same absolute necessity.

Sect. IX. We have had attempts to prove the goodness of God, as it signifies (in some men's idea of it) a kind inclination or principle of benevolence in the Deity, without any reason for it; but I think, much short of the mark. A certain Writer *, to the question, Why do you suppose God to be good rather than otherwise? Answers, "Because I can prove him so a posteriori, or by ascending from "effect to cause. That this is an attribute of

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* An Essay on moral obligation, p. 16, &c.
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the Deity, appears from the works of the
Creation, which is evidently contrived for
the good of the whole, or so as to mani-
fest, that the design of the Creator therein
must be to communicate happiness." Not
to put this Gentleman in mind of the evil,
both natural and moral, that is in the world,
which hath driven some into the absurd sup-
position of two first principles of things, one
good, the other evil, and which must, at
best, exceedingly weaken this argument for
the goodness of God a posteriori, when it rests
upon this foot, and there is supposed to be
nothing in the idea of goodness itself, which
implies it to be a perfection: not to dwell
upon this, I shall only observe, that no con-
clusion can be drawn from effects in the pre-
sent case, because the phenomena which we
have already seen are only a part, and it may
be a very small part of the universal plan,
which God hath laid in his own thoughts;
sso that the ultimate design, for aught we
know, may be the final misery of all percep-
tive Beings, to be introduced by contrary
appearances, that it may be the more surpri-
sing, and the more sensibly felt when it comes;
or the predominant affection in God, may be
the love of variety, which, in the course of
ages, will produce a thousand alterations in
the universe, happiness being sometimes pre-
pollent, at other times misery. If from our
ideas of truth and goodness, we cannot be
Sure that there is any thing in the nature of these attributes, that should give them the preheminence to falsehood and cruelty, then we cannot be sure but this or any other may be the scheme projected, forasmuch as we have seen so little of it, to be able to argue from effects, if we have nothing to assist and guide our reasonings in the absolute nature and fitness of things.

Sect. X. "But" (says another Author *, who espouses the same notion, tho' to a very different purpose) "some things are necessarily pleasing or displeasing, and that which makes them so, is the relation there is in the nature of the thing between the object and the mind perceiving; what is the result of this relation in most cases, we know not but by experience; yet this I think we may be sure of, that certain things are in their nature incapable of being the foundation of pleasure; of which kind I take malevolence to be." If by the relation in the nature of the things between the object and the mind perceiving, this Author meant the relation between the object and judging faculty, I entirely agree with him in his account of mental pleasure and pain. But this he could not mean consistently with his own hypothesis; because when an object gives pleasure or pain, not by immediate and simple pers-

* Two Letters from a Deist to his Friend, p. 33.
perception, but after reasoning or making a judgment about it, it is for some apprehended fitness or unfitness in the object, to which we have, or have not, had regard in our conduct. And as to any other relation between an object and such a mind as the supreme, it is absolutely unconceivable; and, were it granted, would prove that malevolence might be natural and necessary, as well as any other affection, and afford as much pleasure in the gratification. The gratifying of any inclination is pleasant; and that the pleasure is sometimes over-paid for, is because it is condemned by Reason; as its being condemned by Reason is, because Reason judges it to be criminal or foolish. A beast of rapacious kind tears its prey in pieces, and feels no remorse after it hath done; and the chief of intelligent Beings might in like manner delight in sacrificing millions of innocent creatures to a cruel temper, without having the pleasure in the least abated, by the knowledge of what these wretched Beings undeservedly suffered, could it be supposed that one reasonable Being hath no concern in the happiness or misery of another, but as it affects his own; and setting aside that connexion, cannot be blamed for refusing to do the most easy action, in order to remove an unsupportable load of misery, from a great number of innocent and virtuous Beings, or even for doing all in its power, to lay such a load of misery upon them.

Sect.
Sect. XI. Upon the whole, were it so, as these two Writers, one of them a Christian, the other a Deist, say, that in point of moral excellence, there is no difference between goodness and malice, so that all the assurance we have that God is good, or hath an inclination to do good, is from the effects. Were this a true account of things, I should think we were upon a very precarious bottom, and had nothing at all to trust to, whether in the phenomena of nature, or the promises of the Gospel, since the design in both might only be to deceive us. Would not this be a natural progression? There are no such things as moral fitnesses, therefore no evidence for any such attributes as goodness, truth and faithfulness, therefore no way of proving the Christian Revelation: or, supposing the revelation of the truth of the things revealed, or a Providence that regards the actions of mankind, or a future state, therefore no difference between virtue and vice, but only as they happen to affect our present interest. My mind would be unavoidably led, one step after another, to this sad conclusion of the whole matter. And how then are men to blame for thinking God to be delighted in those lewd, superstitious, and inhuman ceremonies, which they have introduced into their religious worship? Why might not the character of Belial or Moloch have agreed to the true God? It was usual for
the Carthaginians to offer children in sacrifice to their Gods. The Historian * tells us, "they at one time sacrificed two hundred "children of the best families to Saturn, "putting them into the hands of a brazen "statue of that God, out of which they "dropped into a burning furnace beneath." And how could they know the impiety of this, if they had only effects to argue from, which according to their interpretation of them, signified that their sullen God was angry, and not to be appeased on any other terms?

Sect. XII. There is one thing I cannot forbear remarking now I am upon this head, and that is, how far a man may be blinded by his attachment to a favourite hypothesis. How else could one of the Gentlemen now mentioned (whose zeal for Christianity I do not question, tho' he be altogether unknown to me, as his book is proof sufficient of his reasoning abilities) have made an invidious reflection upon his adversary, which returns with double force on himself? "It is easy, "faith he, to see what a pernicious tendency "the scheme of independent fitneses is of, "from the use that hath been made of it, by "a late advocate for Deism, whose whole "book is built upon this principle, that duty "and obligation ariseth from the nature and relations

* Diodor, Sicul. 1. 20.
in the DEITY.

"relations of things." Lo! here is another Deist who agrees with this Author, in saying that wisdom hath nothing to do but with the means, and that therefore the goodness of God is a pure natural inclination, which he follows without all consideration of a supposed reason and fitness in things, which these Writers treat as an absurdity. Shall I now, to bring an odium upon this principle, expose it as the refuge of Deists, when they are fleeing from the fear of future punishment? He who first set me the example, could not justly complain of me on this account. But the truth is, I have always had such a dislike to the argumentum ab invidia ductum, that I hope I shall never meddle with it. The only inquiry here ought to be, which of these two Deists hath argued right from his principles? That the Author of Christianity as old as the Creation, must have quite mistaken the doctrine of moral fitnesses before he could think to press it into his service against Christianity, is evident from hence, that one of these fitnesses is, that the creature should obey his Creator, without taking the liberty to question, whether the command is from God, merely because he does not see the fitness of the thing commanded; unless it be a question, whether God is wiser than man; I might have said, whether one man may not be so much wiser, or better circumstanced than another, as to discern an expediency where that other cannot? But now
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the plain tendency of the assertion, that there is no fitness in the divine actions but what is founded in natural inclination, is that we shall be left under the utmost uncertainty, for want of knowing what these inclinations are; or, if we determine for benevolence, we shall be justified to believe, that however men behave, they shall certainly be happy, as happy as they are capable of being made, at last. Happiness, whether men take care to fit themselves for it or no, being the only thing that can satisfy that benevolence which is a mere inclination of nature; and therefore, where there is not a moral disposition for happiness, God, for his own sake, will bestow it. What hath now been said of the wisdom of God, will prepare the way for that which follows concerning his will.

C H A P. II.

Sect. I. The infinite energy, or active force, which, when I am contemplating the nature of the ever-blessed God, is the other thing that offers itself to my thoughts, as comprehended in his idea, may be conceived to exert itself, in willing to do something which he sees fit to be done, or in doing what he wills. They, who make will and power to be in God the same, will excuse me
me for speaking of them as distinct; since, whatever my sentiments are, I do not pretend to decide any thing in that controversy by this manner of speaking, but only follow the order of my ideas. The former of these I would call volitive, the latter executive power. I have not mentioned a third branch of the active force, distinct from the other two, because, to me it appears very questionable, whether there be any such, I had almost said, next to certain that there is not. Were there indeed any such thing as inclination in God, that did not come up to express and full volition, nor follow the conduct of his unerring wisdom, as volition does, but was in order of nature coexistent and independent, this I own would be a third way of considering the active force, and require another, and peculiar name, being as easily separable in our ideas from the other two, as gravitation. (supposing such a property were really inherent in matter, which I am well persuaded it is not) would be from actual motion.

Sect. II. But, in the first place, the possibility of this sort of inclinations in the Deity is hardly conceivable; for they will have the same kind of necessity as his existence itself; and tho' they lie, if I may be allowed the expression, in a parallel direction with the path that is marked out by his infinite understanding, so as to run on with it, and to termi-
nate in the same end, yet they will not in the least be influenced by it. But now, how can the active force be imagined to tend one way rather than another, antecedent to the knowledge of God that one of these ways is preferable to the other? And, were this possible, would it really be a perfection? The inclination will be nevertheless mechanical for being seated in an intellectual nature, if it is absolutely, physically, and immediately necessary; nor ever the less blind and unintelligent, for being united with wisdom and intelligence, if that wisdom and intelligence have no part in guiding the inclination, but are only subservient to it in bringing about the end, which inclination excites to the pursuit of. And is a blind mechanical inclination to be numbered among real absolute perfections; or a proper foundation for all the moral attributes of God? Yet thus it is we are taught to conceive of God by some Writers. The first idea in order (as they range them) is goodness, or a kind and benevolent, but undiscerning inclination; then comes in wisdom, which is instead of eyes to inclination, not to guide it in the choice of its end (for to this it is determined by a blind necessity) but of the most proper means of arriving at the end proposed.

Sect. III. That there can be no place for such inclinations in a perfect nature, I further prove after this manner. Inclination is founded
founded in some prior perception, i. e. there must be some perception, pleasant or painful, that precedes inclination, or proper actual inclination will never exist. It is so, even as to the appetites of hunger and thirst, which, if any one would think, should immediately arise out of nature placed in proper circumstances for it. And yet it is certain, all that necessarily follows the want of meat and drink, is only a painful sensation, not the desire of meat and drink. Imagine the first man, the instant he was created, to have only felt the same uneasiness we do, when we are hungry and thirsty, and that, while he was in this condition, a crystal stream had run at his feet, and fruit of the finest taste and colour had hung just before him, yet as long as he did not know the property of water to lay thirst, and of the fruit to subdue hunger, and moreover, was not secretly admonished by any effluvia of the agreeableness of these things to his animal nature, he would have had no more desire to the water, than to the channel it flowed in; nor to the fruit, than to the timber of the tree which it grew on. So that even hunger and thirst, as far as they signify an appetite, or actual inclination to meat and drink, are not the immediate growth of nature, but presuppose a painful sensation, from which the appetite appears to be entirely distinct, by this consideration that there is no connexion between them, but by the
the intervention of another perception. In like manner the inclination to relieve a miserable object is, many times, owing to the pain occasioned in the mind of the spectator by the sight of such an object. And may we think that, analogous hereto, God is liable to uneasy sensations, for the removal of which, he is inclined to some particular actions? Certainly, this would not be to think worthily of him. But why may not certain ideas cause a pleasing perception, as for instance, the idea of a happy creature, that owes its happiness to God's free gift, from the pleasure accompanying which idea, there ariseth an inclination to produce such a creature? To this I might answer, that the reason why the idea of a beneficent action begets pleasure, is the apprehended fitness of such an action; in which case, an inclination to that action, would not be an inclination of the sort I am now disputing against; this having no foundation in the fitness of things. But, without enlarging upon this answer, I shall just observe that there is no room, even for inclinations that are subsequent to the ideas and perceptions of the divine mind; that is, God does not, having perceived a fitness in actions, feel in himself an inclination to them as the effect of this perception. I cannot but look on this as a very odd notion, though, I confess, it is by no means so dishonourable to God as the other. The grounds upon which I deny any such
such rational inclinations in God as well as
the other fort, will be explained in their
proper place. To proceed therefore,

**Sect. IV.** Will any one say there must
be natural inclinations in God, because there
can be no exciting reason * to action without
them; so that for want of this internal weight,
the Deity must remain in an everlafting sus-
pense, or indifference to all action? But to a
Being of the most consummate wisdom, and
unbounded power, not drawn aside by counter
inclinations, what more persuasive reason can
there be, than the eternal unchangeable rea-
son, or fitness of things?—It is fit to be done,
therefore God does it.—Is not this way of
speaking more respectful to the Deity, than
if it should be said, he does this, not because it
is better than the contrary would have been, but
because it better suits his inclination? And yet
this would be the plain fact, if God could
will nothing that he was not previously in-
clined to, and was inclined to nothing but by
a necessity of nature; since this would be to
make inclination the sole moving spring of
volition. The reason of things apprehended
by the divine mind, would not at all contri-

* All exciting reasons presuppose instincts and affec-
tions. *Hutcheson of the Passions,* p. 216. 'Tis plain if
the Deity had nothing essential to his nature, corre-
 Bording to our sweetest and most kind affections, we
can scarce suppose he could have any reason exciting
him to any thing he hath done. *Id.* p. 239.
bute towards it; for if it hath any degree of influence, so as to bear but a third or fourth part in determining the will, it may as well determine it wholly, there being no more contradiction, that the two or three remaining parts which go to complete the volition, should proceed from a regard to the reason of things, than the one or two that are supposed to do so. Whatever hath any, though never so inconsiderable, weight, may have its momentum increased, till it is sufficient to break the balance.

Sect. V. It is possible then, for God to act without any other reason or motive, than the intrinsic beauty and goodness of the action. And if this be possible, then thus it is we ought to think he acts, as well on supposition of a prevening inclination, as of none. He will, indeed, on the former supposition, act with inclination, but not from it, as the proper ultimate reason of volition, any more than on the latter. Did he act from inclination, in the sense now explained, or so as that to such like questions as these, Why does God favour the righteous more than the wicked? Why is he faithful to his promises? &c. no further answer was to be returned, than because he was inclined to it, or because it was necessary for some end (as for instance, the bringing about the publick happiness of the rational system) which he was inclined to promote.
in the Deity.

promote without any reason; in this case the wisdom, equity, and goodness of divine Providence being only occasioned by the necessary co-incidence of the dispositions of a perfect nature with the nature of things, the dispensations of God's Providence would be no otherwise wise, and just, and good, than they would be without his consciousness, or knowledge, of this co-incidence, which is not the ground, or reason of his proceedings. As certainly therefore, as all the ways of God are wise, and righteous, and good, they are the result of wisdom, and not of unguided inclination. The same wisdom that discovers the preferableness of one end, one scheme, one method to another, is inducement enough to a Being, in whom there is the most perfect rectitude of nature, to perform that end, that scheme, that method in all his works.

Sect. VI. I desire never to forget the weakness and narrowness of my mind, especially when treating on matters of so sublime a nature, in which I would carefully avoid being hasty and positive; but, after all my care, if I follow the chain of my present reasonings, I am led further to think, that as there are no propensions or inclinations in God, antecedent to, or rather independent of, his knowledge of the eternal and immutable relations of things, so nor consequent and dependent upon this knowledge. The progress
is not from a clear view of what is best to an inclination towards it, and from thence, by another and distinct step to volition; but, if it be of something which God sees fit to be immediately done, the view of it immediately issues in volition, without any intervening inclination; if of something fit to be done, but not presently, the view of it is neither followed with inclination or volition, but only with a purpose of doing it when it shall be proper; or, to speak more strictly, is attended with a complacential thought, that when the fulness of time is come for doing it, such is the unchangeable perfection of his nature, he shall certainly will to do it. I freely own for myself, that I am not able to separate an inclination to actions, that are not to be done till numberless ages are past, from something of uneasiness. And, were it otherwise, yet to what purpose should we suppose an inclination so long before it passes into volition? And I will add, why a moment before, if not from eternity? That is, why at all?

Sect. VII. It may be proper to take notice, that in representing the view of what is fit to be immediately done as immediately connected in God with the act of volition, my design was only to exclude inclination from being a sort of medium between these two, not every thing else whatsoever. Inclination, I think, is evidently shut out, but not such a
joy or pleasure as is worthy of God, and essentia
to his happiness. The supreme Being is, in
Scripture, styled the blessed God; µαραπή, happy; with which agrees the common sense
of mankind, that he is as much happier as he
is greater than all other Beings. And what
is the happiness of the Deity, but the pleasure
or satisfaction he enjoys? And of what nature
and kind is this pleasure; and where shall
we find the source of it? Is it a mere con-
fused sensation of delight, that hath its foun-
dation in instinct and temper only, being
without any proper motive to it, or object
about which it is exercised? The mind recoils
at the bare mention of such an absurd suppo-
sition; and yet as absurd as the notion of
blind sensation in the Deity may appear, it is
not more so, than that of blind inclinations;
they are fit company one for the other.

Shall we say then, that the happiness of
the Deity hath its original from knowledge and
reflection? So our noblest pleasures have; and
surely then, much more the exalted pleasures
of the supreme mind; particularly, from the
survey of his own ideas, and the relations ex-
isting between them. These relations are
infinite, whence results an infinite number
of truths, the contemplation of which, in the
vast variety of their combinations and depend-
dences, must give infinite delight. Truths
merely speculative are fruitful of pleasure;
how much more practical truths, or those

\[\text{Vol. IV.} \quad \text{D} \quad \text{that} \]
that concern a right conduct, whether in God himself, or in his reasonable creatures. The fitnesses of action as they lie before him in one boundless prospect, cannot but be attended with unconceivable pleasure, which pleasure must be heightened by the knowledge he hath, that there is nothing, and can be nothing, to draw him aside into actions contrary to the fitness of things, and that therefore he shall ever act as becomes a Being of infinite perfection. This he knows with the same certainty as he knows the fitness of things; and from his knowledge of these fitnesses, and the pleasure he receives from his knowledge, we may be assured, that God in every instance will act after this manner.

The very supposition that God hath pleasure in beholding these moral fitnesses, shews that he can need no other motive to do what is fit, than his knowledge that it is so. The pleasure he takes in any truth must be agreeable to the nature of that truth; that is, the truth being moral or practical (a proposition rightly affirming an action to be better than its contrary, or than the omission of it) the pleasure must arise from the consideration of it under this notion. And if God takes a pleasure in beholding what is fit to be done as such, when he further sees that this or that is fit to be done by him, he cannot, when it comes to be thus fit, but will to do it, and take a pleasure in doing it. We have here then
then a double pleasure, one resulting from the contemplation of moral fitnesses, the other from acting according to them, which, perhaps, is no more than a continuation of that pleasure which God receives from the knowledge that he shall always so act. A wise Being hath great pleasure in acting wisely, and in the assurance that he shall act thus on all occasions, and the more wisely he acts, and the greater his assurance of his continuing to do so, the greater that pleasure; and therefore greatest of all, where the wisdom is infinite and unchangeable. But then this pleasure is not properly the cause of God’s acting wisely, because the very ground of that pleasure which accompanies the divine actions, is his acting in the manner he does, because it is acting wisely, or according to the reason and nature of things as the constant motive of his actions.

Sect. VIII. Upon the whole, I would distinguish what is less evident from what is more so. That there are no inclinations in God at all, distinct from his actual volitions is to me so evident, as hardly to leave any doubt about it in my mind. That there are no such inclinations, as depend not upon any previous acts of the understanding, is still more evident, and the proof of it more easily apprehended. But what is most evident of all, and ought in my judgment to be out of question among those,
those, who would think in the least honourably of God, and not give up all his moral perfections, is, That there are essential and everlasting fitnesses in things and actions, which being perfectly known to God, are the true and invariable reasons of his conduct.—From this Principle the following Corollaries are naturally deduced.


CHAP. III.

First COROLLARY.

SECT. I. THERE can be no such unbounded liberty in the will of God as some have advanced, who (for what end was best known to themselves) have talked deceitfully of God, and complimented him with an absolute empire over truth and falsehood, over good and evil. "It is repugnant to Reason" (faith a celebrated * Philosopher) "that the will of God should not from eternity have been indifferent to all things, which are or ever shall be, because there is nothing good or true, nothing to be believed, or done, or omitted, the idea of which was in the divine intellect, before his will determined to effect it such as it is. Neither do I here speak of priority of time, since it was not there by a priority of order or nature, i.e.

in the Deity.

"so as that the idea of goodness moved God
to choose one thing rather than another.
"e. g. He did not therefore will to create the
world in time, because he saw this to be
better, than if he had created it from
eternity; nor did he will that the three
angles of a triangle should be equal to two
right, because he knew that it could not
be otherwise; but on the contrary, because
he willed to create the world in time,
therefore this is better than if he had crea-
ted it from eternity, and because he willed
that the three angles of a triangle should
be necessarily equal to two right, therefore
this is now true, and cannot be otherwise;
and so of the rest. And thus this perfect
indifference in God, is a most complete
argument of his omnipotence. But as to
man, finding the nature of all that is good
or true already determined by God, and
unchangeably so, it is manifest that he does
the more readily, and consequently, the
more freely embrace any good or truth,
the more clearly he apprehends it, and that
he is never indifferent, but when he is igno-
rant which is the truer or better, or at least
doeth not see it so clearly but that there is
some room for doubting. And thus the
indifference belonging to human liberty is
quite another thing from that which agrees
to the divine."

D 3 Sect.
Sect. II. In this passage we find all truth, whether speculative or practical, (or truth and goodness) is entirely subjected to the free determination of God. The particular instance of a thing fit to be done is not very well chosen, it being a disputable point, whether it was possible, in the nature of the thing, for the world to have been created from eternity, and the creating of it sooner or later in time being, perhaps, a matter of arbitrary choice. But since the assertion is universal that there is nothing good or true, to be believed, or done, or omitted, but the will of God was from eternity indifferent to it, we have a right to suppose, that if it had come into the Author's head, he would not have scrupled to say, that fidelity would have been no better than perfidiousness, mercy than cruelty, universal benevolence than universal malice, if God, of his own free-will, had not made them better. I am pleased, however, to see these two sorts of truth placed upon the same foot; it rejoices me to hear that the truth of this Proposition, the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right, is not more necessary and unchangeable than the goodness of some actions; and that nothing could have hindered the one from being what it is, but a power that had the same absolute dominion over the other. Only grant me that moral fitness is as essential to some actions, as the property
property now mentioned is to a triangle, and I desire no more. That there are eternal and necessary truths, which always were, and always will be the same, and could not possibly have been otherwise, is as plain as that there is any such thing as truth; since nothing could be proved, if something were not self-evident, and what is self-evident could not be made so, because then we could not know whether it is so or no, till we had first proved, that it was the will of God, that the truth of it should be self-evident. And some Propositions being self-evident, the evidence of others is demonstrative, and so resolves into self-evidence; a demonstration being a chain of ideas, in which the connexion between every particular link, and the next following is evident of itself, or without any proof. That there are likewise moral truths which have the same immutable necessity, was attempted to be proved in the two first Chapters, and appears to me in the same full light, as that there are mathematical truths of this kind. The nature of justice and injustice, gratitude and ingratitude, goodness and malice, sincerity and fraud, being no more liable to change, than those of a triangle, a square, and a circle; and having the same invariable relation of agreement or disagreement with a Being possessed of freedom and intelligence, as these several figures have one with another. Nor is it a real lessening to the true liberty of
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the will of God, that he cannot arbitrarily make good to be evil, and evil to be good, any more than it is to the power of God that he cannot make truth and falsehood to be the same thing.

Sect. III. Hobbs is not quite so liberal to the Creator and Governor of the world as Descartes, yet he too talks in a strain that is sure high enough. A right to do all things, does essentially and necessarily adhere to the power of doing them *; that is, in plain English, God hath power to damn his innocent creatures everlastingly, therefore he hath a right to do it; his mere power to deceive his creatures, by acting directly contrary to all the assurances and revelations of his mind that he hath given, or can possibly give them, is not to be questioned, therefore his right to deceive them is also unquestionable. And if there be no difference between physical and moral power, or between mere power and right (as we have Mr. Hobbs's word for it there is not) we have then no absolute security that God will not thus act; and how much better, I pray, is the sovereignty ascribed by some to the most excellent of all Beings than this monstrous, this boundless right of Hobbs? For my part, I cannot see wherein they differ; since each, like a vast abyss, swallows up, without distinction, every thing that is thrown into it. In all

* De Cive, l. i. cap. i. § 14.
all likelihood, Hobbs had never thought of that absurd notion, or would have been ashamed to broach it, if the then reigning Systems in Divinity, had not given authority to that and several other parts of his wild scheme of Religion, Morality, and Politicks.

Sect. IV. Some of late, who are far from believing Cartes's omnipotence, or Hobbs's right, and would entertain the supposition of God's devoting a world of innocent creatures to everlasting misery and torments with the utmost abhorrence, will not, however, allow that one thing is in itself fitter than another; so that, if they abhor the supposition just now put, it is not an abhorrence of reason (according to their own account of it) but of mechanism, like those which we call natural antipathies. The will of God they will tell you, is not guided by any such rule, as fit and unfit *. "What is the reason" (faith an ingenious person in this way of thinking) "why God should communicate happiness to the good and innocent? Will you say, that the reason for it is, that such a procedure is agreeable, and the contrary opposite to the nature of things? If so, I should then ask, to what things is such a procedure agreeable to the nature of? Is it to that of the creatures? Is it agreeable to their nature as sensible Beings? It is certainly pleasing to them

* Divine Benevolence, p. 21.
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them as such; but this is entirely besides
the question, and abstracting from this
sense of the word, I don't see but that
pain and misery is as agreeable to the nature
of a sensible Being, as pleasure and happi-
ness.” But, with this Gentleman's leave, I
would ask, how long a sensible, and an in-
ocent Being, have been equivalent terms?
The question was concerning communicating
happiness to a good and innocent Being; and
certainly, in the nature of the things, there
is a greater agreement between innocence and
happiness, than between innocence and misery,
were it for no other reason but this, that the
happiness of an innocent Being, must, in part,
arise out of his innocence or goodness itself,
while his misery must be wholly external, and
so (if not grounded in a mistake) not only
suit but ill with his innocence, but, like a
negative quality, help to destroy the satisfaction
that flowed from the consciousness of it; for
inward satisfaction may be so equally ballanced
with outward pain, as taken with that, to
have no more value than non-existence, or
so over-ballanc’d as to be unspeakably worse
than that. If any one faith, that he cannot
see how happiness agrees better with innocence
than misery does, I can only with him a
better eye-fight. Should this Author, upon
second thoughts, say, that tho' there is no
reason why God should communicate happi-
ness to the good and innocent, yet there are
plain
plain reasons, why he should not inflict misery, I shall think it a considerable gain to have this one moral fitness granted me, and laying this for a foundation, make no doubt of raising a superstructure of many other moral fitnesses upon it.

Sect. V. The same Author adds, a few lines after this, "I do not find (I am sorry to say it) any necessary connexion between "mere intelligence, tho' ever so great, and "the love or approbation of kind and beneficent actions." And I, in my turn, am heartily glad to hear him say, that he is sorry not to find this connexion not only as his good nature breaks out in this expression, but as it is a confession, of which he himself was not aware, of the intrinsick excellence of beneficent actions. He is sorry not to discern a connexion between the highest degree of intelligence, and the approbation of kind and beneficent actions? Why so? But because he is inwardly conscious (as indeed every man must be who hath not debauched his reason, and much more one of our Author's virtue and good sense) that such actions greatly deserve approbation. For if they do not deserve approbation, there is no cause for sorrow, that mere intelligence or reason would not lead any one to approve them. But, if they deserve love and approbation, as this Author doth in a manner confess, certainly the same intelli-
intelligence which discovers the merit of such actions, as the highest intelligence cannot but do, must needs approve them, and delight in doing them, if there be no opposite principle to counteract it, which there is not in God.

Sect. VI. It is a strange question for any thinking man and lover of virtue to ask, but which I have heard some such seriously put, who were very well able to have answered it themselves, You talk of the fitnesses of things, pray, what are these fitnesses fit for? If I mistake not, I have shewn before that they are fit to ingage the approbation of the greatest and wisest of all Beings; as, in the second part of this Essay, I shall endeavour to shew, that they are well fitted to awaken the attention, and to attract the love and esteem, of all intelligent agents whatsoever. They are a much fitter rule, surely, for a reasonable Being to act by than mere inclination, be it never so right, which yet is the only thing by which these Gentlemen will allow the will of God to be bounded. I cannot forbear asking this new sort of advocates for virtue and benevolence, Is not one action better than another? Tho', I know, they will presently return upon me, For what, and for whom is it better? To which I answer without any manner of hesitation, it is better with regard to the agent himself, not excepting the ever blessed God. Doing good to those that are good, and to the innocent,
innocent, is a better work in itself, and better suits the perfections of the divine nature, than causelessly and needlessly putting them to pain. It is a better employment of that infinite power, which is under the direction of infinite wisdom, than the contrary; better fitted to yield a reasonable, I should have said a divine satisfaction. Will it be said that nothing can be fit that is impossible; but that it is impossible, without inclination, for the Divine Being himself to act one way or another? Why, placing the thing in this light, it is, it seems, fit that the sovereign Being, having an inclination to do good, should do good, and not evil; and that, in doing it, he should have an eye to the fitness of it. But I argue further, that if one action be fitter and better than another, supposing only that it is possible, then the approbation and choice of it can never be impossible to a Being that clearly perceives that fitness, and hath nothing to corrupt its judgment, and pervert its choice; which is evidently the case, with respect to the supreme Being. He hath a natural power of choosing, and can actually exercise this power, whenever a sufficient motive is not wanting, as such a motive to action can never be wanting where the action hath an apparent fitness, and there is no wrong bias to divert and restrain the choice of it.

Sect.
Sect. VII. After all that I have said to prove, that the will of God is in some sense limited by the nature of things, so that he can no more will to do some things on account of their unfitness, than he can to do others, because he knows them to be physically impossible, I am far from saying, that a liberty of indifference can never agree to the will of God, as some learned men have done, alleging this argument for it, that God can never act without a sufficient reason. If there can be instances assigned of things in their nature indifferent, in all such instances, the will of God must be perfectly indifferent with regard to such things. And, for aught I know, there may be things of this nature, and the following may be instances of it, viz. whether the world should be created in one part of space or another; of such a determinate quantity of matter, or a few particles more or less. Yet even here, I must beg leave to observe, that, according to what appears to me, the will of God hath no power over the nature of these things, so, as by preferring one of two indifferent things, to make that become better than the other; but what was in its nature indifferent before, does in its nature continue the same still. If there was nothing to determine the divine election to that part of space, and that quantity of matter, which he made choice of in creating the world, before the world was created, then that part of space, and that quantity
quantity of matter, being chosen, are not now better than any other; since nothing in that particular division of space or portion of matter, was the reason of its being chosen, and no change hath happened in the nature of space and matter themselves; space and matter being in themselves the same, whether a world exists in such a part of space, and having such particular bounds and limits, or no.

To conclude—I shall venture to lay down this as a just idea of the divine liberty, viz. the entire dominion of the supreme mind over his own actions. He who is infinite in power cannot be over-ruled by any external force to do what he would not do, if left to himself; nor can he be tempted to do evil, by a fallacious appearance of things to his understanding; or by inclinations not subject to Reason: his infinite wisdom securing him against the first, and his having no inclinations at all, to be sure none that are wrong, against the latter. It is absolutely certain, that God judges every thing to be as it is, and the contrary naturally impossible. That, having no motive to act otherwise, he will always do that which he judges best to be done is morally certain, the contrary may be said to be morally impossible. So the scripture says that it is impossible for God to lie. So we are used to say, that it is impossible this or that should be, meaning, that it cannot be supposed without the greatest absurdity. And if, in any case, this expression be allowable,
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it is in this; since we might with much less absurdity, conceive all the intelligent Beings throughout the universe to agree in affirming a known falsehood, without any the least temptation for doing it, than that the conduct of the Divine Being, should in a single instance, contradict the counsel of his infinite and unerring wisdom. A natural power in God, in its abstract consideration, extending alike to all actions whatsoever, is not denied. But, as it has been very well observed, a moral action is the exercise of a natural capacity, under the direction of a moral judgment. Now the power of God being under the direction of infinite wisdom, and there being no counter-inclination to draw his will aside, tho' God acts with perfect freedom, so as to determine himself with the utmost complacency, yet that determination, where there is a right on one side, and a wrong on the other, is as certain as if it was physically necessary. Were there no direction at all of any kind there could be no action; and where the direction lies all one way, the action will certainly be that way. This is not the only instance wherein one perfection of the divine nature is, in the exercise of it, limited by another. There is in God a vis motrix, a locomotive power; yet such is the perfection of his nature, that he cannot exert this power, in regard of himself, because of his immensity. There is indeed this difference between the latter
latter case and the former, that the restraint laid by the omnipresence of God upon his power to move from one place to another is natural, whereas that which the wisdom of God puts upon his power to do wrong is of a moral kind; but in both cases the effect is alike certain. I shall not, therefore, scruple to affirm, that the most perfect freedom of which we can have any idea, is the power which the wisest of all Beings hath to act in all cases as his wisdom directs, without any the least interruption or control.

Sect. VIII. Here I intended to have past on to another Corollary, but having met with a Discourse *, published not long since, in which the ingenious Author hath advanced two notions, on which he seems to lay no little stress, I shall take leave to stop so long as briefly to examine them. The first of these notions is, That there not only may be, and even are, numberless instances, both in the natural and moral world, of things perfectly equal; but that it is necessary, and of the greatest importance, for the honour of God, and as the ground of our obligation to his goodness, that there should be, and that we should believe there are so. This Author does himself allow that the will of God, wherefoever there is a superior fitness,

* An Essay on the freedom of the Will in God, and in creatures. See Sec. 5. of that Discourse, particularly p. 60.
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fitness, is determined by that fitness; and faith, "that for God to act an unfit thing would be unwise, and to act a thing which is evil would not be good;" from whence it necessarily follows, that supposing the nature of things to be such, that to an infinite understanding there must always appear a reason for choosing one thing rather than another, tho' God, as a wise and good Being, could not, upon this supposition, in any one instance, choose to act otherwise than he does, yet this would be no manner of diminution of his glory; unless it be more for the glory of God to act without a reason than with one, only to shew his sovereignty and dominion. The question therefore at bottom, is about a matter of fact (viz. whether the reasons are so exactly equal for choosing this or that in a multitude of cases, that God's preference of one to the other is purely arbitrary) upon which it seems to me of little consequence which way we decide, or whether we decide at all, one way or the other; since God as properly determines himself, when he hath a reason for his choice, as when he hath none. Nor are we less obliged to be thankful for the favours God confers upon us, in one case than in the other. Have I received very great and apparent benefits? Were they designed as such? And altogether unmerited on my part? Certainly then, without inquiring whether God had his reasons for doing so much
in the DEITY.

much for me as he hath done, or for doing more for me than he hath for another, I cannot but acknowledge that I am under the strongest engagements to love and gratitude.

According to this Author’s rate of reasoning, if of three persons (whom we will call A, B, and C) C hath been favoured as much more than B as A hath been less, will not the comparison with C, take away from the obligation that B is under to thankfulness as much as the comparison with A inhances it? Had the degree of favour to A and B been the same as to C, would C, who now beholds A and B below him on the scale of benefits, have been less in debt to the goodness of God, tho’ enjoying all the same blessings and favours as now, only because he would have seen A and B upon the same foot with himself? On the contrary, the happiness of a generous mind being increased by company, that which makes C happier, viz. the happiness of A and B, ought not, one would think, to lessen his thankfulness.—But ought we not to take notice, with the liveliest sentiments of gratitude, of God’s having chosen us to be the objects of his distinguishing goodness, passing by others? And is not this motive to gratitude frequently insisted upon in Scripture? I own it; and it is what the examples produced by this Author put out of all doubt. But what then? It is to be hoped the ground of our thankfulness is not that God hath past by others, but that,
passing by them, he hath chosen us, who might likewise have been excluded, for any proper claim we have to higher degrees of favour. 

Merit we have none any more than they; and, as for any other reasons, however proper and effectual they might be, to move an infinitely wise God, they do not, by being arguments of his wisdom, depreciate from his goodness, or lessen our obligations to it.

Will they who shall be living upon earth, when the Gospel is become the Religion of all mankind, have less reason to be thankful for this unspeakable gift than we have, merely because it will then be a common blessing, like the light of the sun, and not, as now, a distinguishing privilege? Or is there just cause why any Christian nation should be more sparing of their praises and acknowledgements to God for giving them the Gospel, because he hath not given it to them only? I cannot help suspecting that such thoughts proceed from the prejudices of education, by which a man hath been taught, in order to magnify the Grace of God the more, to narrow the bounds of it; which is such a strange way of magnifying the Grace of God as no one, without instruction, would have readily thought on.

And if this was the motive to God's making use of this discriminating method in placing his favours, that his Grace would hereby appear the more illustrious (not indeed in itself, but with regard to those few, that happen to be...
be the objects of it) which seems to be the opinion of some, will it not be unaccountable that the same motive did not induce him to confine his goodness to a single object, that being the way to exalt it to the highest pitch of all?

Sect. IX. The other notion in that Treatise, which I cannot come in with, is, That where one thing is no better than another before a choice is made of it, that choice makes it better to the choofer; so that God himself by choosing any scheme or mediums, though antecedently no way preferable to other schemes and mediums, which he does not choose, renders that scheme and those mediums fit, and good, and agreeable *. Here I am apt to think, the ingenious Author deceived himself, or rather was deceived by Bishop King, for want of attending to an obvious distinction, between the absolute and respective goodness or fitness of two or more schemes or mediums, which lie before the view of an intelligent agent. The absolute goodness of any scheme is that which makes it fit to be chosen, if there be no superior reason against it. The respective goodness is its eligibleness above other schemes, that is, the excess of its absolute goodness above theirs. Consequently, where the absolute goodness of two schemes is equal, neither of them is respectively good and fit; nor can

* p. 86.
Wisdom the first spring of Action possibly become so by being chosen. And what then should make it good and agreeable to the chooser? Upon the account of its absolute goodness it may be agreeable; but then, forasmuch as this does not exceed the absolute goodness of the scheme unchosen, the plain and intire reason of its being agreeable is its absolute fitness to be chosen, not its being chosen rather than another equally fit. But the agent hath chosen it, and is therefore pleased with it. What, is he pleased that he hath chosen that and not the other? That cannot be, if he knows that one is no better than the other, and is not influenced in his choice, by a particular and unaccountable fancy for one above the other; which, though it may be frequently fact, in respect of such compounded and imperfect Beings as we are, cannot, without detracting from the simplicity and perfection of his nature, be supposed of God; not to add, that where there is such a partial fancy, the agreeableness of the thing does not arise from our having actually chosen it, but from the fancy we have for it, which is the true reason of our choice.

Second Corollary:

The divine rectitude is a complex term, including several ideas under it; as, for instance, a negative rectitude, in opposition to every wrong inclination; rectitude of judgment.
ment, in opposition to all ignorance and mistake about right and wrong, whether in respect of the actions and operations of the Deity himself, or the actions and operations of his free creatures; a rectitude of will, denoting an invariable determination of the will by a right judgment, in opposition to a will that is capable of being determined without, or contrary to such a judgment; and finally, a rectitude of delight, signifying that as some things are fit to be delighted in, others not, so God is delighted in that, and nothing else, which is a proper foundation and object of delight, and that his delight is always proportionable to the occasion, and the value of the object, in opposition to a satisfaction or delight that is unreasonable, because misplaced as to the object, or excessive as to the degree. All these are comprehended in the rectitude of the divine nature; the inseparable effect of which is a rectitude in the divine conduct and government; by which rectitude, besides his never doing any thing that had better not be done, is further meant his doing every thing that is fit and becoming him to do. The assurance we have of this (the rectitude of the divine nature being presupposed) is the infinite power, or all-sufficiency of God. He cannot be controuled or over-ruled in any of his designs; to him it can never be difficult and painful to do any thing that is possible; he wants nothing, and he fears nothing, and therefore can
can have no inducement to do what he otherwise would not, or to leave undone what he should else have chosen to do, only for the sake of his ease, and to secure his own private interest and happiness.

Third COROLLARY.

Sect. I. The moral attributes of God are only divers ways of considering the will of God, as invariably and delightfully determined by his wisdom, to that which is best in all possible circumstances. The attributes that go under this name of moral, are goodness, justice, truth and faithfulness. Goodness is the will of God invariably and delightfully determined by his wisdom to the communication of being and happiness, because it is fit, and as far as is fit. — Justice is the will of God invariably and delightfully determined by his wisdom to maintain right and order, and, for this end and purpose, to do all that is necessary to convince his reasonable creatures of the regard he hath to the preservation of his own rights, and of theirs.—Truth, or sincerity, is the will of God invariably and delightfully determined by his wisdom to avoid using all signs, in his intercourses with his intelligent creatures, from which they may not only take occasion, without necessity, to deceive themselves, but would have just ground to charge him, with being their deceiver, having a meaning.
meaning to himself quite different from that which the words, or other signs, he made use of, naturally suggested, and were intended to suggest *. — Faithfulness is the will of God invariably and delightfully determined by his wisdom to make good all his promises and engagements. — The holiness of God seems to stand for all these perfections in conjunction, he being by these perfections separated from all society and friendship with false gods, as his people were to be from the worship and worshippers of these false deities, and from all imitation of them in their wicked lives, their superstitious rights and customs, and impious devotion, and upon that account called a holy people.

Sect. II. From this general account of God's moral attributes, it follows that we have clear, distinct and proper ideas of the moral attributes of the divine nature; that, notwithstanding the diversity of the objects, the principle of all these attributes is, strictly speaking, one and the same, viz. God's knowledge of,

* Can the Deity lie by objecting to the mind a false image, either by words or things? — Of what use can a lie be to him? Can he be driven to it by the fear of enemies? Or need it to serve his friends? — There being no reason why God should lie, we ought to conclude the nature of the Gods is free of this imputation. God is true in words and actions, is neither changed himself, nor deceives others, whether by visions, or voices, or signs, whether sleeping or waking. Plat. de Repub. Dial. 2.
of, and delight in that which is good and fit: in a word, that infinity may be predicated of the moral, as well as of the other attributes of God, as we further learn in what sense it may be so.

**Sect. III.** 1. *We have clear, distinct, and proper, tho’ not adequate ideas of the moral attributes of God.* I am sensible, this is very disagreeable doctrine to the disciples of a certain Reformer, who will not allow that our notions of justice and goodness, do at all agree to these attributes as they are in the Deity; in whom they signify something, of which we have only a confused, or rather no apprehension, and exceeding different from what they do when ascribed to men. And, the truth is, as long as they resolve to give such representations of the decrees of God, of his works, and of, what they call, his glory, as they universally do, they are perfectly in the right of it, to take it for a thing granted, that we have no proper idea of these moral perfections (tho’ they would do still better to prove it too, if they could) since they must be conscious of its being a desperate undertaking to reconcile the divine proceedings, according to their scheme of them, with the conceptions which all mankind, not excepting those who have improved their Reason to the highest degree, have of justice and goodness. And not only these men, but others too, who know how
how to reason admirably well upon the attributes of God when they please, have, as often as a different purpose was to be served, talked in the same strain.

Sect. IV. Bishop King is the man who hath most distinguished himself on this head. It is true, his discourse does particularly concern the fore-knowledge of God; but then, he lays down such unlimited assertions, that no reader can forbear concluding from them, that his opinion was the same of the moral attributes as of the rest; notwithstanding his not particularly insisting upon them. "Those powers, properties, and operations, the names of which we transfer to God, are (faith he) but faint shadows and resemblances, or rather indeed emblems and parabolical figures of the divine attributes which they are designed to signify.—A map is only paper and ink diversified with several strokes and lines which in themselves have very little likeness to earth, mountains, valleys, lakes and rivers. Yet none can deny but by proportion and analogy, they are very instructive; and if any should imagine that these countries are really paper, because the maps that represent them are made of it, and should seriously draw conclusions from that supposition, he would expose his understanding, and make himself ridiculous. And yet
yet such as argue from the faint resem-
blances that either Scripture or Reason
give us of the divine attributes and opera-
tions, and proceed in their reasonings, as
if these must, in all respects, answer one
another, fall into the same absurdities that
those would be guilty of, who should think
that countries must be of paper, because
the maps that represent them are so.” And,
in the next paragraph, applying this general
observation to the particular case of God’s
decrees and predestination, he faith, “We
ascribe these to God, because the things
signified by these words bear some resem-
blance to certain perfections, which we
believe to be in him; but there is as little
likeness between the one and the other, as
between the countries and maps which re-
present them*.” — If, agreeably to what
that Writer faith here of the fore-knowledge of
God, it be affirmed, that there is as little like-
ness between our ideas of the justice and
goodness of God, and the attributes them-selves,
as between a map of a country, and the
country represented by it (which seems to
have been his sense of the matter) I cannot
but regard it as not only a very false but dan-
gerous position. Maps are of use to help us
in conceiving of the countries they describe;
because, as to the situation and bounds of the
several

* Divine Predestination, &c. a Sermon preached
before the House of Lords in Ireland, 1709.
Several parts of the map one with regard to another, there is supposed to be an exact and proper correspondence between the map and the country; and because, as to other intentions of a map, having seen the earth itself, mountains, valleys, lakes, and rivers, any arbitrary sign will serve to revive the ideas of them in our minds, which we can easily apply to any particular country, mountain, river, which we have not seen. But now supposing the first and only object a man had seen was a map, I ask, what sort of a representation the map would be to such a man? Would it answer the same ends to him it does to us? Of no more use would our ideas of the divine perfections be to us, if they were only emblems and parabolical figures of those perfections, and represented them no better than a map does a country; since, having never conversed with the attributes and perfections themselves, we must be continually and unavoidably blundering in all our contemplations and discourses about them; and should not, after all, know what we were to believe concerning God, or to expect from him, using the words wisdom, justice, and goodness, without any certain ideas affixed to them. Whereas, from the account just before given of the moral perfections of God, it appears, that the general ideas of them, are as clear and distinct as of the same things when attributed to other intelligent Beings.

Sect.
Sect. V. It is very true, as these attributes are exercised and employed in the works of God, we are often at a loss to make a judgment of them, but then we know that the works of God cannot but be agreeable to his nature; so that God himself being wise, and just, and good, we may be confident that wisdom, justice, and goodness belong to all his providential dispensations. As in the natural world the wisdom of God is clearly seen in the laws and phenomena of it, with the exception of a few instances, which, tho' we cannot tell how they discover the wisdom of God, we cannot prove to be inconsistent with it; so, in the moral world, the wisdom, justice, and goodness of God shine out in a thousand instances; and, tho' there are some appearances (more it must be confessed than in the natural world) which are not easy to be accounted for, perhaps not possible at present, yet we cannot say they do any of them contradict our clearest ideas of wisdom, justice, and goodness, as some cases evidently do, which may be supposed, and which therefore can never be real cases. To annex a greater degree of misery than of happiness to the existence of an innocent creature (greater, I mean, upon the whole) is repugnant to the most obvious ideas of justice, as inflicting the least degree of misery (tho' it were but as the dust of the balance compared with the happiness which the
the creature injoyed) when it was neither deserved, nor promoted any valuable end, would be contrary to the wisdom and goodness of the infinite Being, and for this reason, it is not possible that any such instances should ever occur.

Sect. VI. It is one thing not to see the fitness of this or that apprehended part of the divine conduct, another to see the unfitness of it. The latter only is sufficient to prove, that God is not wise, and just, and good; or that our ideas of wisdom, justice, and goodness are wrong; or that the thing is falsely ascribed to God. But now as to any such manifest unfitness, it hath never yet been, and we may safely conclude, never will be proved of any one thing which God hath done, or which it is certain he will do. Difficulties there are, such and so many, that it would be the utmost vanity and arrogance in any man to think of surmounting them. But then, these difficulties proceeding from our imperfect views of things, are no real objection against what hath been asserted, of our having clear ideas of the moral attributes of God; any more than our not being able to give a satisfactory account to ourselves, of some things in the management of a family, a city, a kingdom, which yet may be ordered very wisely and justly, because we have not been let into the secret of affairs, and are unacquainted with the
the interests of the society, and the characters and actions of the members of it, will prove us not to have a proper idea of the wisdom, justice, and goodness which belong to the character of the master of a family, a magistrate, or a sovereign prince; or that, because we are not competent judges of the fitness of some things, there is nothing concerning which we can pronounce that it would be unfit.

Sect. VII. What we are concerned to remember is, that the larger any society, and the more extensive any plan, the less likely is it that we should be qualified to pass a definitive sentence upon the wisdom of the whole plan, or the propriety of any part; since to the latter it is necessary, that we should have all the parts, even the most distant, with which such a part is connected, lying before us; and to the former, that we should be able to take in at once, that plan and all other plans or schemes with which it must be compared, before it can be known to be, or not to be, the best. Consequently, as the government of a universe, composed of several worlds, is a plan or design, with regard to us, of a kind of infinite extent, and not to be executed, but in the course of many ages; creatures, like us, of narrow faculties, a very scanty duration, and but poorly situated to make observations, should not be very hasty to reject a thing as unfit, because we do not discern the fitness
fitness of it, and thereupon to resolve with ourselves that it is unworthy of God, and cannot have him for its author, altho' there be very good reasons to demonstrate that it is of God and not of men. The thing may be very fit, and yet the fitness of it not appear to us; unless our understandings are commensurate to the natures and relations of things, and God can have no reasons for any particular act or economy of Providence which lie concealed from our searches. Nay, supposing we are not only ignorant of any reasons for God's acting after this or that manner, but can assign plausible reasons, why he should not so act, yet we ought to be very sure that these reasons are at least a counterpoise to the evidence we have of God's having really acted, or revealed his design to act so, before we determine against it. If instead of using this modest caution, we peremptorily decree, that such a thing cannot be, notwithstanding the evidence for the truth of the fact is vastly superior to the pretended reasons against the expediency of it, we are guilty of inexcusable rashness and presumption. Whether this is not the case (to make the best of it) when men argue against the truth of the Jewish Revelation from the numerous positive institutions which it contained, and against the truth of the Christian, from its imperfect promulgation, may be left to every serious and impartial person to judge.

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Sect. VIII. Let me add this further, that no man can be justified to treat the Gospel as an imposture, only for the sake of certain representations of the Deity, that pass for doctrines of the Gospel, but, after the most heedful examination, appear manifestly unfit, and therefore false. Be we never so positive, and upon never so good grounds, of the falsity of the doctrine, that will be no proof at all, that the Religion of Christ is false, if it cannot be shown to be a doctrine of Christianity. Is there no finding out any other meaning of the words and expressions of scripture but this, which we cannot help thinking absurd? And is this absurd sense evidently their true one? Nothing less than a kind of absolute certainty of these things is fit to be opposed to the numerous and most convincing arguments of the truth of the Christian Religion, which will come in the way of any one that seeks for them. Better suppose the greater part of the christian world to have been in an error, one age after another, especially if the error hath not been of dangerous consequence to morals, (though one would not be forward to do this) than that Christianity itself is a mere fable and delusion.

Sect. IX. 2. Notwithstanding the diversity of the objects, the principle of God's moral perfections is one and the same; viz. his knowledge
ledge of, and delight in, that which is right and good. What the School-Divines talk of the identity of the essence and attributes, one with another, is true enough of the moral attributes, in the sense now assigned. The identity they meant, (if indeed they had properly any meaning) was a metaphysical abstraction, quite out of the reach of plain understandings; and holds alike of all the attributes and operations of the divine mind, which according to them, have no real distinction among themselves; the understanding is the same thing as the will of God; and his power as his holiness. And yet, which is a little odd, the same men who with so much zeal contend for this unintelligible simplicity in the divine nature, at other times forget themselves so far as to make some of the attributes not only seemingly, but really; clash and interfere with each other; while mercy is not to be satisfied without the pardon of sin, nor justice and holiness without exacting the full punishment of it. On one side is tender compassion, on the other an unrelenting rigour. It cannot, indeed, be denied, that they have found a way, as they think, to reconcile this difference, by such an exchange of persons between the sinner and his surety, that the surety hath all the guilt of the sinner properly transferred on him, and properly bears all the punishment due to that guilt; and on the other hand, the sinner, united by faith to his surety, hath not
only the effects of his righteousness, but his righteousness itself imputed to him. But, I fear, if it be essential to the notion of justice to insist on the entire payment of the sinner's debt, the method of reconciliation here-proposed falls short of the end aimed at by it, and so must be looked upon as of man's devising, not as the counsel of God. For (not to urge the absurdity of making the sufferings of an innocent person for a few hours in any proper sense equal to the punishment of millions of guilty creatures, whose sufferings being the effect of guilt must be of a quite different kind, throughout innumerable ages, which is much such another whim, as that of crowding eternity into an instant; without urging of this) let it only be considered, that to appease the justice of God, as they describe it, (not as the justice of a Creator and Governor, but analogous to the passion of revenge in a weak man, when he hath received a personal injury; to appease, I say, such a justice as this) the punishment must not only be adequate to the guilt of the sinner himself. Vicarious sufferings will never satisfy such a justice as is rather a physical affection than a moral attribute under the direction of wisdom. What pleases the offended person, is to see the offender himself smart for his fault. Or, if they will needs have it to be otherwise, will not the consequence be, that, for the same reason that justice excuses the sinner
sinner from suffering in his own person, it might, in such a degree as wisdom should judge proper, abate of the punishment?

Sect. X. But now, as the unity of God's moral perfections is an easy intelligible notion, as before explained, signifying nothing else, but their being connected together by one general idea, and resolved into one common principle, viz. the will of God directed by his wisdom, or a wise love of all that is good, according to the degree of its goodness, and of nothing else; in which respect it differs widely from the inexplicable divinity of the Schools; so this plain and simple way of conceiving of these attributes does at once shut out that unyielding justice which some have taught, and that easy flexible goodness that hath been dreamt of by others. Divine justice will take that way, and observe that degree and measure in punishing which wisdom prescribes, going no further than is fit; and therefore we have reason to think, unless in case of final obstinacy, not to the extremity of things; since the original design of God, regarded only the happiness of his creatures, not their grief and punishment, which becomes fit only thro' their voluntary abuse of those capacities of happiness, and opportunities and advantages for obtaining it, which God hath given them. Happiness (either actually enjoyed, or capable of being enjoined) is the re-
mote foundation of all moral fitness; abstracted from the connexion it hath with happiness, nothing in the world is of the least value. Any further therefore, than the obligations of the reasonable creature to his Maker, for the capacities and means of happiness, which he hath violated, render it fit and necessary, God will not be severe to mark iniquity. And who will pretend to say that this must always be to the extent of its demerit? One would rather think, that forasmuch as the only conceivable motive to God's communicating Being was, that he might bestow the capacities of happiness, if the creature hath not made that use of these capacities which he ought to have done, it should not be morally fit and necessary for God immediately to put the guilty creature out of all possibility of recovering that happiness, for which it was originally intended; especially, when the natural weaknesses of the creature are such, and the temptations in the midst of which he is placed, are so numerous and strong, as in a manner to entitle him to compassion; one would not think, I say, if we only considered the reasons of things, that this should be fit; as we certainly know from Revelation that God hath not proceeded with this severity.

Sect. XI. Nor may we therefore regard the goodness of God, as such an easy flexible thing as others have imagined it, God can-
not but disapprove every action, and much more every character, that is *morally evil*; and the question is, whether as it is fit that he should disapprove it, it be not likewise fit and congruous, that he shew his disapprobation? The disapprobation being perfectly just, and relating to the creature, is it not reasonable that the creature should be made sensible of it, that he may be the more affected with the sense of his own ill conduct? And how can this be if sin go altogether unpunished? Or if the punishment be next to none? Or be not distributed by some rules of proportion, so as that the most guilty shall be the most miserable? Which yet we know is not always done in this life, there must therefore be a future state. Nor do I see any necessity of supposing that all punishment hath the nature of an admonition, either to the sufferer himself, whose amendment is designed by it, or by way of example to others. Did the incorrigibleness of the offender take away all prospect of his profiting by his punishment, and we should set aside the consideration of any other being concerned in the example, it seems highly fit that the sinner should be made to know the evil of his ways, and his having incurred the displeasure of his Maker; and that in order to his knowing this, he should feel it. And here it is that I should place the expediency of punishment as far as it relates solely to the *impenitent sinner*; not in the bare
bake congruity between guilt and punishment, but in the sinner's knowledge of his guilt, and the design of his punishment to work in him a stronger conviction of it, and to express the displeasure of his offended Sovereign against him upon that account; that he may be self-condemned, and, tho' unwillingly, do homage, in his own thoughts, to the holiness of God, giving him also the glory of that goodness which he hath abused. So that, should we suppose the sinner to have lost all consciousness of his deserving what he suffers, and to esteem his sufferings the pure effect of arbitrary will and pleasure, not a proof of God's abhorrence of sin; as, on the one hand, there would be no injustice in the sufferings of such a sinner, because they were deserved, so neither, on the other, would there be any fitness in them if the notion I have here offered be right.

Sect. XII. As to vicarious punishment, or punishment by substitution, the wisdom and fitness of it is not difficult to be shewn in the only example we have of that kind; for there being in the sufferings and obedience of Christ, taken in connexion with the glory that followed, a peculiar fitness to shew God's disapprobation and abhorrence of sin, and his approbation and love of holiness, Christ, by his sufferings, may very properly be said to have made satisfaction for sin; that phrase not necessarily
necessarily implying that Christ hath paid an equivalent; but only that he hath done and suffered what God was pleased, in his infinite wisdom, to accept in lieu of the punishment due to the sinner himself; so as to require nothing further of him, in order to his obtaining a happy and glorious immortality, but his compliance with certain necessary terms, which the Grace of God will render possible to him. God, the wise and righteous Governor of the world, was satisfied with the death of Christ, as a sufficient foundation for a new covenant, a covenant of life and immortality upon the condition of sincere, tho' imperfect, obedience; because he knew this death, with all its concomitants, was fitted to declare both his love to sinners, and his hatred of sin in the most conspicuous manner that could have been chosen for the illustration of both; and thereby most effectually to answer, at the same time, all the ends and designs of the divine government. This I apprehend to be the scripture doctrine of satisfaction, in which I see nothing but what, instead of offering violence to the acknowledged principles of Reason, is perfectly consonant to them.

Sect. XIII. We learn from hence in what sense infinity may be predicated of the moral attributes of God; not absolutely and separately as of the rest, but relatively to the wisdom
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Wisdom of God, and the internal energy of his nature; both which together produce a love of adherence to that which is good, that requires (if I may so say) a more than infinite contrary attraction to overcome it. It is with relation to these, not to the actual display of the moral attributes ad extra, that we are to estimate the degree of these attributes. The attributes exist in the divine nature before they are exercised; nor, when they are exercised, must we imagine the effects to be an adequate measure of the perfections themselves; any more than from the power of God, which is infinite, we can infer that the things produced by it are likewise infinite. All the fitnesses of things, and actions, in all possible circumstances and combinations, are clearly seen by the divine understanding, moral good in all its excellency and beauty, and moral evil in all its turpitude and deformity, the intire and unchangeable difference between them; so that as no reason is to be offered against the one and for the other, none can be offered by means of any change that can happen out in the course of everlasting ages. This prospect of the divine mind is boundless. And forasmuch as God's love of that which is good, his adherence to it (if I may so express myself) and delight in it, must correspond to the knowledge he has of it, and the active force of his most blessed nature; no bounds can be set to this love, this adherence, this delight; nor can
can the will of God be otherwise than right in all its determinations. In this sense principally the scripture is to be understood, when it affirms there is none holy as the Lord, none good but one, that is God. As all other Beings are holy and good only by derivation from God, not originally and independently as he is, so they come infinitely short of him in these perfections, and therefore are not, by the perfection of their natures, absolutely immutable like him. If we consider only the negative part of holiness, consisting in an actual freedom from all moral evil, or the mere abstract rectitude of the will, there is a kind of equality between one innocent creature and another, of a superior order, and between the innocent creature and the Creator. But when we speak of positive holiness, or the force with which the will is carried to that which is good, and the approbation of, and delight the mind hath in it, the equality vanishes; this, where other things are equal, being always in proportion to the wisdom and active force of each nature. Take several bodies of unequal quantities of matter, tho' all gravitate the same way, yet their gravities are as their quantities of matter, which is the reason that a force sufficient to stop one, will not hinder the descent of another. We may use this instead of a better illustration of the disproportion in point of moral excellence, between an angelical and human mind, and between
between the supreme Being and the highest angel. The understanding of an angel will be owned to be much larger than the understanding of a man, and the determination for the will to virtue in a good angel, to be as much stronger and more unconquerable than in an innocent man, as his understanding is more capacious, and the activity of his nature greater. But what is the highest angel in this regard to the most high God? The moral impossibility that God should be unjust, unmerciful, unfaithful, in a single instance, is as much greater than the security which any of his creatures have in themselves, against their being so, as the compass of his understanding, and the energy of his ever blessed nature exceed theirs. The temptation had need to be infinitely strong, to be a balance to infinite perfection; and more than infinite (which is a contradiction) to prevail over it; whereas, such is the rectitude of the divine nature, and such the extent of the divine power, that God cannot be tempted with evil in the least conceivable degree; so far is he from being liable to be tempted to such a degree, as would endanger his acting contrary to the dictates of his all-perfect mind.—Till I viewed things in this light, I must confess myself to have ascribed infinity to the moral attributes of God from a sort of implicit faith, or in compliance with the language established, without having any proper distinct idea of what I said.
Sect. XIV. From hence, by the way, I would observe, that *Cartes's* account of the human will is not entirely just. It deserves, faith he*, to be remarked, that as to other things I find not any power or quality in myself, which I possess to such a degree of perfection, that I cannot conceive how the same can be greater and more perfect; e.g. if I consider the faculty of intelligence, I am presently sensible of its being exceedingly short and confined, as it is in me; and at the same time I form the idea of another understanding much greater, yea, the greatest that can be, and even infinite; and for this very reason that I am able to form an idea of it, I conclude it to belong to the nature of God; and so of other faculties. The will is the only power which I experience to be of such extent in myself, that I cannot have a conception of any greater; insomuch that it is in respect of this, more especially, that I bear a sort of image and likeness of God; for though the will be without all comparison greater in God than in me, both with regard to the knowledge and power that are joined with it, and render it more firm and efficacious, and the object, as it extends itself to more things; yet, precisely considered, it doth not seem greater, because it consists in no-

* Meditat. 4.
thing else but this, that we can either do or not do a thing (i.e. either affirm or deny, pursue or avoid it) or, rather, only in this, that we are carried to affirm or deny, to pursue or avoid what is proposed by the understanding in such a manner, that we perceive ourselves to be determined to it by no external force.” But must not the intrinsic original force of the will, bear a constant proportion to the perfections of the Being in other respects? Is a Being infinite in presence, in power, in understanding? And must not the quantity of will (I beg leave to use the expression for want of a better) be answerable; so as that we may be allowed to say, there is more will in God, as well as more understanding, more power, more presence? That we are not able to form a clear distinct idea of the internal force and extent of the will, is not to be wondered at, since we are as little able to conceive what the power of willing itself is, absolutely considered—As for what he brings in proof of his notion, viz. “that in willing we perceive ourselves to be determined by no external force,” I cannot, for my own part, discern any thing like an argument in it; for besides that the will, though self-determined, is not determined with that internal spring and vigour in me as in the Deity, and therefore cannot be reckoned equal in two agents so infinitely unlike; there is another thing to be observed, and that is the fallacy
fallacy in the expression of *not being determined by an external force*. The *will* cannot be determined by an external force, much less can we perceive it to be so determined, in this sense that we are compelled to *will* a thing against our *will*; yet in this other sense of the words the *will* may be determined by an external force, that by a *superior influence* we may be so irresistibly carried to *will* a thing, as not to be able to *will* the contrary, while we are under that influence. Which very thing shews that there is no proportion between the *will*, any more than between the understanding of God and the creature.

**Fourth COROLLARY.**

**Sect. I.** The *blessedness of the Deity is not at all lessened by the misconduct of his free creatures, and the severity which this obliges him to make use of either by way of correction, or final punishment.* For, whence doth the blessedness of that adorable Being, according to our conceptions of it, flow, but from the all-comprehending views of his mind, the perfect and unchangeable rectitude of his *will*, and his being possessed of power without bounds, and a nature not liable to change? Now neither of these can be affected by any thing without him. His understanding is a region of pure unmixed light, that can never be overcast with a cloud, in
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in which there is an endless variety of the most beautiful scenes. His will never deviates from the rule of right marked out by his wisdom; nor can his power ever fail in the execution of what he wills; nor his Being, or any of his perfections, decay, or be other than they are. And, as he can never be disappointed in respect of himself, by ignorance or impotence, by being not able to effect his designs, or not knowing the most proper manner in which to do it, so nor in respect of any of his creatures, by their refusing to do what he would have them. For, if we take the matter right, the will of God directly regards his own actions, and only indirectly those of his creatures. He directly and absolutely wills the existence of intelligent and free Beings; such Beings therefore shall exist, nor can any thing hinder. He absolutely wills to command these his intelligent creatures, either by the voice of Reason or Revelation, to do some things, and forbear others; and withal he wills to put it in their power, immediately or remotely, by the exercise of their natural faculties, or the aids of supernatural Grace, to act or forbear acting agreeably to his commands; this is absolutely his will, and because it is so, his creatures will be obliged to do, and able to do whatever God requires of them. So far the will of God is not liable to be defeated. For let men act never so wickedly, it will not cease to be true, that it was their
their duty to have acted otherwise; and in like manner that it was in their power; which was all that God willed; he did not directly will their acting right, seeing then, they would certainly have so acted (the immediate object of such a will being something to be done by himself, viz. exerting such a powerful influence, as often as it was needful to secure the event, and would determine his creatures to act according to his pleasure) but he directly willed his laying them under an obligation, and giving them a power to act right.

Sect. II. But is not the happiness of created Beings contingent, depending upon the use they make of their liberty? Very true, it is so; because God wills it should. The original capacities of happiness are bestowed without any condition, but not actual happiness. The creatures may make themselves miserable, because the will of God is that, if they are happy, their happiness will be the result of their own choice. They are therefore made capable of avoiding misery, and obtaining happiness; and, for this very reason, that they are capable of obtaining happiness, and will not be persuaded to make use of the only proper means for that end, it is the will of their Creator that they should not enjoy it. Wherefore, since God always wills what is right, and his will is never without effect, what possible room is there for uneasiness
uneasiness and disappointment? Having done all that it became him, both as a wise and good Being, to do, he can have no pain from the knowledge of his own conduct, but, on the contrary, must have the highest satisfaction; nor can he receive any pain, by way of involuntary sensation, from the deserved and necessary punishment of any of his creatures, because he hath no mechanical affection, by crossing which such sensations must arise. Indeed, were God inclined to make his creatures happy, antecedently to the consideration of their moral character and qualifications, it would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to explain how any of his creatures could suffer, and he not suffer with them (that expression of scripture not seeming to have any thing figurative in it, upon this supposition, in all their affliction he was afflicted) the consequence of which would have been, that for his own sake, he would have made none of his creatures liable to sin and misery.

Fifth COROLLARY.

Sect. I. THIS will help to solve that difficult problem concerning the origin of evil.—" If all things as they came out of the Creator's hand were very good, " by what way had evil its entrance into the " world? It could not be without a cause. " Was that cause good or evil? If good, " how could it produce evil? Might not " darkness
"darkness spring from light as soon as evil"
"out of good? If the cause was evil, then"
"there was something that was originally"
"evil, and so evil had no beginning."

Sect. II. The answer lies plain—That God made every thing good, but, for wise rea-
sons, not immutably so. He saw fit to make his reasonable creatures free, and to suspend both their future highest happiness, and the continuance of the present, upon the right use of their freedom. This freedom they abuse, this abuse is a moral evil, and productive of pain, both of body and mind, which is natural evil. That there would not have been pain and uneasiness of some sorts, and in a lesser degree, while the state of trial lasted, though there had been no sin, I shall not pretend to affirm. But then, if there had, yet as this pain and uneasiness would have been only an appendage to a state of trial, and no more than that state, tho' a state of innocence, required, and therefore we may be confident not incompatible with a very happy life; the condition of innocent creatures on their trial, with all its disadvantages and imperfections, would have born little or no resemblance to the present scene of things, in which the evils of life are so numerous and weighty, as in many cases to render it disputable which deserves the preference, such a state of existence (were there no better in prospect)
or not to be at all. Surely, the primæval state of man must have been as different from this, as the world, after God had finished his six days works, was from the Chaos. The present state of things could only be introduced by some voluntary defection of man from his Creator and Lord, agreeably to the account of things in the sacred records. And if moral evil must have been prior to those natural evils which are the portion of the present life, much more must it be so to all that evil which is final, and separate from any good sufficient to compensate for it. Natural evil, at present, is corrective of moral, or a preservative from it, and, by exercising and improving the virtuous dispositions of the mind, may be the occasion of greater natural good in the issue. In this sense Plato's * reasoning is very just — "That if men suffer, it must not be said "that they are miserable, and that God "makes them so, but rather, that sinful men, "being miserable, need correction, and when "corrected are herein favoured and assisted "by the Deity." But the case is so very much altered, when no good remaining to counterbalance the evil, existence itself becomes a burthen and a torment, or at best ceases to be worth any thing, that there is no possible way, that I can see, to reconcile God's putting a reasonable Being into such a state of existence, but supposing, that he hath deserved.

* De.Rep. lib. 2.
deserved it by the perverse use of his liberty, or obstinate refusal to be made happy. And this, indeed, will effectually do it; the fitness being first proved or granted of God's creating free agents. Now one way of proving the fitness of this is from the existence of liberty. —God hath made free Beings, therefore it was fit such Beings should be made. —And this should satisfy all who believe that infinite wisdom presides over the universe, tho' they did not perceive what was the ground of this fitness, about which the advocates for fitness themselves are not perfectly agreed.

Sect. III. "God (faith one) could not "approve his own work, without regarding "and consulting the order of the universe; "and how could that order have been estab- "lished, or how the system of creatures "have been completed, if no liberty had "been granted, no agents created? Had not "men and angels been free, they could have "been no more than conscious instruments, and "intelligent machines *." But, with the leave of this excellent Author, and others that talk after the same manner, the true idea of liberty ought first to have been cleared and distinguished before they had affirmed, that without liberty men and angels would not have been agents, but only conscious instruments, and intelligent machines. This is very true, if by * Divine Rectitude, p. 25.
liberty no more be meant than a self-determining power, without which, it is plain, there can be no proper agency, and (were it no where to be found) no motion in the universe, but an eternal quietism. But that liberty which is given to rational creatures as the foundation of their trial means something more than this. * It is a power to determine wrong, so circum-

* It must be carefully observed, that the liberty to be accounted for, is that power which the event too often proves rational Beings to have of making themselves guilty and miserable. So that the thing is not only naturally but morally possible, and may be supposed to happen without any manner of absurdity. What is the ground of this freedom, particularly in mankind? Does it not proceed from the imperfection of Reason, the difficulties attending the steady practice of virtue, and the incitements of objects and enjoyments suited to the appetites and affections of human nature? Let us then only suppose such a uniformity in the nature of man, that reason and inclination point the same way, such a strength and vigour that no instance of duty costs him any labour or pain, and that moreover his knowledge hath all the clearness and extent of which it is capable; and, by this means, tho' we shall not destroy moral agency, we shall leave little or no room for moral evil to come into the world. Why then is man formed and situated so very differently? Here is the difficulty; which the reason for liberty taken from agency doth not at all touch. Since there might be free agency (and is so, as was shewn before in considering the freedom of the Deity) where there is no such liberty as this, which, as it implies a moral possibility, and, in some cases, even a probability of acting wrong, is, comparatively only, a perfection, but absolutely considered, a defect: upon which account I must own the expression of this liberty being given is hardly proper; that which is given being directly a power...
circumstanced that the agent eventually may, and sometimes does, act wrong. Now either there is no occasion for such a liberty as this, that a Being may pass for a proper agent, or God himself is no more than an intelligent machine. The truth is, the only liberty required to the notion of agency is that of self-determination; and such a liberty there might have been in men and angels, without the least hazard of their ever deviating from the rule of righteousness.

Sect. IV. "But it is further argued, "that liberty is requisite, as in respect of "order, so in respect of happiness, to which "it not only conduces, but is essential, so "far that no happiness can be perfect, or "raised to any considerable height, without "it *." Here again, the distinction of liberty just now mentioned is overlooked. Were there not a self-determining power, the happiness of the best and greatest of all Beings, and so in proportion of his intelligent creatures, would not be so great as it is. But where there is this self-determining power, what need of any further liberty? Is it necessary to the complete happiness of any Being that he hath a power, to act right, attended with a power to act wrong from the imperfection of the agent, and the circumstances of Being which he is placed in.

a power, or once had a power, of making himself miserable; a power, properly so called, or that may, without the least absurdity and contradiction, be supposed reduced into act? From whence then is the perfect felicity of the supreme Being? Not but I believe, that men and angels, having successfully past through a state of trial, are the happier for having been once free; not merely from a consciousness of having approved themselves in a state of trial, when they might have done otherwise, but from the apprehension they have of an antecedent or original fitness, that they should be placed in such a state. And here, as I take it, the whole weight of the argument rests, which I shall endeavour very briefly to explain.

Sect. V. There is something in the idea of a reasonable creature that makes it immediately fit that he should be free, to the end, his virtue and happiness may be suited to his nature. The Being of a creature is contingent; for he might not have been; so, therefore, ought the moral goodness of the creature to be, that it may carry the marks of the Being it belongs to. The creature might not have existed, or tho' he existed, he might not have been in that state of elevated and confirmed goodness, to which, by patient continuance in well doing, he is finally advanced. The creature is dependent upon his Maker; every
every thing he hath is borrowed; it is highly fit he should acknowledge this debt, and that his acknowledgment should be so entirely from himself, as not to be extorted by the conviction of his understanding, and the regularity of his will, in the absence of all temptation to the contrary. The happiness of all other intelligent Beings, besides God himself, being the happiness of creatures, there seems to be a double fitness, why it should depend upon their own free choice, viz. that it may be contingent like the Beings who enjoy it, and wrought out by those reasonable and active powers, which they have received from their Maker. The blessedness of the Deity being necessary, like his existence and perfections, his wisdom and power can be only employed in promoting the happiness of his creatures, not in contriving and executing means for the accomplishment of his own. Whereas, the active powers of the reasonable creature, as they may, so ought to be exercised in contributing both to the good of others, and to his own final felicity. Thus does it appear congruous, even to our imperfect views of things, that reasonable creatures should be made free, as no one will dispute that being made free, it is fit they should be treated and governed according to that character. And were it otherwise (that the fitness of God's making free agents could not be
be proved) yet the thing being fact, we have no reason to doubt of the fitness of it.

Sect. VI. This account of the origin of evil from the freedom of intelligent creatures is, I believe, the first that offers itself to every man's thoughts, who is not prepossessed when he is upon this inquiry. And I will venture to add, that it is the only true one. No hypothesis, that hath yet been started, will serve the purpose. That of two independent and contrary principles dividing the world between them, one inclining and prompting us to virtuous deeds, the other soliciting us to vicious ones, one throwing sweet, the other bitter, ingredients into the same cup, from whence comes the mixture of good and evil in every man's condition, one building, the other destroying, one doing, the other undoing; this notion, I say, hath been long since given up as indefensible. The whole frame of nature, and the laws of motion by which it is governed, proclaim the unity of the first cause; I mean not here a unity of Being, in opposition to a plurality of Gods of the same kind, tho' this be a most evident truth, but a unity of Perfection in opposition to two or more Gods of different moral characters. Such a vast and complicated machine as this of the world is, in which amidst the greatest variety there reigns a most admirable unity.
unity, could not be contrived by any wisdom less than infinite; nor actually framed and put in motion, so as to go on from age to age, and answer a thousand most valuable ends and uses, but by infinite power. The wisdom that is displayed in this great work could belong to none but a good principle, since a perfectly wise Being can never judge any thing to be good that is evil; or that evil can ever be a proper object of a free and deliberate choice, or good of aversion and refusal; and, always making this judgment, must always be determined to that which is good. He knows his own happiness to depend upon it, and therefore may as soon consent to be less happy, or even to be miserable, as be tempted with evil, or tempt any one to it. And if all the wisdom belongs to the good principle, so doth all the power. Power without wisdom can never be a match for power and wisdom confederated. The creation therefore, is intirely the work of an infinitely wise and good Being.

Sect. VII. Shall we lay all the fault, as others have done, on the stubborn nature, and malignant influence of matter? They who believed matter to be co-eternal with mind, (as most, if not all, the Pagan Philosophers did) might do this with a better colour, than those who believe the matter as well as form of the world, to be the offspring of creative power. But in whatsoever way matter be imagined to have
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have come by its existence, it is plainly innocent of the things laid to its charge. Matter cannot operate but by motion; between which and an inclination or perception of the mind, whether virtuous or vicious, agreeable or painful, we can discern no natural connexion. Nor is motion the growth of matter; or at any time, as to the vis motrix, residing in it, but something altogether foreign and external. And when all the motions of matter are derived from immaterial principle, can the happiness or misery, the good or bad dispositions of immaterial Beings be necessarily tied to certain motions? Or cannot the first mover impress only such motions on the several portions of matter, as will have a friendly influence on percipient Beings? Were the body the unavoidable source of evil, why do not all souls suffer alike by their union with matter? How comes one man to have a happier constitution than another? Might not that ease and health and vigour, that calm and cheerful serenity of the spirits, that smooth and regular flow of the passions, which is injoyed by a few, have been the portion of all? If a terrestrial body does not necessarily hinder one man's virtue or happiness, neither can it hinder those of another. It is not therefore a necessary consequence of the nature of matter, that the soul should be subject to irregular inclinations, to violent passions, and to painful and grievous sensations by its union with the body. All this
in the DEITY. 83

this is not to be ascribed to matter, but to the
laws of union, freely established by the Creator. Nor, even now, that these laws are
established; is any one necessarily vicious or miserable.

Sect. VIII. Dr. More * hath a notion
that angels themselves are clothed with bod-
dies of a more subtile kind. And his reason
for it is, "that some of them became evil"
by their own voluntary act. But now a
"spirit purely and perfectly immaterial,
"cannot, he thinks, be obnoxious to any
"stain or lapse; for, being of a nature so
"simple, whence should it be tempted to
"desert its station?" — Not to examine the
ground of this conjecture, I shall, at present,
only remark that tho' matter be by the Dr.
supposed the causa sine qua non of evil, yet
not the proper efficient, much less necessary,
cause of it. A spirit by its commerce with
body, becomes liable to fall, and by that to
suffer, but is under no necessity of falling, in
which the Dr's opinion differs widely from
that which makes matter the immediate ne-
cessary original of all the that is evil in the
world.

Sect. IX. What way then shall we try
next in order to get out of this labyrinth?
Can we find any other besides that of moral
fitness?

* Respons. ad fragment. Cartesii.
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fitness? Or God's having fixed upon the present scheme, because his wisdom approved and pronounced it best? This I should think to be the right way. But all are not of this mind. Rather than admit of any original fitnesses in things, by the idea of which God determined himself, there are those who have recourse to a natural benevolence, prompted by which the Deity exerts his almighty power in producing the greatest sum of happiness that can possibly be. This greatest happiness of the whole system of rational Beings taken together God absolutely wills, not because it is fit, but because his inclinations oblige him to it; and accordingly, the sum total of happiness, let men and other free Beings act how they please, will, in the event, be the greatest that infinite power and wisdom could possibly produce; or (in the words of a late Author *) "the greatest of which the universe of creatures which God hath made, is capable; still supposing that their original capacities for happiness were fixed by his will and pleasure." I shall not take advantage of this Author's manner of expressing himself, when he faith, that the original capacities for happiness were fixed by the will and pleasure of God, which, according to the propriety of language, should signify that the very same Beings might have been created with greater or lesser capacities than those which God hath actually

* Divine Benevolence, p. 71.
actually assigned them; from which, if true, it follows, that they were capable of greater or lesser capacities of happiness; that is, were originally capable of greater or lesser degrees of happiness; a capacity to receive a greater capacity of happiness, being, in effect, the same as a capacity of greater happiness; and, consequently, God bestows upon no Being the utmost happiness of which he is capable. Letting this pass, I shall confine myself to the general notion, which, if some men are not mistaken, is such a glorious discovery as does at once dispel the darkness, wipe off every aspersion, and shew us the face of Providence in its full beauty. Let us see whether it does so or no.

Sect. X. I imagine that in the preceding Discourse I have overturned the very foundation of the theory, viz. the notion of benevolent inclinations in the Deity, of which his wisdom is not the exciting cause or reason, but merely the servant or minister to execute what they order. At present, without insisting upon that, I shall endeavour to demonstrate, that granting the existence of such a natural benevolence, it will by no means account for the origin of evil. For if all the works of Creation and Providence owe their birth to mere benevolence, without all regard to moral fitness, why is not every creature of God, that is capable of happiness, as happy as it is capable
ble of being made? Why is there any such thing as misery in the world? Particularly, in the world of mankind? The answer, I apprehend, must be, that evil, or rather a liability to evil, is the unavoidable consequence of something which the greatest happiness of man, or the entire system of rational Beings, made necessary. But I very much doubt this is not so easily proved as said. Let them tell us what that is which, while man, or other Beings of a higher order than man, cannot be happy without it, is yet the unhappy occasion of misery.

Sect. XI. It cannot be any thing in the frame of the world without us, and the connexion between that and the portion of matter to which the soul is united, since these external things might be so ordered and directed by the continual agency of the supreme cause, as to produce nothing but good, and all the good they can possibly produce. I confess, supposing the world to be governed by those few general laws that now obtain, and the course of nature always left to proceed according to these laws, it is hardly conceivable but some inconveniences must arise to particular members of the system. But forasmuch as the supreme agent is not determined by fitness, but natural benevolence, what should hinder him, being omnipotent and almighty, from interposing to prevent any ill effects that might attend
attend the natural working of second causes? Would it be inconsistent with the wisdom of Providence, having settled general laws, to be perpetually breaking in upon them? It might be so, had the wisdom of God any other aim besides the happiness of his creatures, as the only way of gratifying his natural benevolence. But wisdom being wholly employed about the means to this end (according to the scheme I am now considering) the wisdom of God is then most of all displayed, when this end is most effectually answered, in whatever way it be, whether by more, or fewer, laws of nature, or by none at all that are so fixed as not to be set aside every time the creature may suffer by them.

Sect. XII. We christians believe (nor are we singular in our notion) that there will be a more advantageous state of things than the present, in which the happiness of intelligent Beings as far as it depends upon the material world, shall have nothing wanting to it, nothing to disturb and interrupt it. Now what will at any time hereafter be, might be immediately. Why then is it not? Why is not every thing fitted to give pleasure? And why are we not better formed to receive it? Why should there be any thing injurious to health, or disagreeable to any of the senses? "It would by no means be a satisfactory answer, that God may make Beings with..."
different degrees of perfection. That it is an imperfection in us men, that we want a perfect knowledge of our own frame and constitution, to supply which want of knowledge in us, God hath affixed the idea of pain to our nature, which is designed to give us warning of anything that might hurt us. Pain is a real evil, and yet if we were not admonished by it, we should never know when our frame was out of order till it was too late.* Such an answer, from the persons I am now debating with, would either prove nothing or too much; viz. that in a state of innocence we should have been as liable to pains and disorders of body as we are now; and that the just shall not be free from them after the resurrection. Should it be said, that then we shall be otherwise framed, the question returns, why are we not so framed at first, if mere goodness, or goodness as a natural, not a moral, attribute, as leading wisdom, not led by it, is the spring of all divine actions? Must a more imperfect state take place first, that we may know to value a state of perfection? Is it necessary that we should drink of the cup of adversity, to set our taste right for the joys of immortality? Will these be insipid if not heightened by the remembrance of the other? If so, what can we think of those Beings who know good, but never knew evil; there is at least one such

* Gordon at Boyle’s Lect. Serm. 3.
Such Being, and why could not that one happy Being have made others like him in this respect?

 Sect. XIII. But perhaps there is something in the frame of man himself essential to the perfection of his Being, and yet the fountain of all the evils he complains of. Man is a rational and a free agent; from hence comes his distinguishing happiness; and from hence likewise it proceeds that he is liable to misery. His happiness arises from the right use of his Reason and Liberty, his misery from the abuse of them. But is Reason the natural cause of misery? The highest degree of Reason would then be conjoined with the greatest degree of misery; nor could a reasonable Being, as such, be happy. Or is Reason the foundation of misery? Only by accident, or, as it happens to be imperfect? So it must be, or not at all. But why then had not God given us (if not larger faculties, which perhaps was impossible, other faculties supposing other Beings, yet) opportunities for improving the faculties we have to greater advantage? And why is not every man's share of happiness in proportion to his share of Reason? Reason alone then cannot be the occasion of misery.

 Sect. XIV. We must therefore have recourse to liberty, in order to explain this wonder-
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wonderful phænomenon. Now liberty implies a power to do evil as well as good; and he that doth evil freely (as moral evil must be done freely, if at all) can have no ground of complaint, when he reaps the fruit of his own doings. True, he that does evil cannot. But can there be any evil, moral evil, where there is no moral fitness in actions? No doing what ought not to be done? How can that be evil which is not unfit; and which the agent is not to be blamed for doing? Nay, how can there be liberty, where the reasonableness of the thing neither is, nor ever can be, a motive to action, the only exciting, or moving reason being inclination?

Sect. XV. The opposers of moral fitness, must give me leave to implore their help in getting over some other difficulties; as, Why liberty (if it be possible upon their principles) is bestowed? Is it universal? Might there not be liberty, and yet all men be happy, though not in the same degree? Let me, in the first place, beseech them to inform me, Why this fatal gift, called liberty, is conferred on man? * Should they say, that it is an inseparable companion of finite intelligence, I do not see how the consequence can be avoided, that no created

* The objections in Tully against the goodness of the Gods in giving Reason to man, upon the notion of a God moved only by natural affections would be but too just, and, I think, unanswerable. De Nat. Deor. 1. 3. § 26, &c.
ted Being, much less man who enjoys so small a scantling of this intellectual light, can ever attain to a state of happiness which he is not liable to lose; in express contradiction to the Christian revelation, that the righteous shall go into life eternal; not to be doomed to endless vicissitudes. I mention this for the sake of those who will allow the argument from authority, when it is that of Jesus Christ. Nor does it appear, that there is any such necessary connexion between the liberty (as it must here be understood of a power to do good or evil) and imperfect intelligence, or Reason. For how easy is it for the supreme intelligence, being present throughout his works, by occasional illuminations and assistances, to supply the defective intelligence of any of his creatures, and to guide them, by an unerring hand, in the way of innocence and felicity, the most perfect innocence, the highest felicity. I believe, I may add, it is not the imperfection of Reason, separately considered, that is the foundation of liberty, but the weakness of Reason compared with the strength of inclination. The weakest degree of Reason may be sufficient to secure the performance of that duty which it discovers, were there no temptation on the other side; nay, is not barely sufficient for this end, but would certainly and infallibly attain it, it being morally impossible that a reasonable Being should counteract the lowest degree of Reason, with-
out any motive or inducement whatsoever. And why is there any temptation to evil? Why have we inclinations that are not directly subservient to virtue? Why do not inclination and reason always go hand in hand, as we christians believe they will in the blessed state that follows next? These questions are asked of those who resolve the divine actions into unguided benevolence, not into fitness, as the original reason of them.

Sect. XVI. Will they say that liberty is given (not because it cannot be with-held where Reason is first bestowed, but) because liberty is necessary to happiness? It will then be asked, whether liberty is a universal thing, so that in the whole system of reasonable agents there are none, who, that they may be compleatly happy, are not made free? And the happiest of created Beings would not be so happy, were their happiness the effect of necessity, and not of their own free choice? But why so, when the blessed God is necessarily and unchangeably blessed? They may reply, that the happiness of God, and the happiness of his creatures are of different kinds; that the happiness of the one is therefore the highest possible, because it is necessary, while that of the others is the highest they are capable of, because it is free. Should a reason of this difference be demanded, I fancy the patrons of blind benevolence would be hard put
put to it to find one. It can be no addition to my present happiness to reflect, that I might not have been happy, unless it was _previously fit_ that I should be left to my own choice, whether I would be happy or not. _Fitness_, I own, is a reasonable ground of pleasure. It is a pleasure to think that God has done what was fit in making me free, and that I, as was fit and becoming, have made a good use of my _liberty_. But, without this _antecedent fitness_, which is a thing these Gentlemen will laugh at, I see not why I should be better pleased with the happiness of my condition, for being the issue and reward of a course of virtue freely chosen and continued in by me. Is it any trouble to me, when arrived to my journey's end, that there was but _one road_ to it which I could _not possibly_ miss? To be able to go astray is not a thing of itself desireable; nor is the consideration that we were once _so_, though now _so no more_, any way necessary to recommend our present felicity, if it was never _suitable to our nature, as created, dependent Beings, and therefore fit_, that we should, for _some time_; be left in the hands of our own choice. This, I say, is not at all necessary to give an accent to our happiness, provided we take our _estimate_ of the happiness we _injoy_, not from _fancy_, but from _reason_, as all the happy spirits of heaven will do. And therefore, I cannot but think the _Jew_ was quite out in his reasoning.
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ing, who told Mr. Boyle *, "that he thought " men owed more to God's goodness than the " very angels do. For, said he, whereas God " without any good works of theirs, purely " out of his goodness, conferred on them " that blest condition they enjoy; by giving " man a free will, by the good use of which " he may glorify his Maker, when by abusing " it it is in his power to dishonour him, he " allows man that highest satisfaction and " privilege of co-operating to his own felici- " ty." Not to observe the great improba- bility of the supposition, that the good angels were confirmed in bliss without any trial pre- ceding (since the fall of the evil angels is a proof of their having been tried) the very supposition seems to imply, that a state of prob- bation is not antecedently fit, which takes away the foundation of that satisfaction, which the Jew fancied a man must have from co-ope- rating to his own felicity. This by the way.

Sect. XVII. This hold failing, will it be said, that all intelligent Beings are not created free, but only some of them, for the sake of variety, which variety is for the sake of happiness, rendering the whole a more entertaining spectacle? More entertaining to whom? To them who, by the abuse of their liberty, are capable of making themselves unhappy? Or to those, who have no freedom, which

* Seraphick Love, p. 117.
which they can abuse? The former will be apt to think, that any such variety might very well be spared. Nor can the latter need it, unless that they may be able to triumph upon the comparison. A worthy satisfaction truly; like that of a man who lolls at ease in his gilt chariot, and laughs to see the crowd trudging along by him on foot. It is the pleasure of a Domitian, who loved to exhibit his naval fights in rainy weather, often shifting his cloke to keep himself dry, which he would not permit any one else to do; at the same time compelling them to stay out the shew*. All variety does not please the sense, much less the mind, which had much rather have one uniform prospect, than a prospect diversified by the absence of something, of much greater importance than a fanciful variety. All happy minds must needs be benevolent, and, because they are so, must delight more to see the happiness of their fellow-creatures fixed like their own, where there is no reason for the contrary, than to see any of them in danger of having their whole fortune shipwrecked. The Poet †, indeed, hath observed,

Sueve mari magno turbantibus aquora ventis,
E terra magnum alterius spectare laborem.

"It is sweet to behold, from shore, the weather-beaten vessel tossed on a tempestuous sea, and ready to perish in a storm."  

* Vid. Sueton.  † Lucr.  

Non
Non quia vexari quenquam est jucunda voluptas,  
Sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave est.

" Not, faith he, that we are pleased with  
" other people's calamities, but to be spectators of those dangers which we ourselves  
" are out of the reach of."

But even this indirect pleasure proceeds from a reflection the mind makes, that their case might have been ours, or at least that our condition is not absolutely fenced against the strokes of fortune. Nor would a generous soul be ever the less happy, if he had no such examples of wretchedness before him; but more so, the pain he hath from a sympathetic sense of another's evils, being more than equal to the pleasure of congratulating himself upon his own exemption from them. Hath God made some Beings mortal, that others may have a quicker sense of their immortality? Or is the contrast, between the imperfections of created Beings, and the absolute perfection of the Creator, that which completes his satisfaction in the infinite fulness of his essence?

Sect. XVIII. Besides the insuperable difficulties which I find myself encountered with on the two former questions, Why is liberty given? And is this gift universal? There is this inquiry still behind; Might there not
not be liberty, and yet all men be happy, though not in the same degree? They who have made the best use of their liberty, we will say, are happiest; they who have made the worst use, the least happy. But why may not even these be tried again and again, till they have learned to be wiser? Why must one trial decide their fate? Or if there must be but one trial, and that trial hath issued unhappily, what forbids their being put into a state of inferior but certain happiness, in which their faculties being restored to their soundness, and their broken fortunes repaired, they have all the other pleasures of which they were originally made capable, besides those which flow from a consciousness of having acted well in a state of trial; which, by the way, cannot be very considerable, if he that acts best does not what is morally more fit than he who acts worst? What room can there be for a state of final punishment, though only negative, or such as consists in the everlasting absence of any good of which they are capable? Why any punishment at all, when no past evil conduct of the sufferer can render it morally fit, if there be no such thing as moral fitness? As for its usefulness to instruct and warn others, surely a Being of infinite knowledge might think of some other way as effectual to preserve his creatures in their duty as this, without making one part of the creation happy at the expence of the other. Or supposing he could not,
not, yet why must some be miserable, that others may be more happy, without any reason for it in the thing itself?

Sect. XIX. Where moral fitness is out of the question, a lesser sum of happiness divided among a system of percipient Beings, without a single instance of vice and misery, must carry it before a greater quantity of good, where evil is not excluded; even though, after the substraction of so much good as is equal to the evil, the good that remains should exceed that in the other case. The first thing that self-love prompts us to, is to flee from pain; the next to pursue pleasure. And in the like way must natural benevolence work with regard to others. The first concern will be that there be no miserable object to jar upon the heart-strings; the next to procure all the happiness that is in the power of the benevolent person to bestow. Would it not be a greater satisfaction to one, whose kindness was nothing else but a natural impulse, to make ten persons moderately happy, than nine in a much higher degree, if that could not be done without leaving the tenth in the most deplorable circumstances, without all help and hope? This reasoning holds much stronger when applied to the Deity, considered as having a universe of his own children to take care of, and supposed to have no rule to proceed by, but kind inclinations, separate from every other motive
in the DEITY.

motive to action. A Being wholly actuated by such inclinations would be more shocked and offended with the view of one thousand wretches, in his family, than pleased with the sight of ten thousand Beings that were happy, and hereupon would immediately thus decree — "Let not a groan or sigh be heard through the whole creation; let pain and fear be forever banished; not one eye drop a tear, not one heart be oppressed with anxiety and sorrow; let every class of Beings, and every individual in each class, be pleased, and of the many millions that people my wide dominions, not one be found, who does not bless the bounty of his Creator." Such would be the decree, if inclination held the throne, and wisdom and power only waited as ministering attributes to perform what that dictated. And, did the creation wear such an universal smile, there would be more ground to suspect, that wisdom and power were under the command of inclination, than there is at present, that such a dark cloud hangs upon the face of nature. To shut up this debate.

Sect. XX. Were it not antecedently fit, that a reasonable creature should have good and evil, life and death set before him, let him that can give me a satisfactory reason, why any creature should be exposed to the hazard of such a choice. Put the case that a great number
number might be made happy, by placing a single Being, as soon as he existed, in a state of misery, would this justify such treatment of an innocent Being? Surely no. Let me take leave to say, it is not a whit more justifiable to make any one miserable, whatever be his character, for the advantage from hence accruing to others, if there was not an original moral fitness that a creature endowed with understanding and freedom of choice, should act in one way rather than another. If there cannot be a moral difference in actions, there ought not to be a natural one; since, without a moral difference, no man, act how he will, can properly deserve to be made miserable. — The sum is, supposing the will of God to be guided by wisdom, and wisdom to be measured by fitness, it may be shewn how evil came to have a beginning, otherwise not.

Sixth COROLLARY.

Sect. I. THE love of God to his creatures is easily conceivable upon these principles. I doubt the notion of it advanced by some ought to be rectified, as being neither worthy of God, nor adapted to afford any stable comfort and satisfaction to the creature. The love of God, if they say right, is his making choice of some to be the objects of his munificence, while others, and they the vastly greater number, are left destitute
tute of all power to emerge out of that miserable condition into which they are fallen through no fault of their own. Is there not too much reason to say, that this notion of the love of God to man is utterly unworthy of him? What does the Deity discover by such a love (if it must be called by that name) but uncontrolable power, an attribute in which the best of all Beings differs not from the worst, but only with regard to the degree of it? Yes, it may be said, he shews his goodness too to his elect. Tell me how, if in all that he does for them he hath no direct regard to their happiness, but determines their happiness rather than misery, just to shew his arbitrary will and pleasure, not from any pleasure he hath in beneficent actions as such? And that so it must be is plain, since, were it goodness that wrought so strongly towards some, as to decree their salvation by an irresistible grace, without respect to any meetness and concurrence of theirs, the same goodness, to say the least, could not but make the attainment of happiness, or, if not that, yet the avoiding of misery, everlasting misery and damnation, possible to all, who can never deserve that misery which it was never possible for them to avoid.

Sect. II. And as this notion of divine love is unworthy of God, so it is big with terror and affrightment to the creature, unless a man
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a man hath the good luck to be of a temper
to believe every thing, with reason or without
it, that he is willing to believe. For say
that this love proceeds by a decimation, tak-
ing one out of ten, there will then be nine to
one against every single person, that he is
not of the happy number. Nor, to speak
truth, can I perceive any great ground of
rejoicing that the favourites themselves
have, provided they use their Reason, or
have any spark of generosity in them, for
when they think of the principle on which
they imagine the Deity to act, in selecting
them from the common mass of mankind,
and using so much severity towards others,
how can they have any dependence on the
favour of such a Being? He that hath no
other reason for all that he does but mere
will and pleasure, may alter his will with-
out reason. What is there more dishonour-
able to God in deceiving his creatures with
fair promises, which he never intends to
fulfil, than in putting them under an inevi-
table necessity of being for ever miserable?
This being supposed no disparagement to the
Deity, is there any thing else that can be
so? Could a person who aimed to conform
all his own actions to Reason, and esteemed
it the greatest glory of a Being to do good
to all according to his ability, have much
satisfaction in the friendship of a prince,
who, while he cared for a few of his sub-
jects,
jects, had formed a design of ruining all the rest, and making them feel the weight of his power, for no other reason, but that it so pleased him? To those whom such a Prince should call near him, and load with honours, one might apply the words of the Roman Satyrift.

In quorum facie misere, magnæque sedebat
Pallor amicitiae.--------- Juv. Sat. 4.

SECT. III. It must be confessed, the love of God to his creatures, as others describe it, in the manner of an immediate emanation from the very essence of the Deity, diffusing itself on all sides, is more agreeable to Reason than this, and infinitely more amiable. God absolutely wills the greatest happiness of the system he hath made. But though this must be owned to be an amiable affection, it hath not all the beauty of a moral excellence. A wise love is that alone which becomes the Deity. And there are three periods in which this love may be considered. **First**, as delighting to bestow, in various degrees, the capacities and opportunities of happiness upon a world of intelligent creatures; **then**, as having a peculiar complacency in those of his creatures who improve the capacities and opportunities they have received; and, **finally**, as delighting to crown persevering virtue with the highest actual felicity that his wisdom
judges fit and proper. This is such an account of the love of God, as gives the greatest encouragement to all sincere and honest souls; and to none but such. To know whether I am beloved of God I have nothing else to do but to inquire, whether I have a prevailing love to that which is good. *The righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance beholds the upright.* The love of God terminates first on things, and then on persons. He loves the righteous, because he loveth righteousness; so far is that notion from being true which represents God as first absolutely determining to make a certain number of his creatures happy, and, after that, by an irresistible operation of his Grace, making them holy, as the indispensible means of their being happy; not to add, that it is pretty hard to conceive, what can be meant by holiness, and by necessity of holiness in the creature, when the holiness of God, as by them delineated, is nothing else but sovereign will and pleasure.—*N. B.* Though *Reason* will discover, that in the same degree as any man loves that which is good, he himself is beloved by the best of all Beings, yet the only certainty of God's so loving creatures whose virtues are so imperfect, as to design them for complete and everlasting felicity, is from *Revelation.*

*Seventh*
SEVENTH COROLLARY.

**Sect. I.**

The truth of the present scheme being supposed, the fundamental duties of Religion, (such as these following, obedience, resignation, love, gratitude, imitation, prayer, and glorifying God) appear plain and obvious in the theory, and highly reasonable in the practice. Here is one ground of obedience; I do not say the only one, but such a one, that, if there were no other, we should yet be indispensably obliged to obey God; and now that there are other reasons of obedience, this is a reason of that use and importance, that it ought not to be overlooked. For having the utmost assurance that God can never do nor command what is not fit, we from hence know the fitness of any thing commanded, that God hath commanded it; when, perhaps, it is not knowable in any other way, and being sure that it is fit, upon some account or other, to be commanded, we cannot reasonably refuse to do it. If it be said, that, in this case, we only consider the command of God as the medium by which we discover the fitness of the action, not as the formal reason or motive by which we are influenced in performing it; and so, notwithstanding we do what is commanded, yet not doing it because commanded, we do it not in obedience.
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tence to God. I answer, that this would be very true, if this were our only inducement to the action; but when there is another reasonable inducement, it is impossible that he, who hath a due regard to the one, should be regardless of the other. The inducement, I mean, is authority founded on the several relations of Creator, Preserver and Redeemer, which God stands in to us, and the benefits communicated in consequence of these relations; which authority no one can choose but reverence, who does an action, because, from God's commanding it, he believes it to be fit; for as it is fit that he should have an eye to the divine authority, so the consideration of this fitness, will have its share of influence, as well as of the fitness of the action to be commanded, which he infers from God's commanding it. Whoever habitually and prevailingly loves what is fit, as fit, for the same reason that he pays a constant regard to one sort of fitness, will do the same to another, and to that most, which is most fit; as nothing can be more fit than that we should do whatever God hath commanded, because he hath commanded it, and not merely because, he having commanded it, we are satisfied of its being fit, that is, conducive to some valuable end: and, much less, merely because of the promise or threatening annexed to the command. If I have respect merely to these, or so much more to these than to any other motive, that no other mo-
tive, without these, would be effectual, every body sees that it is not the authority of God that sways me, or not principally, but hope, or fear of being made happier or miserable by his power; and so what I do, is not really out of obedience to God, and for conscience sake. So little reason have they to triumph in the piety of their sentiments, who resolve all obligations into the will of God, and, when they come to explain themselves, give us to know they mean not the will of God, as signifying what he would have us do, but what he intends to do by way of reward and punishment; to which we may add, that there is no such immediate connexion between a respect to self-interest, and to the authority of God, in the performance of one and the same action, as there is between a respect to the fitness of an action to be commanded (however we come to be informed of that fitness) and a respect to the authority of God commanding that action; the latter of which is as apparently fit as any thing can be, and as likely to influence a person who hath made it a rule to himself always to follow that which is right. One thing that proves this connexion between a regard to fitness, and to the authority of God, is, that the chief, if not only, ground of the fitness of an action commanded may sometimes be its being a fit, or proper trial of our obedience. After all it deserves to be remarked, that of these
obedience from a sense of God’s authority; and obedience from a persuasion of the fitness of whatever God commands to be, for some good reason or other, done) the latter seems directly and immediately to do most honour to God, as it implies an apprehension of his always acting in the most perfect manner, the most honourable apprehension that a creature can have of his Creator; while the former considered as a practical acknowledgment of God’s authority, or rightful power to command, immediately signifies the regard which the creature in obeying God, because of his right to command, hath to what is fit, rather than his belief of God’s regard to it in commanding it. And therefore whichever of these is supposed to be most acceptable to God, (which must depend upon the disposition of the heart from whence they flow) the former, as I said, arguing the highest esteem and veneration of God himself, is plainly most honourable to him.

Sect. II. Let a man have this notion of Divine Providence as in every part and step of it conducted by the highest Reason, and duly attend to it, and he can have no doubt concerning that resignation which is his duty always to practice towards the great Governor of the world. What more just and
and reasonable than that a finite and fallible Understanding should submit to an Understanding that never errs; and a Will liable to be misled and over-ruled by irregular inclinations, to a Will that is always holy, and just, and good; and that Passion should not be permitted to cavil at that which Reason cannot but approve? To sit down easy and contented, because we can get nothing by complaining, is not enough. Did chance and necessity, or humour, govern all, a wise man for the sake of his own quiet, would not struggle with his chain, but endeavour to make the best of a bad matter. This is not our case; the world is the care of an infinitely wise and good Being. Our part, therefore, is to behave as those whose resignation is voluntary and cheerful, not forced; or, if forced, is the effect of no other compulsion, but that which proceeds from a full conviction of mind, that every thing is ordered for the best. This resignation, cæteris paribus, will be most easy to that man who, as he believes so, frequently considers and reflects, that whatever is done was fittest to be done, and that the measure of this fitness is the tendency of God's providential dispensations to promote the final happiness of all the sincere lovers of truth and goodness.

Sect. III. Keeping the same rule in our hand, we shall be led directly into the true notion of the love of God; be able to prove the
obligation to it, and furnished with the most certain mark and token of it. Love to God may be considered as a love to the character, or to the person. The love of God in the former sense, or as characteristical, is the delight we take in the thought of an all-perfect Being; in contemplating the idea of such a Being, and believing that this idea is not a creature of the brain, but a copy taken from an original really existing, and possessed of greater perfection than the most exact copy can possibly express. Moral excellence is that part of the idea, which is the principal attractive of love, that which is loved for its own sake, and communicates a loveliness to the other perfections, giving them their beauty and lustre. The contemplation of an eternal, self-existent, all-knowing, all-powerful, and omnipresent Being, immediately excites admiration, with a sentiment of the profoundest awe and reverence. But that this reverence, this awe, and admiration, may have pleasure mingled with it, such a pleasure in the theory of these perfections, as makes us sincerely exult and triumph in the abundant proofs we have of their real existence, we must have reasons to believe, that the most absolute perfection in every other kind, is conjoined with the most perfect rectitude of will; for then our notion of an eternal almighty, immense and omniscient Deity, is that of a Being in whom all these perfections have
have the utmost value and excellence they can derive from the truest and noblest direction of them. Eternity and immensity, without knowledge and power, affect the mind no otherwise, than an infinite eternal Chaos might be supposed to do; together with some knowledge and power superadded, without moral perfections, they cause much the same terror, as clouds big with thunders, and lightenings, and storms, when it is not known where they will fall. But now, only add moral rectitude, and the whole scene is changed, and what before was wonderful only, or dreadful, becomes amiable; amiable in the sublimest and most extensive sense, or so as to challenge a love attended with approbation and esteem, and supported by it; which the most diffusive benevolence, not founded in fitness, would not do. We should approve such a benevolence, with almighty power in its retinue, much after the same manner as we should the beneficial operations of nature, were nature imagined to have had no other parent but necessity.

SECT. IV. The personal love of the Deity (if I may be allowed the expression) is the pleasure we have in believing, that the best and the most beneficent of all Beings is the happiest; that his beatitude as much transcends that of all other Beings, as his moral perfections do theirs. There is no room for us to
to wish God happier than he is, or to wish him the continuance of his happiness, for his blessedness is infinite, unchangeable, and everlasting. But the thought of such a happy Being may give us pleasure, we may rejoice with joy unspeakable, in the eternal indissoluble union of love and majesty, of infinite holiness and unbounded blessedness. The obligation to love God (as the duty hath been now explained) or to rejoice in the fulness and perfection of his nature, and in the unrivalled greatness and permanent duration of his felicity, arises partly from the immediate perception of his loveliness, and partly from our having partook of the effects and emanations of his love. God hath made us capable of judging of moral excellence; we cannot exercise those intellectual powers which God hath given us as we ought, but we must perceive that every degree of moral excellence is amiable, and consequently the highest degree of it most amiable; that the fittest conjunction of happiness is with holiness, and of the most perfect happiness with the most perfect holiness; this we cannot but immediately perceive, if we make a right use of our faculties; and our obligation to this seems to me self-evident. The obligation to love God arising from the divine benefits I shall consider presently.
in the DEITY.

Sect. V. The most certain criterion or mark of our thus loving God, or delighting in the contemplation of a Being, who always does that which is right, and in the thought of his happiness upon that account, is our approving and practicing that which is right ourselves, according to the measure of our capacities. This right temper and disposition of mind in ourselves, is the ground of our delight in the perfection and happiness of the divine nature. For being restored to this excellent temper, we are better able to judge of what is really excellent and good, and cannot but delight in it, and in that most which is most excellent, and therefore most of all in that God, whose excellencies are without comparison superior to all. Our hearts being rightly affected to that which is good, we participate with the supreme Being in his perfections and felicity. We enjoy both at second hand, and, without considering the benefits which we receive from him, or do further hope for, we are wonderfully refreshed with the meditation of a self-sufficient, and all-sufficient Being, who, having the fountain of being and happiness in himself, can never stand in need of any other.—“My goodness cannot extend to thee, O Lord! And I rejoice to think thou art so great and happy, that all the services of men and angels can
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"can add nothing to thy happiness and " glory."—Is not this a much better account of love to God? Does it not give more satisfaction to the Reason of our minds, and more plainly shew the necessity of a holy life, if we would deserve the name of lovers of God, than theirs who place the love of God in blind passions, and confused emotions and elevations of soul, as often as they read, or bear, or think, of God, and Christ, and such like objects; such emotions as the understanding or judgment have little or no part in, and who, as a distinguishing proof of their love, please themselves beyond measure, with the frequency and length of their devotions, without attending to the habitual temper of their minds, or observing what fruits their Religion produces in the course of their lives and actions? This sort of devotion borders so nearly upon the mystical, and is so very like the enthusiastic raptures of some famous Saints in the Romish Church, that one would almost suspect it to have been originally borrowed from thence.

Sect. VI. The love of God (even that which I have named personal) may be distinguished into three kinds, pure, interested, and grateful. Pure love is the delight we have in the perfection and happiness of the Deity, from the self-recommending nature of these objects. Happiness so seated gives plea-
pleasure to a mind, rightly disposed, as naturally as light, the first of all created beauties, does to the eye. Interested love is the delight we take in the same things, from the expectation of some great advantage that we shall have by them. It is a pleasing thought that the world is the workmanship of an all-perfect Being, and the continual object of his wise and watchful Providence; that this God will be our God, if we make choice of him as such, our guide until death, and after death, our exceeding great reward. The consideration of this is a very reasonable ground of pleasure and satisfaction. Nor is this pleasure, though it regards our own interest and happiness, at all inconsistent with what merits to be called love to God, but is, indeed, necessarily implied in the love of indigent creatures; insomuch that if we did not desire the favour of God, and highly value the hopes of obtaining it; if we could be contented to give up all further pretensions to the divine approbation, and to retire out of Being, without knowing and enjoying more of God than we have already done, there could not be a surer sign that we did not love God; since in the same proportion as we love any person, we prize his friendship, and study to recommend ourselves to it. Grateful love is the delight we have in the same objects, from the goodness of God already manifested to us, and the obligations he
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he hath laid upon us, by his gifts, or promises.

Sect. VII. Gratitude is nothing else but love awakened into act by particular favours and benefits. These are proper incentives to love; and when they prove so, love loses its own name, and assumes that of gratitude. Among the many reasons we have to rejoice that God is the happiest of all Beings, and the Head and Lord of the Universe, this is one, that he hath been so kind and gracious to us. And though the infinite disparity of condition between God and the creature, must for ever put it out of our power to return the kindness (which is what gratitude never fails of doing where it can) yet nothing shall hinder us from acknowledging it in every proper way, and on every proper occasion, particularly by religious and solemn thanksgiving. I am sensible that some allow of no other foundation for gratitude to the Deity but natural benevolence. "We have hardly any notion (faith one *) of a good and amiable action, but that it proceeds from this principle, viz. a benevolence in God, corresponding to kind instincts in us. If kindness, or a good disposition be not the spring, no matter what the nature or consequence of the action be; however beneficial it may be

* Divine Benevolence, p. 27.
to us, we like the Being that produced it
never the better, we do not think our-
sefelves obliged to gratitude, or imagine
him any way the more perfect, as to his
moral character, on the account of it.”

Most surprizing news! That I should have
no reason to be grateful to God, because
he had his reason for being kind to me, tho'
that reason was not borrowed from any
merit of mine. This will appear more
strange, when it is considered that the very
reason of God’s esteeming what he does for
his creatures to be fit, though not founded
in their merit, is taken from their happiness;
to which for the creature’s sake, not his own
(he having no prospect of any accession to
his own riches by that means) God delights to
contribute, in every way, and to the greatest
degree, that infinite wisdom will permit.
So far is God’s being moved by the fitness
of the thing from diminishing, and much
more from annihilating, the merit of his
goodness to us, that in reality we can hardly
frame an idea of it upon any other foot.
The Being that acts from pure benevolence of
temper, does so far act like a necessary Be-
ing; his goodness sheds abroad its influences
after much the same manner as the sun
shines, and the water flows. It is true he
knows what he does, and he wills the doing
it, which the others do not. But he wills it,
not as a moral, but a natural, agent. His
benevolence, in a physical, not moral, way,
deter-
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determines his will to all those actions, which
to his wisdom appear necessary for the bringing
about the greatest good, or happiness of the rati-
onal system; not that this greatest happiness
is esteemed by him morally better, or fitter
to be chosen than their greatest misery, but
only is what his inclinations (of which no
account is to be given) lead him to promote.

Sect. VIII. The thinking part of man-
kind have always agreed to place the chief
part of Religion in the imitation of the Deity. But we must first know what the
duty is, denoted by this phrase, the imitation of God, before we can judge of the rea-
onableness of it, or pretend to practise it. The imitation of God hath respect to the
general principle of action, or to particular
attributes. This principle, in all the works
of God, hath been shewn to be an inflexible regard to the reason and fitness of things.
The universal frame and course of nature
speaks to the Reason of every man, that
there is a first cause of infinite power and
wisdom; and having not the least ground
to surmise a wrong inclination in the Deity;
by which he may be misguided in his judg-
ment or choice, we conclude without hesi-
tation, that he always sees what is best and
most becoming him to do, and as he always
sees this, so is ever determined to do it.
Would we then be like God in this respect,
we have but this one general rule to mind, that as God, without the least variableness or shadow of turning, pursues that which his infinite wisdom dictates to be best, so we, according to the measure of our abilities, diligently enquire after, and constantly prefer, throughout the whole course of our actions, that which appears best to that imperfect understanding, and in that dimmer light, which our Maker hath given us. The more enlarged and accurate our judging faculty, and the more sagacious to discern between good and evil, the greater is the resemblance it bears to the divine understanding. The more careful we are to preserve the subordination of Passion to Reason, the nearer approaches do we make to the Deity, who hath no Passions at all to mislead him. And finally, that which completes our imitation of the divine Being, as to the general principle of our conduct, is when, having fixed our aim right, i.e. our general purpose or intention to do nothing unreasonable, nor to leave any thing undone that is reasonable and fit, we keep as close as we can to this our aim and purpose, not knowingly and wilfully declining from it. We follow the Deity in making fitness our rule, as he does, and also because he does; without which it would not be complete imitation, since that word does not simply denote a resemblance, but a designed, studied resemblance: or, at least,
least, a resemblance occasioned by a familiar converse with the object of it, and so likewise in the common measure of this fitness, we conform to the Deity. To him the measure of this fitness is his own perfect nature, the several natures of his creatures, and the relations he stands in to them. In like manner, the measure or rule of fitness to the creature is the nature he partakes of, and the relations subsisting between him and his Maker, and between him and his fellow-creatures. Is it not undeniable that every one who makes this fitness the measure of his actions, imitates the Deity, endeavouring to be holy as he is holy, and perfect, as he is perfect; perfect in his little sphere, as God is in his, which is boundless? I am willing to believe that in all this I talk very intelligibly. But whether they talk thus, or indeed can do it, who are in a quite different way of thinking, deserves to be considered.

Sect. IX. In the first place, what can they mean by the imitation of God who believe God to have no other reason of his conduct towards his creatures, but arbitrary Will and Pleasure? To absolute Will in the Creator, there seems to be nothing to answer on the side of the creature, but absolute submission. What room can there be for imitation unless men of the most obstinate and imperious temper, whose Will is their law, are reckoned among the imitators of God; which I do
do not find they have yet been even by themselves? They have more reverence for their Maker, than to pretend their having learnt this temper from him; though this temper, it is to be feared, makes them have the better liking to those high and rigid notions, which represent God much such a one as themselves. Should it be said in favour of this scheme, that in never acting without a reason, we act according to our nature, as created, dependent Beings, and in acting according to our nature, we imitate God, who acts according to his, when he substitutes his Will in the room of all other reasons; my answer would be, that I should own this to be very much to the purpose, if our estimate of the nature of God was to be taken from the absoluteness of his Will, and not from the perfection of it. The independence of God upon all other Beings expresses his greatness and perfection. Not so the imaginary independence of his Will on the reason and fitness of things: at least, it does not seem so to me.

Sect. X: Let us now try whether those in the benevolent scheme can come off any better. After what manner will they explain the imitation of God, so as to give a rational and consistent account of it? The supreme Being, they may say, is an example of benevolence to all other intelligent Beings. True,
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If his benevolence be any thing more than a natural inclination. But if this is the best can be said of it, then, in giving the sum total of the divine actions, we must put it down thus, the Deity always and only follows inclination. And may not the sensual, the injurious, the revengeful man plead that he follows his? Notwithstanding which, no one will presume to say that such men are followers of God. But their inclinations are not like those of the Deity. And can they help that, as far as they are purely natural, or even as acquired or strengthened by custom, if in every action of which this custom is made up, they were prompted by some inclination or other, which they could not refuse to obey? But they ought to have over-ruled inclination by the force and authority of Reason. I would gladly know how; supposing inclination in every the least movement, be the only exciting reason to action. And if Reason could have done this, and had done it, Reason would then have been the principle of their conduct, and not inclination; and in following Reason they would have departed from the pattern set them by God, of all whose actions, the first and master-spring (if some men say right) is inclination. Yes; but his inclination is to do good; in doing good, therefore, we imitate God, tho' it be only in obedience to Reason, not in compliance with inclination: in the effects we do, not
not in the original cause or principle; this in us, being of a higher order than in the Deity, if while we are governed by Reason, he is wholly led by inclination. Which single reflection should, methinks, be enough to disgrace this opinion.

Sect. XI. Proceed we next to consider the imitation of God, as it respects particular attributes. God is just, and true, and faithful, and good, and in all these characters we are to set him before us as the great exemplar and original of moral perfection; keeping him continually in our eye, so as not only to be just and good upon other grounds and motives, but to strive to be so with a view of bearing the image of God, and being followers of him as dear children. In this divine image the ruling feature is universal benevolence, the lineament that is most obvious and lovely, and in which the likeness chiefly consists. The first view of the Deity is universal good, to the production of which, in a way agreeable to the nature of intelligent and free Beings, he employs his infinite power. Our power is confined within narrow limits; but our wills and affections are more boundless. We can wish happiness to every Being that is capable of it, rejoice in every instance of happiness that comes to our knowledge; and, the less we are able to do for the benefit of mankind,
should think ourselves more obliged not to omit doing any part of that little. Here a thought comes in my way—What title the selfish generation can have to be called imitators of God; they who frankly declare that they have no affection but for themselves, no concern for the interest of other men, further than their own is interwoven with it, so that in their most beneficent actions self-love only verifies the old Proverb, that the farthest way about is the nearest way home. If nature and practice, in this sect of Philosophers, be not better than principle, they will be hard put to it, to make out their relation to God from likeness. While God in creating and governing the world, hath no happiness of his own in view, but only that of other Beings, chiefly of those that are intelligent, they for their parts, though capable of proposing, with their own, the happiness of their fellow creatures, and of concuring to it, would never be at the expense of a wish for the happiness of others, were it not as a means of their private good. In any other view, the happiness of the whole world, of their country, of their best friends is nothing to them. Say, ye idolizers of self, where in the mean while is your imitation of the true God?

Sect. XII. It may be of use to observe, that the infinite distance between God and
his creatures is no bar at all to their imitation of him. And therefore, when Puffendorf* says, "that he does not see how the sovereign right which God exercises towards his creatures, can be the model of that right which ought to take place between Beings naturally equal; or how a law that imposes on men mutual obligations can pass for an image of the divine authority, essentially independent of all law and of all obligation." If hereby he would insinuate that there is, and can be, no proper similitude between divine justice, goodness, truth, and faithfulness, and human, I think the considerations that have been laid before the reader in the progress of this Discourse prove this to be a mistake. Nor does the inequality of the Beings, or of their stations in the universe, or the reflection added by Puffendorf's Annotator, at all affect this question. Are not superiours, when they behave worthily in their stations, examples to their inferiours, teaching them, in like manner, to fulfil the duties of their's? And whatever difference there may be in the instances and occasions of exercising any virtue, where the general foundation of action is the same, the same virtue exemplified in any one case, is just ground of imitation in every other, how widely distant for ever it

it may be, as long as these dissimilar cases are objects of the same virtue. Mr. Barbeyrac may therefore, if he pleases, call it an important reflection, but to me it appears trifling, "that there are many acts of human justice which cannot agree to God, because of the excellence of his nature. Such are a great number of acts of universal justice, and those of particular justice, which regulate contracts invented for a supply to the wants and necessities of life. Who would dare, for example, to reason thus, pay your debts because God pays his; be grateful, because God is to those who have done him good; obey your sovereign, because God obeys his superiors; honour your parents, because God honours his. Are not these reasonings manifestly absurd?" They are so, and the more manifest the absurdity of such reasonings, the more needless was the remark. But what then, because in the particular instances there is no resemblance, does it follow there is none in the virtue that governed the action? A steady purpose to make the reason of things our rule, agreeably to the example of the Creator of all things, and fountain of all perfection, and on no account whatsoever, to break in upon right and order, will have that influence upon a man as to ingage him to pay his creditors what he owes them, if he is able; to be grateful
to his benefactors, obedient to his parents and civil governors, &c. And, in that virtue which discovers itself in an uninterrupted course of these and all other virtuous actions, he will truly, though imperfectly, imitate the great author of his existence.

Sect. XIII. As to Bishop Cumberland's * observation, "that we must first know what justice is, before we can distinctly know that justice is to be ascribed to God, and that his justice is to be kept in view by us as our example; because, we cannot know God by an immediate intuition of his perfections, but by the effects first known from sense and experience;" I grant the truth of it so far as this, that we must have some knowledge of effects before we can have any knowledge of a first cause; but that our whole knowledge of the perfections of the first cause is immediately deduced from effects I deny, having, I think, proved the contrary in this Essay; viz. that being informed, from a survey of the works of nature, of the power and wisdom of their author, we are able from his wisdom, to demonstrate his moral perfections, from which we are supplied with an additional proof of the law of nature, and the most perfect pattern for our imitation.

Sect.

Sect. XIV. A learned Divine † is pleased to express himself on this subject in the following manner. "There is something previous to imitating of God, and more acceptable to him, which is obeying him. Otherwise, the duties of the first table would be set behind the second. We may endeavour faintly to imitate God in our benevolence towards men; but the love of God, and all the duties which a creature owes immediately to his Creator, are the prior duties, and they are more strictly and properly the business of every creature, than imitating God. To imitate his example, is paying him a dutiful respect; but submitting to his authority in all things, is most highly honouring him, and shews the profoundest reverence, resignation and humility." My general remark here is, that the comparison is not justly stated; which, when fairly made, is not between benevolence to man (which is but one particular instance of imitation, and a duty of the second table) and obedience to God in general, but between a proper thorough imitation of God, and a sincere universal obedience. When the matter is thus proposed, there are two or three things about which, I fancy, there will be no controversy, viz. that imitation and obedience, are both alike necessary,

† Dr. Waterland's Obligat. and Efficacy of the Christian Sacraments, p. 42.
necessary, being indispensibibly required by the law of Reason, and inseperable from the character of a good man; that one of these cannot exist without the other, imitation without obedience, or obedience without imitation, and that, in both these, we honour God and are accepted by him. These things, I imagine, will not be disputed. The question, therefore, that remains must be, which of these is prior to the other, most acceptable to God, and does most highly honour him? I think imitation. Imitation is prior to obedience. My reason for asserting this is, that to obey God presupposes our having made a right use of our intellectual powers and faculties, the result of which is a conviction that God hath given us a Law which we are bound to obey, and a resolution to obey it. Now in this right use of our faculties, we evidently imitate the supreme of all Beings, who constantly exerts his most perfect knowledge and power after the most perfect manner.

Sect. XV. I hope too, one may venture to say, that imitation is more acceptable than obedience, if all that is acceptable in this latter be, when traced to its original, borrowed from the former; which is really the case. That which gives an act of obedience its whole worth and significancy, is the temper and posture of the mind in performing
forming it, a right affection towards truth and goodness. And what is there so like God, in the imitable part of his nature, as such a temper of soul? And, for what this Author faith, that the love of God is a prior duty to imitation, if he means to all imitation of him, it is certainly false. The love of God which is characteristical (i.e. a love of goodness, especially as existing after the most transcendent manner in God) being the noblest imitation of him, and that which either includes, or draws after it, every thing that comes under the name of imitation. If he means that it is prior to some particular and outward acts of imitation; though this be true, it makes nothing to his purpose, proving no more than this, that one imitation of God is prior to another; inward to outward, a similitude of spirit to a similitude of conduct. Nothing can be plainer than that love, as the principle of obedience, must be prior to that obedience which flows from it.

Sect. XVI. That imitation more highly honours God than obedience, is, if possible, still more evident. For only consider the direct and immediate language of one and of the other. Obedience directly and properly respects the authority and power of God; imitation his wisdom and goodness. And which is most honourable to God, the ac-
knowledgment of his having the command of all other Beings, or that he is infinitely more excellent than they? Would it not be much more for the honour of a prince to have it said that his subjects, in every part of his dominions, made it their highest ambition to be and do like him, as far as the disparity of circumstances would admit, believing that in the same proportion as they advanced in the imitation of their sovereign, they should advance in perfection and happiness, than that they obeyed him in an implicit resignation, never presuming to control or dispute any of his commands? The instruction to be drawn from hence is, that though every way of considering the Divine Being yields great advantage, which is a very good reason why we should not forget him under any character and relation, as particularly that of our rightful and almighty Sovereign, yet our thoughts should be most frequently conversant about the moral attributes of God, whether as the rule to which every part of his government of the world is conformed, or the pattern which we are to follow; and to come as near as we can, that we may have more of the light of it derived into our conversation to make it shine before men. By repeated contemplation we may grow more intimately acquainted with these perfections, be more sensible of their beauty, and feel their attractive influence; the consequence
sequence of which will be, that knowing God better, in those things which are his very nature as a moral agent, we shall love and resemble him more; upon the same account as we shall be transformed into his perfect image, when, in the sublime language of inspiration, we shall see him as he is, and face to face. The more we place our religion in the love and imitation of God, the less will the danger be of our omitting the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and truth, and shuffling into their room, a feigned sanctity of behaviour, and punctuality in some outward forms of devotion, which will never atone for the want of a good and honest heart, and the substantial virtues of a christian life.

Sect. XVII. Prayer, by this rule of fitness, may seem to be excluded from being a necessary part of Religion. “For he that asks is worthy to receive what he asks, or he is not worthy. If worthy, he will receive it, though he doth not ask; if not worthy, though he ask, he will not receive.” The fallacy of which argument lies in supposing what ought to have been proved, that there is no antecedent fitness in Prayer. For if there are several considerations which shew it fit that creatures, circumstanced as we are, should pray to

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to God, then it cannot be fit that God should make no difference between those who wholly neglect Prayer, and those that are constant and devout in the discharge of their duty; nor can the former be worthy of the favours of heaven in the same sense that the latter are so, not being in a right disposition to receive them. Prayer, regularly performed, and with attention of mind supposes and promotes the true knowledge of ourselves, an habitual regard to the Presence and Providence of God; a sincere endeavour after those things which we make the subject of our Prayer; of those chiefly which in our Prayers we acknowledge to be of the greatest importance; and, finally, a kind and friendly disposition towards our fellow-creatures. The knowledge of ourselves, among other things, includes the knowledge of our unworthiness, and of our weakness, and indigence; of all which Prayer is a plain acknowledgment; the more necessary, because without putting ourselves in mind of these humbling truths, we might be apt in the pride of our hearts to forget them; and, for want of reflecting upon them, to behave unsuitably to our real character of infirm, necessitous, and sinful creatures, who have nothing they can challenge in the way of exchange from the hand of God, and neither injoy, nor can do, any thing without him.

SECT.
Sect. XVIII. By the same means the mind is rendered more attentive to the Presence of an invisible God, and to his Providence, both universal and special, directing and ordering all things without us, and operating upon our minds. Who have the most steadfast belief of a super-intending Providence, and reliance upon it, they who live without Prayer, or they who would as soon choose to be without their necessary food? Were the petitionary part of divine worship to be laid aside, thanksgiving would not continue long after; for what more natural than not to reflect on our having received every thing from the bountiful hand of God when we ask nothing of him; to be unaffected with the effusions of God’s paternal goodness on the creation, and look upon all that happens in the common train of events, with the same indifference as if the whole proceeded from an undesigning cause? The unavoidable effect of all which will be, that we shall neither enjoy the satisfaction in what we have that we should otherwise do, nor trouble ourselves about the use we make of it. Prayer is so far from superseding our own care and industry, as to be one of the most powerful arguments and incentives to them. For, I hope, we are none of us so unreasonable, to pray that God would do all while we sit still and do nothing; that is, that
that he would do both his own part, and ours too, and put us in possession of all the blessings we need, without our making use of the most likely means to obtain them.

The only construction that a reasonable Prayer will bear, is, *that God would succeed our best endeavours*; which shews that in every Prayer, there is a virtual promise of vigilance and activity on our part, according to the nature and importance of the things desired. A man would be ashamed to pray every day, deliberately and seriously, for his *daily bread*, who by idleness and extravagance took the certain way to make or keep himself poor; to pray that God would give him his *grace* to lead a virtuous and useful life, who would not be at the least pains to practise any one virtue, to deny any one vicious inclination, or to observe any one rule, though never so necessary, for the eradicating of evil habits, or planting of good. And for the tendency which men's praying *with* and *for* one another, hath to beget and cherish *social affections*, they need only consult their own *Reason* and *Experience*. Does not joint and mutual intercession to the *Common Parent* of mankind, and in a peculiar sense the *Father* of just and good men, dispose, as well as teach them, to look upon one another as *brethren*, and at the same time widen both their views and their affections? How could any one, without be-

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ing challenged for it by his own mind, recommend others to the favour and compassion of the Deity, and himself refuse to give them any assistance, or perform the least office of humanity for them, how much so ever needed? For should all be thus backward to lend their helping hand (as all may with as much reason as any one person can) how shall they be succoured, in many cases, without a miracle? Which, according to the true intent of our Prayers one for another, we do not beg; the meaning of our Prayers for others being no more than this, "that God, in the ordinary course of "his Providence, would direct things in "their favour, and so influence the minds "of men, that as far as they can be mu-"tually helpful to one another; they may "be excited, each according to his several "ability, to contribute to the publick good." These considerations, with others that might be mentioned, shewing the fitness of Prayer (at least in the present state of things) do at the same time prove the necessity of it, if we would please that sovereign Being who does what is fit himself, and cannot but require it from his reasonable creatures.

Sect. XIX. To demonstrate the fitness of glorifying God, and apprehend the design of God in exacting this tribute from us, nothing more is necessary than to explain the
the terms. It is the glory of God that he is, and hath, and does, every thing that can enter into the notion of an infinitely great, and perfect, and happy Being, that he gives all, and receives nothing. His majesty is not like that of earthly princes, which, for the most part, arises from things without them, such as sumptuous palaces, a crowd of courtiers, attendants, and guards, a great deal of state and ceremony, and other like things, which make a seeming distinction between the prince and the subject, where, very often, there is not the least real one; and have their chief use from supplying the place of true grandeur and majesty. To glorify God is to think of him as he is, and to love him in proportion to our capacities, as he deserves. Of our going beyond the truth there is no danger, but only of our falling vastly short of it. Were there but one reasonable creature, this would be his duty and happiness, to turn his eyes towards this glorious fun, and gaze for ever on his beauty and brightness. This is the first part of the idea of glorifying God, or rather the first step to it. The next, and that which most properly and formally constitutes the duty, is when in intelligent Beings take the most effectual course, to testify their own just sense of a Deity one to another, and to excite, and cherish, and improve, one in another, the same worthy apprehensions of God, and predominant affections
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He glorifies God most, whose words and actions are best calculated to propagate right and honourable notions of the Deity, and correspondent dispositions of mind towards him. From whence, by the way, let me observe, that an active life appears to be ordinarily preferable to a life of lazy retirement, and barren contemplation; and to be really more perfect. Confession of the truth, and zeal to promote it, solemn and publick acts of worship, a reverent use of the name of God in our common discourse, and (may I not say) above all the rest, a regular, useful, and holy life, are all comprehended under the general expression of glorifying God, being apparently necessary to maintain and spread the knowledge and love of God in this part of his reasonable creation. Among these means, it is not without reason, that I have given the preheminence to a useful and good life. The greatest person that ever lived upon earth has told us, herein is God glorified that we bear much fruit; so (faith he) shall ye be my disciples. Glorious character of a disciple of Christ, that he is one that abounds in the fruits of righteousness and goodness! Can any thing be more for the glory of the Master, than to make this a mark of his disciples, leaving them an example that they should follow his steps? Or of the disciple, than to follow, obey, and imitate such a Master?

SECT.
Sect. XX. Whoever attends to what has been now said to explain the duty of glorifying God, cannot mistake the design of God in requiring it. It is a most certain truth that God made all things, even the whole frame of heaven and earth, for his own glory; that is, so as that they might be visibly adapted to lead up the intelligent observer to the first Cause; to excite in the mind, the most elevated thoughts of God, and to impress those sentiments of awe, and reverence, and delight, which are suitable to his infinite perfections. He made intelligent Beings to glorify him in an active manner. Not that he needed or proposed the glory resulting from the works of creation, or from the praises and adorations of the intelligent part of it, to compleat his own happiness. He was not moved by the desire of fame as the children of men many times are, in their greatest and most shining actions; who, without considering that in such an action, they shall discharge their own duty, and be useful to mankind, and being urged by this reflection, think of nothing but the renown it will procure them, and how their names will be mentioned with honour, by those that are strangers to their persons, and, as they flatter themselves, by remote posterity. Such a desire of fame, for its own sake, may be the infirmity of great minds, but
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but still it is an infirmity, and therefore not consistent with a perfect nature. Alas, what are the applauseves of a world, of ten thousand worlds, to him whose greatness and glory is all inherent in himself, and independent of any other Being! What are their united praises to the single approbation of his own eternal mind! He hath a more solid and divine satisfaction in himself than to be capable of delighting in a sound or a shadow.

All that God does, and all that he would have his creatures do, is fit, and he does it, and would have them do it, because it is fit; and forasmuch as this is for the glory of God that he does that, and nothing else but that which is fit for a Being of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, to do, and because it is highly fit that reasonable creatures should think, and speak, and act in that manner which is most for the glory of God; in this sense God may be said to design his own glory, materially considered, or what declares and shews forth his essential glory, but not any glory without himself that terminates his view. It is very true, that a great deal of glory will redound from the works of God to their Creator; yea, and further, that he expects such of his creatures, as can do it, should serve and glorify him; but as for the glory that redounds from his works, it is a necessary appendage of
of their Being, much after the same manner as a noble production in any art is an honour to the artificer. *The work of the Lord is glorious,* and it is glorious because expressive of the idea or platform of it in his own mind; and as thus agreeing with his design, he cannot but approve it, it is really lovely and beautiful. And if God challenges the service and praises of his creatures, it is not that he reaps any advantage from them, or delights in them for their own sake, but because it is fit and reasonable, and for the benefit and happiness of the creature, that he should serve and worship the Creator; and because what is fit, and becoming, and productive of pleasure and happiness, God who is a lover of truth, and order, and of mankind, cannot but approve, and, as the wise Governor of the world, command under pain of his displeasure.

Upon the whole; since we can have no reason to doubt of the truth of that notion which best consults the honour of the divine perfections, best agrees with the universal sense of mankind, and is best adapted to promote the cause of Virtue and Religion, and to answer the most difficult questions on the subject of Creation and Providence, I take leave to conclude, that **Wisdom (and not arbitrary Will or blind Inclination) is the First Spring of Action in the Deity.**
A short and easy Rule of Conduct for Ministers of the Gospel, explained, applied to some particular cases, and recommended in

A CHARGE
Delivered at the
ORDINATION
Of the Reverend
Mr. Farnham Haskoll
AT
TAUNTON,
Nov. 8. 1733.
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1741
A Short and easy Rule of Conduct for Ministers of the Gospel, &c.

It is of very great use, as in the general conduct of life, so likewise, in discharging the duties of any particular function or employment, to have some first Principle, some one certain important and comprehensive Rule, by carefully attending to which we may be able to judge more easily of the course we have to take, of the very best manner of doing things, and the issue we may reasonably expect from the whole. I am ready to believe that I have thought of such a Rule as this with regard to the work of the Ministry, to which you, Sir, have been now solemnly separated; I make no doubt, with an upright and a ready mind on your part, and with the universal approbation of those that know you, and have at heart the true interest of Christianity.
A Rule of Conduct

The Rule I have an eye to is that contained in those words of the Apostle Paul to Timothy, his dearly beloved Son, 2 Tim. ii. 15.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God.

The several branches of the Ministerial Office have been so often, and so largely treated on, and you, Sir, are so well acquainted with them, that I need not say any thing upon this subject. And, indeed, had I a mind to do it, I should find it hard to say any thing but what was common, and had been better said before. But, as I am sensible you are not a little solicitous about the method in which you shall pursue the great end of all your labours (viz. the promoting of truth, and peace, and holiness) so as most effectually to answer this most desirable end, to have most present satisfaction, and most comfort and pleasure in the review, at the finishing of your course: and as, upon this occasion, you have been pleased to make choice of me to be your Remembrancer (for I pretend to no more) you will give me leave to offer to your consideration a few thoughts and reflections (with which I pray God I may always have my own mind deeply impressed) on that excellent advice of the Apostle which hath
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hath been now mentioned, Study to shew thyself approved unto God. "Be this " thy constant aim, thy most ambitious and " diligent endeavour, from which thou art " not to be diverted by any temptations " whatsoever. In every debate that may " arise within thyself, which thou shalt " choose among the several and contrary " ways that are taken by those who pro- " fess to intend the same thing, let both " thy first and last inquiry be, which will " appear best after I have laid aside, as " much as possible, all human views and " passions, and have asked counsel, not " only of my own calm and retired thoughts, " but of the Lord? Which will best stand " his awful trial, and may most justly " hope to have his final sanction added to " it?"

In this Exhortation, it is by no means supposed a thing unlawful to desire and en- deavour our being approved, both of God and man, or a thing impossible in any degree to be attained. The Apostle Paul faith of himself, a that to the Jews (not yet convert- ed to Christianity) he became as a Jew, that he might gain the Jews; to them that were under the Law, (obliged as they thought, by the Law of Moses, though they had im- braced the Gospel) as under the Law, that he might gain them that were under the Law;

a 1 Cor. ix. 20,—22.
to them that were without Law, (the Gentiles) as without Law, that he might gain them that were without Law; to the weak, as weak, that he might gain the weak; in short, that he was made all things to all men, that he might by all means save some; which however (notwithstanding the indefiniteness of the expression) must be restrained to things lawful and expedient, such things as did not injure the truth of the Gospel, for the sake of which, he says he did all this, ver. 23. His design in yielding to all being this, that he might save some, i. e. save them from their errors and vices, which could never have been done, if he had complied with them, in professing the same opinions, and doing the same actions.

The truth was what St. Paul would never give up, well knowing that if he so pleased men, he could not be the servant of Christ. It is therefore only in indifferent matters, that we must imagine the Apostle to have used this complaisance. What Principles were in common between him, and others, whom he endeavoured to bring to a more thorough knowledge of the truth, he took the advantage of, and, by approaching as near them as his peculiar Principles would permit, shewed it was not out of personal disrespect, or ill-will, that he differed from them. We should willingly

* Gal. i. 10.
willingly offend none, and be glad to please all, could it be done by fair and honourable means. If they are to be reasoned into an esteem for Religion, and of us, as no ill advocates for it; if we can overcome them by dint of good nature, and by the force of meekness, gentleness, condescension, and a readiness to do them all kinds of good offices, can oblige them to lay aside their prejudices against us; if we can compel all to come in, by such methods, we are very happy. But this, I doubt, is a thing rather to be desired than hoped. Yet still, it is encouragement enough, to do our utmost this way, and to persevere in it, that we shall not wholly lose our labour, that we shall at least win those who are more open to conviction, who for number, as well as weight, may be sometimes worth regarding. For we should have too bad an opinion of mankind, and be too much disheartened in our endeavours to serve them, did we believe that truth, and sincerity, and moderation, and benevolence had lost all their influence upon any, or that they did not sway considerably with some.

We read concerning our divine Master in his early years, that *he increased in wisdom, and in favour with God and man*; and the Apostle *Paul* hath told us how we may be acceptable to God, and approved of men, *viz.*

* Luke ii. 52.
by remembering that *the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*; that the Gospel had set men free from those restraints in things of their own nature indifferent, which the Law of Moses laid them under, and yet that this freedom, as to the use of meats and drinks, was nothing in comparison of the other privileges of the Gospel; that universal righteousness, and mutual peace, and charity, are some of the principal duties enjoined by the Christian Law; and a holy spiritual joy, the present, as well as future reward annexed to it; by calling this to remembrance, and then in these things serving Christ, the interest and credit of whose Religion cannot be promoted in any other way, so effectually, as in this.

And if the Apostle Paul himself, and the other Apostles of our Lord, and first Preachers of Christianity, were not approved of great numbers of men, what shall we say of the marvellous success of the Gospel, with the dispensation of which they were intrusted? They who embraced a Religion which could propose none of this world's encouragements to its followers, must do it upon the good opinion they had both of the Christian Doctrine itself, and of the Persons who taught it. And, perhaps,

*d* Rom. xiv. 17, 18.
haps, sometimes the favourable notion which they had of the Persons, from the simplicity and purity of their manners, and their kind, benevolent, patient, and forgiving temper, prepared a way for the easier reception of their Doctrine. But then it must be confessed the greatest numbers were still on the other side; and in this sense, the Christians continued for a long time, "a Scot everywhere spoken against. And so it will be, in a greater or lesser degree, with the cause and lovers of truth at all times, even where Christianity is the established Religion.

Considerate and impartial persons, those who think and judge for themselves, who are above being led away by vulgar prejudices, and have a prevailing love for truth and goodness, to God and man; these will approve a man of upright heart, like themselves, who is concerned for nothing more, than to find the truth himself, to assist others in discovering it, and to engage both himself and them, to walk suitably to it. But can it be said, that this is the character of all mankind, or of the greater part of them? I should be glad to have more reason to believe so.

But though neither the unlawfulness of all desire to please men, nor the impossibility of succeeding in this aim, in some degree, be

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 Acts xxviii. 22.
here supposed, yet I much doubt whether it was not designed to be imitated, that all who are approved of men, are not so of God. It is no strange thing, if this happens frequently to be the case, where any love the praise of men, more than the praise of God. For, provided they have but cunning enough to know how to manage matters, (and it is not a great deal that is required) they may easily captivate the minds of the simple, and by fair speeches, and other arts, more obvious than they are honourable, become the idols of all those, whose character it is, that they had rather have their fancies pleased, than their judgments informed; would rather be confirmed in their mistakes, than convinced of them; and have always the best opinion of such Preachers, as indulge them in the good opinion they have of themselves: such as instead of endeavouring to shew them the unreasonable-ness of their prejudices, and passions, and personal and party quarrels, fall in with them, or secretly flatter them, as in the right; perhaps connive at their vices, and are more concerned to dazzle weak minds, with an ostentatious and enthusiastic piety, than to edify the world, with the solid, the rational, the useful, and divine virtues of a uniformly holy and good life. By such methods as these, we may conceive the Pharisees to have gotten a much greater share of reputation,
tation than they deserved among the common people of the Jews, and the False Apostles among the more ignorant, injudicious, and wavering part of the first Christians.*

It is enough to cure a man, who hath generous sentiments, of all fondness for such kind of incense, to reflect from whom it comes, and by what low and dirty ways, generally speaking, it must be obtained. Not that persons of integrity, upon the whole, are out of all danger from the temptation, and are never at all warped, and influenced by it. Indeed, men of this character will not, in order to gain the favour of the multitude, deliberately do any thing which they know to be unlawful; but from vanity, or avarice, or love of power, or some other ill quality, which hath not lost all hold in them, they may have their judgments of things, in some measure, insensibly perverted, and, by that means, be drawn to do things not approved of God, while they themselves are so, for the general rectitude of their hearts and lives; or by an excess of good nature, or want of resolution, they may go, or rather be carried, too far.

* Among the Corinthians, there seems to have been One, who headed a Faction against St. Paul, by whom the Incestuous Person was countenanced, if not openly defended.
A remarkable instance of which we have in no less a person than the Apostle Peter, who before that certain came from James did eat with the Gentiles, but, when they were come, withdrew, and separated himself, fearing them that were of the circumcision; the consequence of which was, that the other Jews dissembled with him, (i.e. disguised their real sentiments, in respect of the liberty of the Gospel) insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. As what was done by St. Peter, and others in this case, proceeded from weakness, and was not apprehended to affect the general cause of Christianity, it was a very pardonable fault, but still it was a fault, which was the reason that the Apostle Paul withstood him to the face, as thinking him worthy of blame. He that is wise, will be made still wiser by such examples, and particularly from this, will learn to take care, that his conversation and management in religious differences, as well as his profession of love, be without dissimulation.

You will not think it improper if I more particularly, but briefly, consider the character of one that studies to shew himself approved unto God; then illustrate this character by a few instances; and finally, mention

Gal. ii. 11
some things which conspire to recommend it.

I. If we consider the character of one who studies to shew himself approved unto God; he that would be perfect makes it his first care, to settle right and worthy notions of that Sovereign Being whose approbation he seeks. We all think alike method absolutely necessary, when we would cultivate the esteem and friendship of our fellow-creatures; we study their tempers, their notions, and manner of life, and suit ourselves to them as far as allowably we can, not giving them any unnecessary disturbance upon these heads, because we know that the art of pleasing is, in general, the same in all cases, and with all persons. This observation may be transferred to the present case, which is of the highest nature that can be supposed. To please God, there is an indispensable necessity of our acquainting ourselves with him, and in all things conforming to his commands, and to the standard of perfection he hath set before us in his nature and works. This conformity is necessary, because he is in one mind, and who can turn him? He is a law to himself, and this law is immutable; there being an essential and everlasting difference in the nature of things, between the moral Perfections of the Deity, and their contraries. In following God
we follow wisdom and goodness, and are therefore sure never to go wrong, which is a very great satisfaction. Just apprehensions of the divine nature and government are at the foundation of all true Religion; and a man might as well think of hitting a mark he does not see, as of pleasing and imitating a God of whom he is grossly ignorant; for which reason no good man can be supposed to labour under such an ignorance of the Deity.

There are additional considerations which demonstrate the necessity of this knowledge, even of the higher degrees of it, in the Ministers of the Gospel, whose business is to guide others into the knowledge of God, and of the several important truths of Religion depending upon this first Principle, and derived from it. And, by the way, it is for want of laying this foundation well, that they who should be instructors of the ignorant, instead of being so, are sometimes the unhappy means of leading them into, or confirming them in, the most absurd and dangerous notions of the Deity; notions, which though they may be fundamental to some particular Systems of Divinity, are, in their natural consequence, subversive of the true foundations of the Christian Faith; and, while they set Christianity in as bad a light, in some respects, as it could appear in if it was a false Religion, unde-
undesignedly give the enemies of it a handle to treat it as such. The best that can be said for them is, that so they have been taught; and they seem to reason concerning what they have been taught in relation to the true God, as the Heathens did about some things reported to have been done by their false God. *Sanctius ac reverentius visum de actis Deorum credere quam scire.

And because it may be thought that there is no need of so much care and pains where persons are, from their very childhood, instructed to say and believe, that God is a Spirit, Infinite, Eternal, and Unchangeable in his Being, Wisdom, Power, Holiness, Justice, Goodness, and Truth, I shall take the liberty to observe, that though this be a very good definition of the term God, yet this definition is no more than nominal (a bare account of the name) with regard to all those who are not instructed in the meaning of it. For what signifies our ascribing all possible perfection to God, if we have no idea at all of the perfections we ascribe to him, or a confused, or mistaken one, which, upon some accounts, is worse than none? While we honour God by giving him the titles of wise, holy, just, good and true, we may dishonour him by believing such things of him as are utterly

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* Tacit. de Mor. Garm.
inconsistent with these perfections, and would forfeit all pretence to them in a man like ourselves. Now an indistinct and inconsistent belief, though it may not do all the hurt of one totally erronious, where there is a good and honest heart, yet, to say the least, is not likely to prove such a source of sincere and rational pleasure to the mind, nor such a steady inflexible rule of conduct, as one that, being cleared of all disagreeing mixtures, is throughout just and true.

Having settled such notions of God as he can securely build on, the next thing which the man who studies to shew himself approved unto God is concerned for is, to know the mind and will of God; what God expects from him in his personal or relative, his private or publick capacity, as a Christian, or a Christian Minister. Without despising the light of Reason, he blesses God, from his heart, for a supernatural Revelation, and is of opinion that as Revelation is a vast improvement upon Reason, so Reason is of great use in proving, and estimating the value of Revelation, towards the right understanding of it, in pointing out and clearing the connexion of revealed Religion with natural, and the true grounds of both in the eternal and unchangeable difference of things. From the Scripture he draws the scheme of Christian Doctrine, and the model of a Christian Life, with all the
the exactness and fidelity he is capable of, and from thence traces out his duty as a Minister of the Gospel.

But forasmuch as the general duties of a Christian and a Minister are as plain as they are important, and agreed on all hands, I content myself with just putting you in mind of them, because you know them, and are established in the things which become sound Doctrine. What I have more particularly in my view here, is the care taken by the person I am speaking of to know the will of God in points of conduct, about which the world is divided; and in cases which, though they may be plain enough of themselves, are yet rendered doubtful and perplexed by notions and customs that have gained authority by establishment and length of time. And here he continually finds the advantage of those clear and rational conceptions which he hath entertained, and well digested, concerning the nature of the works of God; which open and enlarge his mind, render it more quick and sagacious in other questions that have any connexion with these, rectify and conduct the judging faculty, put the right clue into his hand, and set him above those servile superstitious fears, those weak and groundless jealousies and scruples, and those vulgar prejudices to which persons who are afraid
afraid to think freely (in the best sense of that word) are perpetually liable.

To these just notions of the Divine Being he forgets not to add humble and frequent addresses to him for direction, illumination and assistance, not at all doubting of the truth of that promise, that the meek be will guide in judgment, the meek be will teach his way; that God hath an immediate access to the mind; and, where his influences are piously acknowledged and earnestly besought, does frequently give that light, and throw in those hints, which free a man from the perplexity of thought he was before under, and make his way plain and easy before him.——Nor does he foolishly make his trust in the divine guidance a pretence for neglecting the rules of common Prudence; but considers Times and Seasons, Persons and Things, and makes proper allowances for every circumstance; in which he hath the authority of St. Paul's example, who at one time circumcised Timothy because of the (unconverted) Jews that were in those quarters, who all knew that his Father was a Greek: at another time, would not suffer that Titus who was a Greek should be compelled to be circumcised, and that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out the liberty which the professors of the Gospel

* Acts xvi. 3.   * Gal. ii. 3—5.
pel had in Christ Jesus, that they might bring them into bondage; for which reason the Apostle gave place to them by subjection, not so much as for an hour, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with the Churches.

There was, indeed, this material difference in the two cases, that Timothy was a Jew by the Mother's side, Titus entirely a Greek, or Gentile. Yet still, in representing the Apostle's conduct on these two occasions, the design seems to have been to intimate his being more yielding in one case than in the other, together with the reason of it. It is probable that, barely to gratify these false brethren, he would not have circumcised Timothy any more than Titus, since he would not give place to them (or submit to any of their demands) so much as for an hour: and, on the other hand, that, to avoid offending the unbelieving Jews, he would not have taken Titus with him as he did Timothy; the circumcision of Titus being what he would not have consented to upon any terms; without which, the Jews would have had an insuperable prejudice against him, if he had chosen Titus for his Assistant, he would therefore have followed the middle way, and left him behind.

At first St. Paul did not communicate with any concerning the Gospel which he preached
preached to the Gentiles; afterwards he did, as we learn from the beginning of the Chapter just quoted, where it is said, that fourteen years after he went up again to Jerusalem—by revelation, and communicated to them the Gospel which he preached to the Gentiles, but privately to them that were of reputation, (that is, to the Apostles, to whom he first and more particularly imparted the affair) left by any means (faith he) I should run, or had run in vain; i. e. left he should be less succesful in his future labours, or give his enemies an opportunity to destroy what he had already built, if it should be believed that he taught the circumcision of the converted Gentiles, or that he and his Gospel were not owned and approved by the other Apostles, both which suggestions were at once confuted by the friendly reception he had from the Apostles, and their not compelling Titus to be circumcised. The instruction from whence is, that circumstances being different, a prudent man will not think that his conduct ought always to be exactly the same.

Finally; being satisfied, after mature examination, what is the will of God, in relation to any debated point, he is so intent upon approving himself to his great Lord and Master, that he will follow that which appears to be his duty, whatever contradiction, reproach, or inconvenience, he may happen to suffer.
suffer by it. He is thus resolved not only in the essential and uncontroverted duties of his Christian and Ministerial Profession, giving all diligence to be regular and holy in his conversation, and faithful in the trust committed to him, but further, in things too often overlooked by persons, in the main, sincere, through haste, or prepossession, or a secret bias to something or other, that lies out of the strict and narrow way: the question with him who strives to be perfect in all incidental matters, as well as others, not being-Will this suit with my worldly interest? Is it agreeable to my inclinations? Or can I hope by doing this to please men? No; but shall I be approved of God? In this also like St. Paul, who, when it pleased God to reveal his Son to him, that he should preach him among the heathen, immediately set about the work he was called to, *not conferring with flesh and blood, i. e. with any man whatsoever to know his opinion upon it: and who, by being less forward in asserting the liberty and privileges of the Gentile Converts, might have easily avoided a good part of the storm that fell upon him, for so he asks (in answer to some who suggested that he was guilty of temporizing, by seeming to allow the necessity of circumcision, which was a favourite notion of the Jews) *if I yet preach

* Gal. i. 15, 16.  

k Gal. v. 11.
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preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? Then is the offence of the cross ceas-
ed. As much as if he had said, the persecutions which I undergo from the Jews, are a clear proof of the falsity of this charge of my preaching circumcision, since the great offence which they have taken up against the doctrine of a crucified Jesus, is the apprehension of its being intended to set aside the rites and customs of the Mosaic Law. Would I spare them in this one point, for all the rest, they would more easily forgive me.—Let this suffice for the character.

II. I shall now produce a few instances which serve to illustrate this character, and in which the man, who studies to shew himself approved unto God, in the manner before explained, makes it visible that he does so.

1. Is he persuaded of its being not only his undoubted right, but his plain duty, to search and judge for himself? In this case, that he may be approved of God, he lays aside all undue regard to human authority, to great names, and great bodies of men; and leaving the streams which, for ought he knows, may have been poisoned, or at best defiled and muddied, he goes immediately to the fountain-head of truth. And it would be
be exceeding strange, if, being so impartial, and having such just notions of God as I have supposed, he should not discern this to be his duty; as it is to me amazing how any of tolerable sense and honesty can make it a serious dispute, whether it be his right. It is, indeed, the right of every man to use the faculties which God hath given him, and, as far as he is capable, and has opportunity for it, to see with his own eyes, to search the Scriptures, to try notions and spirits, and having proved all things, then to hold fast that which is good, which sometimes cannot be known to be good before trial. This is every man's birthright, as a man, and much more every Christian's; and being their right, must in a greater or lesser degree, according to the diversity of their capacities and circumstances, be their duty too.

But was the matter doubtful in respect of Private Christians (which it is not) yet, as to Ministers, the most palpable absurdities, and some of the worst of consequences, must attend the denial of this liberty. Are they not the Ministers of Christ? And is it not the Gospel of Christ that they are to preach? Granted; may it be replied by some; but then they must not look into the bundle that is delivered them, but let things pass just as they have received them, either from the Church of Rome (as they of that
that Church (ay) or from Sets of Articles, Catechisms, and Confessions, as too many Protestants would say, did not their principles, as Protestants, make them ashamed to speak out. But I would be glad to know why we must not receive the Doctrine of Christ from Christ himself, since we may have it immediately from him? Or why it is thought a necessary qualification in a Minister of the Gospel to understand (at least) the Original Language, in which the writings of the New Testament were penned, if, in studying these writings, he is tied up to one particular System of Notions, which he must make his rule of interpretation, under the specious title of the Analogy of Faith, without regarding the design of the author, the coherence of the discourse, or the force and propriety of words? Study to shew thyself approved unto God, (faith the Apostle) a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth: i. e. (as the Context makes probable) separating among the things that are taught by men, things important from things trivial, truth from error and fable, that nothing but the pure uncorrupted word of God may remain.

One inference from hence (which lies too plain to be overlooked) is, that a man who sets up for a teacher of others, and yet takes indifferently all doctrines that he hath been taught,
taught by the Masters of his Faith (notto fay of his Conscience) without knowing how to part the good from the bad, or being any way concerned to do it, is a workman that hath too much cause to be ashamed. A like direction is given by the same Apostle in his Epistle to Titus, where speaking of a Gospel Bishop, he says, ¹He must be one who holds faft the faithful word, as he hath been taught, πίστιν λόγον, the word worthy of credit, which may be known by this mark, that it is κατὰ τὴν διδασκαλίαν, according to the doctrine of Christ, and his Apostles, not of designing, or of weak and fallible men.

But may we venture to go off from the principles of such and such, whose praise is in the Churches for their exemplary piety, and strictness of conversation? The answer is easy. If the piety was all, or almost all, on one side, there might be some temptation to suspect the truth was so too, but, when in order to follow one set of good men in their opinions, we must abandon others of equal piety, and, as it may happen, superior learning; or, if we will hold with all sides, must believe contradictions, we must leave this rule to those who have vanity enough to think that the power of Religion is confined to their own party.

¹Tit. i. 9.
But shall private Ministers presume to remove those boundaries and landmarks, which have been settled in Synods, and other venerable Assemblies? This question may be answered by another. Did these Assemblies pretend Authority to decree Articles of Faith, or did they not? If they did, it will be time enough to submit to their decrees, when they have satisfied the world, who gave them this authority. If they did not assume any such authority, as they could not do it consistently, without challenging infallibility too, why should we be so forward to compliment them with that authority and infallibility, which they themselves professedly disclaim? Or why appeal to their Decrees as the last resort, when they themselves send us for the proof of all they have decreed and taught to the Holy Scriptures? In vain are we referred to the Scriptures, if after all we must not search the Scriptures, to see whether these things are so, but be obliged to receive the Scripture with their interpretation of it. A power in any men to interpret Scripture, without being liable to have their interpretations called in question, is, in effect, the same as a power to add to it; for how shall it be known whether any thing be added or no, when barely their saying that this, or that, is only the true sense of Scripture, (though to us it hath all the appearance of an addition) is
a sufficient reason to believe, that it is no more?

It further deserves to be considered, that it doth not follow a man is singular in his opinions, because they are not to be found in a harmony of Confessions. On the contrary, of those that have taken up their opinions, and continue in them, because, after fair trial, they judge them to be right, not going just as they were led, the greatest number may be on his side of the question. Or taking an equal number of men, of equal probity, learning, and abilities, will we say they are more likely to find the truth in a Synod, than out of it? One would think the contrary; because when alone by themselves, they have their thoughts more about them, are capable of canvassing things with greater care and dispassionateness, and (which is no small matter) are not so much under the management of a few leading men, who govern things more by art, or authority, than by Reason. And as for the want of humility, which is so often charged on a Minister's exercising a right of private judgment, one would rather imagine the suspicion of pride would lie on their side who take upon them to judge, not only for themselves, or for all others of the same age, but for the Church of God, in all following ages. If this be not inconsistent with humility, I do not see how every man's judging
for himself, leaving to every other man the same liberty, can be so, especially when every man must give an account of himself to God. Why should they judge for me, who are not to answer for me?

But is this all the respect we have for the memory of our first Reformers and Martyrs, to depart so lightly from the faith, in which they died? My reply is, if by their Faith be meant the Protestant Faith, or the pure undefiled Religion of Christ, as opposed to the corruptions of Popery, the more diligently we study the Scriptures, and the more we use our understandings in Religion, the less danger there is of our forsaking this Faith. But if by their Faith be understood certain Tenets, which, as they do not enter into the character of a Protestant, so were never yet proved to belong to Primitive Christianity, there is no great harm done, if in these things we do not think as our Fathers of the Reformation did; nor is it any reflection at all upon them who, having their thoughts and time so much employed in detecting and reforming the abuses of Popery, had not that leisure (I might have added, nor those advantages) for revising and clearing all the parts of the Christian scheme, by a more thorough knowledge of the scriptures, that their successors have had; and, besides that, were naturally prejudiced in favour of some notions, for their appre-
prehended opposition to certain errors of the Romish Church, not duly considering, that this opposition might be of the same nature with that, which two extremes have one to the other.

And whereas it is esteemed such an honour to some opinions, that they were the opinions of our English, and other Protestant Martyrs, (not to observe that they were not so properly the opinions of the men, as of the times) what if it shall be found that the Christian Fathers and Martyrs (indeed, the Christian Church in general) of the three first ages, held different notions? I hope this prejudice in favour of one side, may at least be sufficient to balance that now mentioned on the other; and that this is actually the case, in respect of some notions which have borrowed their name from an eminent Reformer (such as that of mens being good or bad in consequence of an absolute decree, which is the same as by necessity, not by the use or abuse of their freedom of choice, &c.) will hardly be disputed.

After all, the person I am speaking of is far from setting up his private sense as superior to that of the rest of mankind, is ready to mistrust his judgment when he hath the concurrence of few or no thinking and serious persons in it; is not fond of differing from others for differing's sake; on the
the contrary, he would be much better pleased to have no occasion to leave the beaten track; he is thankful for all the assistance he receives from others, be they who they will, in finding out the true sense of Scripture, neither vainly conceiting himself about these helps, nor ashamed to confess his obligation for them; and many times where he sees reason (or thinks he sees it) to depart from the judgment of worthy men, as he does it with all modesty, so, perhaps, something or other dropped in their Writings hath struck the light which leads him to discern their mistakes, or by some common principles upon which they very much insist as well as others (e. g. the infinite goodness of God, the sincerity of his promises and declarations, the preeminence of the love of God beyond all the positive parts of Religion, and the necessity of practical holiness) he is able to prove the erroneousness of some notions which they graff upon these noble principles, by shewing that they cannot possibly grow upon such a stock, to which they are likely to do more hurt than they can receive advantage from it.

Yet notwithstanding this liberty of judging is so very evident from Reason and Scripture, and it be managed with all the submision consistent with a due regard to truth, and the authority of the only Head and Lawgiver of the Church, whoever does not
not express a like reverence for human Creeds as for the Word of God, is sure to be cen-
fured by almost every party, though there is no party but would give him leave to have as little respect as he pleased for every other Creed and Catechism, as far as it dif-
fered from their own. Be it so, (since such is the prevailing humour of mankind) he that studies in all things to shew himself approved unto God, will not be much moved by this. He is sure that it is not for the sake of his ease, or worldly inter-
est, that he challenges a right to think and examine; since he should consult these much better by believing every thing, and disputing nothing; and he is conscious to himself that he does not act out of pride, and a spirit of contradiction; and therefore whatever be the present temporal disadvantage to him-
self, he is determined to persevere, content-
ed to go through good report, and through evil report, and to receive bad usage toge-
ther with good.

II. Is the same person satisfied in his own mind, that having found the truth by diligent and impartial enquiry, and duly weighed all the circumstances of the case, he is obliged to speak his thoughts with an honest freedom, and to set himself to de-
tect and confute received errors, as he hopes to have this part of his conduct approved by him who hath put him into the Mi-

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nistry?
nistry? Being thus persuaded, he does not hesitate what he shall do, but is ready to hazard every thing of his own rather than napkin up the truth when it ought to be brought into light. It is here supposed, that he hath calmly considered both the truth and importance of his opinions before he troubles others with them, not chusing to risque his own reputation, or the peace of any part of the Christian Church, upon points more doubtful and difficult, than necessary to be known; and, in stating the reasons for and against speaking out the whole truth, hath been very careful to cast up the account right. He will not indifferently, in all places and companies, and upon all occasions, in season, or out of season, utter all his mind; which would be acting too much like Solomon's fool, whose wisdom faileth him, when he walketh by the way side, insomuch that he faith to every one he meets, that he is a fool.

He hath also that regard to the weak side of human nature, always tenacious of old opinions, as to make trial first of what can be done in a less open manner, and being crafty he endeavours to catch his hearers with an innocent guile; stealing away their notions from them while he leaves them their phrases, and then afterwards, when he hath prepossessed them with other notions,

m Ecclef. x. 3.
tions, prevailing with them to resign their phrases too, as no way proper to express the notions they have now entertained. Or he sees ground to think that an unreserved declaration of his sentiments, either because of his age which would not add any authority to what he faith, or for some other reason, would do more hurt than good, and therefore he hath his faith to himself till a more favourable opportunity offers for making it publick.

But if, after long waiting, such an opportunity as he wishes is never likely to happen, but false opinions are industriously propagated, and with more zeal and bitterness than usual, and handed down from fathers to children as the Faith once delivered to the Saints, from which they must not deviate an hair's-breath; if he hath instances before him of the ill effects of certain religious principles upon the lives of any, whom he is not able to recover out of the snare of the Devil any other way than by shewing them that though they reason right, yet it is from wrong principles; and upon the tempers of a great many more, rendering them either morose, conceited, censorious, or melancholy and dispirited in Religion: and if, moreover, his not saying any thing against such principles, is deemed an argument of his being a friend to them, or the effect of a mean and cowardly
ly spirit; when the honour of Religion, the safety of souls, and his own usefulness are thus at stake, he dares be valiant for the truth, and can, with pleasure, sacrifice every thing for the sake of it, when he knows it will not be the sacrifice of fools. Not that he will render railing for railing; but contrariwise, Reason for Invective, and Blessing for Curbing. He will, for prudence-sake, speak his mind in a manner the least offensive that is possible, and forbear giving some things as bad names as they deserve; chusing rather to expose the deformity of error, by setting the truth in all its amiableness and evidence over against it, than in strong and direct terms.

It is not improbable that he will be thought an enemy by many (especially when some who have their private ends to serve by it, suggest that he is so) because he tells them the truth; even though he tells it them with the most insinuating softness and gentleness, and cannot keep silence with a good conscience. When this happens out, he is sorry for it, more for their sakes than his own; but still holds to his resolution, not to be kept by the fear of man from openly asserting the truth when it is necessary, any more than to be awed and checked by the authority of man in settling the important question, What is truth?
III. After revolving the matter in his most unprejudiced and deliberate thoughts, is it his judgment that by such a particular way of preaching he shall do most good, promote the knowledge and practice of true Christianity more than by another, which, it may be, is more agreeable to his own inclination, or will better strike the taste of his hearers? If these are his thoughts, he is not for pleasing himself and others at the expense of what is of much greater importance than any thing merely entertaining can be. Was a Minister to consult nothing else but the exercise and improvement of his own genius, and to use the method and style which pleased him most in the writings or preaching of other men, and which would give most scope to his imagination (it may be naturally lively and fruitful) possibly his Subjects would be too often of a speculative nature, and more curious than profitable; his way of thinking would be too far removed from that which is common; his reasoning be too close and abstract, and his language too laboured, or abound too much with ornaments for the meaning to be easily come at by ordinary people. Which now shall he do, please himself, or profit his hearers? The question does not require much time to be answered by one who constantly studies to shew himself approved unto God. He will not, in compliment to a few, overlook the rest.
rest of his audience who are the greater number; nor, barely to make his court to the greater number, go into a manner of preaching which he himself is convinced to be wrong, and will be disliked by the more judicious few. He knows a way in which he could, with very little pains, procure to himself the applause of some sort of people, and at the same time make them believe they were greatly edified too. When he was to prove a thing he could make use of arguments, which, though really inconclusive, should do more to persuade a great many of the truth of what he aimed to establish than the most solid proofs could do. And without enquiring after the true sense of Scripture, which is not found without some trouble and pains, he could by only following the sound of words, and idly playing with metaphors, get himself the reputation of a profound Divine.

What more easy than for a man (if his conscience will permit him) to appropriate to himself and his Brethren the name of Experimental Preachers, and to the people of the same way that of Experienced Christians? To have the Name of Christ often in his mouth, taking no care to represent the Christian Religion so as that it may be an honour to that name; a name dear to all true Christians, because they love their Saviour in sincerity; and pleasing to a great many
for Ministers recommended. 179

many others, because they strongly conceal themselves to be loved by him? What more easy than to talk much of Faith, justification, the Righteousness of Christ, free Grace, and the like, not from the Scriptures (diligently studied and compared one part with another, so as to make the whole a consistent scheme of doctrine) but from certain Writers, whose works are of such authority with some, that they may be called Deutero-canonical? To say the very same things that have been said a thousand times over, and in the same set of phrases and expressions, without giving the least new light to any subject, or making people a jot wiser than they were before?

In fine, what more easy than to say little of the precepts of the Gospel, and nothing in proof of the reasonableness of them? To infuse suspicions and jealousies of Reason as no friend to Religion? And to make general declamations about the weakness and corruption of human nature, and the insufficiency of natural light, which comparatively understood, and with proper limitations added, would be true enough, but are far from being so when spoken absolutely, and tend to give the hearers very wrong notions in Religion? What more easy than all these things? And yet what more certain way among some persons to secure the name of a Gospel Preacher? Explaining in a rational
tional intelligible manner the grounds of our obligations to the Redeemer of the world, together with the nature, the design, and the intrinsick excellence of the Gospel Dispensation; setting before men the terms of acceptance; telling them their duty plainly and fully, the encouragements they have to perform it, (from the promise of Divine Assistance, the tranquility and happiness of a religious life at present, and the hope of eternal glory) and the extreme peril of neglecting it; without adding such exceptions and limitations (as to the persons intended) as tend to enervate the force of the most powerful motives and earnest exhortations; this way of preaching is cold, and legal, and unedifying, and not to be compared with the former. But though the former way would be easier to himself as well as more agreeable to the major part of his audience, till their judgments were more improved, yet he cannot allow himself thus to play the cheat with his hearers, amusing their fancies, and working up their affections, without any thing to support them, instead of enlightening their understandings, inspiring them with the love of a holy as well as a crucified Jesus, and bringing them to esteem and practise the substantial virtues of the christian life.

iv. Is he persuaded that zeal for the truth is no way inconsistent with charity for
for those that are apprehended to be in error? He does not think his charity (proceeding from that very temper of mind on which the Gospel lays so much stress) a thing to be ashamed of. What though by this means he himself forfeits the charity of persons of more zeal than knowledge, and more conceit than either, and they have a worse opinion of him only for having a favourable opinion of some that think not as they do, or as he himself does; scarce allowing that he can be a good Christian, who is not a good party-man? He pities those that are of such a narrow spirit, but is too honest, with his present view of things, to do as they do; joining to hunt down a man as soon as the common cry is against him, when he professes the greatest regard to the honour and authority of Christ, and hath nothing but what is Christian in his behaviour. He is not hasty to believe another man is in opinions which seem to him evidently to contradict the Christian Revelation; does not make the difference wider than it really is, nor lay more stress upon it than it will bear; takes not up every flying report of a person's having said this and done that; does not love to fix names which he knows will hurt the reputation and lessen the usefulness of another Minister, nor esteem it good evidence of the truth of any story told to his disadvantage, that he is one who does
does not vote and subscribe as he could with him to do. Can I, in my heart, believe, O most righteous and merciful God, that this is such dealing as thou wilt approve? Or is this doing to others as I think it equitable they should do to me? Or as I actually do to those for whom I have a tender affection, or on whom I have a dependence, when they go astray?

He studiously avoids entering into party-quarrels, is very sensible of his being himself frail and fallible, takes not upon him to judge the hearts of men, and considers that it is not so much the knowledge as the love of the truth; not so much faith as the good disposition of mind from whence it flows, that renders a man acceptable to God; that one man may believe the truth he hates (as the Devil we are told, believes and trembles) another in things not essential to Religion miss the truth he loves, and is continually enquiring after. He never yet heard it suggested that that passage of St. Paul is corrupted in our present Bibles, and now abide faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity; nor did he ever know any one pretend to assert in words of that noble description of charity, by the same inspired Writer, that, when filled up as it ought to be, it would run thus; charity suffereth long (the faults of those that are of the right party) and is kind (to them.)
Charity envieth not (those who humbly take their lessons from us, and never presume to rival, much less, out shine us.) Charity vaunteth not itself (where there is no temptation to do it.) Is not puffed up (unless it be, when we have got an enemy at an advantage, and can trample him under our feet.) Does not behave itself unseemly (except when a good cause requires it.) Seeketh not her own (when she hath nothing of her own to seek.) Is not easily provoked (where nothing is done to provoke it.) Thinketh no evil (of a few chosen favourites.) Rejoiceth not in iniquity (received, but, done.) But rejoiceth in the truth (when it is apprehended not to favour the opposite side.) Bear eth all things (that need little or no patience to bear them.) Believeth all things (to the advantage of its own, and disadvantage of the adverse party.) Hopeth all things (good to the one, and evil to the other.) And endureth all things (all things, where only the precepts of the Gospel are broken, but nothing where the truth of certain opinions, or expediency of certain injunctions purely human, is called in question.) What a deformed picture would these inconsistent additions make of one of the most beautiful in the world, as it is drawn by the pen of an inspired Apostle!

I shall shut up this head with a remarkable Story, which I have read—" That when
Gomarus, accusing Arminius before the States, said, that the opinions of his Colleague were such in the articles controverted between them, that he, for his part, would not appear with them before God; some persons, a little moved with such an instance of censorious zeal, could not forbear declaring that they had rather appear before the divine tribunal with the Faith of Arminius than with the Charity of Gomarus.

I must entreat your patience, while I little more than mention a few Considerations, among many, that recommend this excellent and amiable character. You will agree with me, Sir, that,

It is a consideration which must afford great peace and support to an honest mind, that whoever studies to shew himself approved unto God, is sure to be approved of him; for he is not a hard master, who reaps where he hath not sown, or a respecter of persons in judgment. It is true, he requires sincerity of all, but since that does not signify any particular degrees of strength and capacity of service, given to some, and not to others, or particular heights of perfection, not attainable by all, but only a faithful improvement of the abilities and opportunities we have, it must be every one's inexcusable fault, if he be not sincere. Besides, that this want of sincerity can nev-
ver be charged upon the person I have been describing, who is able to say (proper allowances being made for the imperfections of human nature, and for the great distance between the two characters) as his blessed Master did, that he seeketh not his own will, or his own glory, but the will, and the glory of his Father in heaven.

Consider further, that having approved yourself unto God, you will not fail of being self approved. And this is no small matter, for a man to stand well with himself. As far as you are assured of the approbation of the great Judge of heaven and earth (and you are assured of this in the same degree, as you are conscious of an unfeigned active desire to please him) you cannot but have rejoicing in yourself, and your joy no man taketh from you. It is a reasonable joy, because founded in truth; and it is a joy in some sort divine, because arising from those things which render a man like God, since God approves none but those in whom he sees some traces of this likeness. A diligent endeavour to shew ourselves approved unto God bespeaks the participation of a divine nature, that is, a right temper of mind, and a holy and heavenly life, with a care to perform the duties of our particular profession as becometh the servants of the all-knowing, and all-perfect God; a character as honourable in itself as any can be.
You may add, that the man whose character this is, will, ordinarily, secure the approbation of those whose good opinion and good word is most valuable. And, as to others, he may hope to gain upon them by little and little; provided, he pursues a steady inflexible course of piety, charity, and moderation. Nay his very enemies (if after all he hath any) will not be so forward to open their mouths against him, unless their prejudices are great indeed, and their tempers more than ordinarily bad, or there be somewhat else very singular in the case.

"In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing incorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech which cannot be condemned; that he who is of the contrary part may be more ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. But supposing the worst, yet,

Consider the service that is done to Religion by examples of a tried integrity, and universal goodness. Religion does, upon the whole, gain by such characters as to the reputation it bears in the world. And, in truth, were not its credit a little kept up by such, they who were strangers to it, or bore it no good will, would be ready to say that Christianity was not a Religion calculated to promote the freedom of the mind,

[a] Tit. ii. 7, 8.
mind, to enlarge the heart, to sweeten the passions, and to unite mankind in the bonds of love; but, on the contrary, to split them into parties and factions, and both to heighten and justify their rage one against another; to make a narrow, angry, unconversable temper, still more so, and to establish everywhere a spirit of superstition. Thus would some be apt to speak evil of things which they did not know, judging of them from the general behaviour of those who talked most about them. Thanks be to God, that, as our holy Religion itself, viewed in the writings of the Apostles, does not give the least countenance to such a charge, so there are examples, (to be found I trust, in all parties,) which prove it to be unjust. Would to God they were more! It is worth any one's while, that wishes well to Religion, to be among them, whatever it costs him. Once more,

Consider, that if, during the course of this mortal life, and of your Ministerial Labours, you study to shew yourself approved unto God, great will be your reward in heaven. And how much better is it to have our reward laid up there, than to enjoy it here upon earth? This is our anchor sure and steadfast, which keeps the mind from fluctuating in this unquiet stormy world. You shall have praise of God for your diligence, and faithfulness, and sincere
cere endeavours to know and do his will, whether you have praise of men, or no. It is a small matter for you, or me, or any other person, to be judged of man's judgment; he that judgeth us is the Lord. And when God justifieth, who is he that condemneth? Those very things that were the great articles upon which men accused, reviled, and condemned us, (if for conscience towards God, we suffer wrongfully) will be mentioned to our honour at last; not without a silent reproach to those, otherwise good men, who hearkening too much to their passions, were not so just, much less so kind, to their fellow-servants as they ought to have been. Did ever Matter pay his servants as our great Lord will do his, with honour in the presence of all his angels, with rest from all their labours, with an inheritance incorruptible, and a crown of righteousness and glory that fadeth not away?

Wherefore, wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart. You have the prayers of your Brethren in the Ministry, and of the Church of God that you may obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful; and have your faithfulness rewarded with a great deal of comfort and success. Stir up the gifts of God that are in you. Cherish in yourself those noble principles of love to God, to Jesus,
and to the souls of men. Persuaded of the excellency of a beneficent temper, of the worth of souls, which are immortal, and the worthlessness of a dying world, esteem it the greatest happiness of your life, and most acceptable way of glorifying, imitating, and serving God, to do good to men, especially in their highest interests. Be kind to the unkind, have charity for the uncharitable, comfort the feeble minded, support the weak, be patient towards all men; and by manifestation of the truth, let it be your aim to commend yourself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. In a word, take heed to the Ministry which you have received of the Lord to fulfill it; and, that you may not be too much affected with the difficulties and discouragements you meet with, frequently think of the superior goodness of the work to which you have devoted yourself, the assistance and pleasure you will have in it, if you are sincere, and the infinite greatness of the promised reward.
The End supposed to be aimed at by a faithful Minister of the Gospel, explained, and recommended in

A CHARGE
Delivered at the
ORDINATION
Of the REVEREND
Mr. Daniel Harson,
AT
Moreton-Hampstead, Devon.
July 27, 1737.
A
CHARGE
by
ORDINATION
of
the
Rev.
Mr.
Daniel
Hastie
AT
Merton-Hopfield,
Devon.
July
22,1774.
The End supposed to be aimed at
by a faithful Minister of the Gos-
pel, &c.

As the truth of the Christian Religion
appears in the superior excellence of
its doctrines and precepts, and the excellence
of these in their manifest tendency to pro-
mote the glory of God, and the happiness
of mankind; so the great usefulness of the
Christian Ministry is alike obvious to all con-
sidering persons, from the original design of
it, to instruct men in this excellent, this di-
vine, Religion, and to persuade them to live
agreeably to it, in certain hope of the re-
ward of eternal life through Jesus Christ
our Lord: the serious thought of which
must yield very great satisfaction to all sin-
cere, intelligent, Christians. And I parti-
cularly mention it for your encouragement,
Sir, who have been now separated to this
sacred office, as well as theirs who have cal-
led you to labour among them in the word
and doctrine, and of any others that are
present,
The End aimed at present, and witnesses on this solemn occasion.

When, with the dignity and importance of the pastoral care, there is a happy concurrence of the qualifications of the persons devoting themselves to it (which we have good reason to think is the case here) no prospect can be more agreeable, no juster ground of rejoicing, to the Church of Christ.

In the few things of which I would briefly put you in remembrance at this time, I shall take my rise from the Apostle Paul's exhortation to his Son Timothy, 1 Eph. iv. 16.

**TAKE HEED TO THY SELF, AND TO THY DOCTRINE; CONTINUE IN THEM; FOR IN DOING THIS, THOU SHALT BOTH SAVE THYSELF, AND THEM THAT HEAR THEE.**

You see, Sir, here is the end supposed to be aimed at by a faithful Minister of the Gospel, viz. his own salvation, and the salvation of those that hear him; together with the means prescribed for the attainment of it, *taking heed to himself and to his doctrine*; in doing which, and so continuing, he hath the prospect of success to excite and inspire him.

Can there be a nobler end, and of nearer concernment to us all, than that here proposed?
posed? For by salvation, in the Gospel sense of the word, every one knows the highest happiness to be understood of which man is capable; the utmost perfection of all his faculties, and affluence of the most satisfying delights, in the presence and enjoyment of God to eternity: for he is both the sole author and the supreme object of this felicity, to whom, as the eternal fountain of all good, be glory forever. It is a to the praise of the glory of his grace, that he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. The glory of his attributes is the final result of all his works, of Creation, Providence, and Redemption; in which therefore we are to terminate our regard.

And when we consider the necessity of making each of these a part of our chief end, with the inseparable connection, and natural subordination, there is betwixt them; it must appear strange, that in a case so plain, and where all sides appeal to Reason and Scripture as the common rule of decision, there should be such a diversity (I was going to have said contrariety) in the sentiments of men about these things: or, if not in their sentiments themselves, yet in their manner of explaining them; one representing self-love, another benevolence, a third a zeal for the glory of God, as in effect the sole principle which over-rules and swal-

a Eph. i. 6.
swallows up the other two. Which, perhaps, may in part be owing to their not attending to the following plain distinction, viz. that, if we speak of their respective dignity and importance, it must be acknowledged, that the first in order is the glory of God, next to that the general good, and in the third and last place private felicity. But if we consider the natural progress of the mind in its operations, we begin with seeking our own happiness, then, together with our ideas, enlarge our desires too, to the happiness of others; and from thence rise to the glory of God, as the furthest limit of our view; while, from an inward conviction of the necessary relation between them, and the mutual happy influence they have upon one another, we jointly pursue all three. Nor is there any need of our being solicitous about the respective degree of strength with which they act upon us; this being an inquiry more curious than useful, and, generally speaking, not so very easy to be resolved. It is enough, that each of them powerfully determines us, and in perfect concert with the other two.

Thou shalt save thyself. This is one part of the motive made use of by the Apostle in order to engage Timothy to the vigorous discharge of his duty; not barely signifying what would be the effect of his taking the course here directed to (of which afterwards) but
but what he might and ought to propose to himself, and what the Apostle takes it for granted he did propose, for his encouragement in well-doing.

Self-love is an original affection of our nature; and the proper object of self-love is self-interest, or happiness, truly so called. Nor does Religion aim to extinguish this natural principle in us, or oblige us to endeavour it, but only teach us how to make a right use of it, by the knowledge it gives us of our chief good, and final felicity.

Regard that as your highest interest, which is really such; aspire to the happiness set before you in the Gospel; and then, that you are self-interested, in this sense of the word, will be not your crime, but your virtue, a commendation, not a reproach; not in the least interfering with the desire of pleasing and glorifying God, and contributing to the happiness of your fellow-creatures, but adding fresh life and strength to it. Unless you are concerned for your own real happiness, you will never be so for that of others; nor for the honour of the Supreme Being, of whom you can have no very exalted apprehensions, while you represent him not to yourself as the original fountain of perfection and happiness to his intelligent creatures. Nothing will awaken the mind of man, naturally indolent and sluggish, like the prospect of an eternal
The End aimed at eternal heaven, the abode of holy and happy spirits, of sacred joys, and everlasting rest; the hope of arriving at these blessed mansions, on the one hand, and the fear of coming short of them, on the other. Knowing the mercies and the terrors of the Lord, you will be the more earnest to persuade men to flee from the wrath to come, and to lay hold on eternal life.

Begin therefore with the care of your own soul. Consider well its nature and dignity, forget not its danger; labour after the assurance of your own interest in the favour of God, and title to the promised reward; and the peace and satisfaction hence resulting will infuse a strange vigour into your faculties, quicken your zeal and alacrity in the service of your heavenly Master, and render every part of your work much more easy and delightful.

Nor is there any fear of your over-doing it; or occasion for your distinguishing so nicely, as some have done, betwixt being influenced by the consideration of your own happiness, as your own, and as a part of the happiness of the whole, or a means of advancing the glory of God; the latter of which they contend for, without allowing of the former: this is refining upon things till the very substance of them is quite gone, and can answer no end, that I see, but making some persons conceited, with an imagination
vation of their having soared so much above the common pitch, and others said, that ought not to be made so. When we are enjoined to love our neighbour as our-

199 selves (not more than ourselves) and have the example of Moses, and of a much greater than Moses, our blessed Lord, recorded for our imitation, one of whom chose to suffer affliction with the people of God, because he had respect to the recompence of reward, the other for the joy set before him, willingly endured the cross, despising the shame; in these, and so in other places, we have our duty simply proposed to us, without the least hint of any danger we are in of loving ourselves too well, and setting too high a value upon our own happiness, so as to pass over the love of God, and our neighbour.

You need not be told, that as a Christian, and much more as a Christian Minister, you should extend your good wishes and endeavours yet further, and seek to save others as well as yourself. Thou shalt save thyself, and them that hear thee. Provided you are really solicitous about your own salvation, any such admonition as this will be little wanted. You will not, you cannot, in that case have respect to your own things only, but will also mind the things of others; the very nature of these spiritual

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and eternal things being such, that the greater the number of the communicants is, the greater in some sense is the share of every one, at least as to the satisfaction he hath in them. And, there being one heart and one soul, no one faith that ought of the things he possessest is his own, but the joy of one is the joy of all. Which, by the way, is a thought that does not much favour the narrow scheme, which contracts the bounds of the divine mercy, and supposes the grace to be the greater for the fewness of those to whom it is shewn; as if the happiness of heaven was not a social thing; and the command to rejoice with them that rejoice, did not imply that our joy, and consequently our obligation to the great author of it, is not the less, but the greater for the extensiveness of the divine bounty and goodness. I cannot forbear thinking, that had men a greater largeness of heart, their notions of the love of God would ordinarily be larger too; the defect never lying on God's part.

Let me add, while you are earnestly contending to save yourself, and them that hear you, and todo all the good you can to all, what you feel in your own breast will be a sufficient conviction of the falsity of their notion, who assert all benevolence to be nothing else but self-love in disguise, differing from

\[\text{c Rom. xii. 15.}\]
by a faithful Minister.

from what is commonly so called, only in this, that in one case self-love goes more directly to its end, in the other more round about, by the way of common good, which it considers and values merely as a means of private happiness. Only observe the workings of your own mind, and you will find this to be a gross misrepresentation of human nature, and exceeding unjust; for though self-love be in nature prior to every other affection, and a man supposed not to love himself, could not love any person or thing besides; because having no happiness of his own, he could have no notion what the happiness of another meant, nor indeed any such principle as love and desire in his nature; yet the idea of benevolence, or the good-will we bear to others, is plainly distinct from that of self-love, and may be proved to be so by the pleasure immediately arising from the happiness of our fellow-creatures, especially when in a great degree owing to us; for which pleasure there would be no room, supposing every man were conscious to himself, that the happiness or misery of all other persons were alike indifferent to him, any further than his own happened to be connected with theirs; like those who, being embarked in the same vessel, and joint sharers in the profits of the voyage, should heartily wish the preservation of the ship, and help towards it, but
The End aimed at

each with a view only to himself, otherwise not in the least concerned whether it arrived safe to the intended haven, or sunk to the bottom of the ocean.

Social affections are a credit to human nature. There is a pleasure in the exercise of them, where only some inferior good is to be procured; but the divinest satisfaction is when we befriend others in respect of their highest, their eternal, interests. The salvation of souls is a glorious end indeed, the vast importance of the ministerial office is never more conspicuous than in this way of considering it; as in this view of it, every one who engages in it with right aims, and hath generous affections beating in his breast, must be disposed, as well as reckon himself obliged, to do his utmost to prevent the misery and ruin of his fellow-christians; those especially of whom he hath a more particular charge, and to direct, and quicken, and assist them in their pursuit after everlasting happiness. If the gain of the whole world cannot countervail the loss of a single soul, what more worthy the ambition of a truly great mind, than not to save one soul only (though that would richly reward the pains taken to this end) but many souls from death, and to conduct them in the paths of righteousness and immortality? Think of this, and you will hardly need any other motive to the faithful
faithful discharge of your duty.—And yet I cannot forbear mentioning this further consideration, that in labouring for the salvation of immortal souls, you will have the noblest of all examples, that of the Son of God, the great friend and lover of souls, to animate you, who for the redemption of the world, lapsed into a state of extreme ignorance and corruption, and to recover that immortality which was lost by the sin of man, became incarnate and died. This was the travel of his soul, to ransom the souls of men; the effect of which when he sees he is satisfied, finding the pleasure of the Lord to prosper in his hand, and blessed with a numerous seed of righteous persons like himself, prepared to enjoy those glorious rewards which he procures for, and will finally bestow upon them.—Though this single instance of love to the souls of men exceeds all others taken together, and should, and will, have more weight with every one truly devoted to the service of his great Lord, yet it may not be amiss, nay it may be of great use, to recollect any other examples of this kind in a lower sphere; especially that of the Apostle Paul, who writing to the Philippians appeals to God as his record, how earnestly he longed after them all in the bowels of Christ; tells the Corinthians, that they were in his heart to die

Isaiah liii. 10, 11.  Phil. i. 8.  2 Cor. vii. 3.
The End aimed at
die and to live with them; and the Thessalonians, that he reckoned himself to live, when
they stood fast in the Lord; whose heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel was, that
they might be saved; ready were it proper, to wish himself accursed from Christ (cut
off from all the privileges of external communion with his church) for their sakes, and
by a violent death to be offered up to God on the sacrifice and service of their faith,
whom he had converted to the profession of the Gospel.

In a word then, the end I suppose you to have in view, viz. everlasting happiness or salvation, both your own and that of others, with the glory of God as the supreme author, conductor, and finisher of this vast design, must, duly considered, prove a mighty incentive to diligence and resolution in the use of all those means by which it is accomplished.

And what the principal of these means are, in respect of the part which the Ministers of the Gospel have in the conversion and salvation of souls, the Apostle hath informed us in these words, Take heed to thyself, and to thy doctrine. For once, suppose this exhortation directed to you; as in effect it is in the person of Timothy, and to all others who have taken the pastoral charge upon them.

Take
1 Thess. iii. 8. k Rom. x. ix. 3. j Phil. ii. 17.
Take heed unto yourself. In general, that your character, as a sincerely good man, a disciple of Christ indeed, be unexceptionable; and, more particularly, that you do not come behind in certain virtues which are likely to have a peculiarly good influence in this matter.

In general, you are to take heed that your character, as a person of true christian integrity, be unblemished. Every Minister of the Gospel ought to be a good man; this qualification is indispensible. It was formally, by the Heathens themselves, thought a necessary qualification for their accomplished Orator, that he should be so; much more then must this be necessary for the Christian Orator, whose sole business almost lies in persuading men to be good, that they may be happy. I must be sure not to want that myself, of the absolute necessity of which I am continually endeavouring to convince others; and, while I warn them against being deceived with a wrong notion of genuine vital Religion, or of their own state and condition, not to be mistaken myself in these things, lest by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.

Nay, simply to be good should not content you, but you should endeavour to excel; to have the evidence of your sincerity as bright and strong, and the objections against
against it as few as may be. This is the more needful, not only that you may be an example to the flock, which every Minister ought to be, and teach men their duty with the greater force and authority, but to put to silence the enemies of Religion, shall I say, only, or likewise add some of the friends of it too? I fear this latter is too often the case, in the present divided state of the Christian Church; that which would otherwise be a sufficient proof of a man's goodness in the judgment of common charity, not passing for such among those who do not so well like him on some other accounts. To bear down such prejudices, a person must not have many failings and blemishes; little less than demonstration being admitted, sometimes, by good men one of another, when they do not serve in the same party. Why, since they are thus unreasonable, demonstration let them have, as far as you are capable of giving it, that what they will not grant out of charity and equity, they may be obliged to do from the irresistible force of conviction.

There are certain virtues which you should more peculiarly cultivate, as they are likely to have a particularly good influence in this matter. Such, among others, are humility and meekness, temperance, sincerity, a contempt of every thing mean and fordid, a peaceable temper, charity, courage
by a faithful Minister. 207

courage in a good cause, and, to add no more, prudence.

The more humble and meek you are, so as to keep your self-esteem, and your anger, within due bounds, the more you will resemble your great Lord and Master, in whom these amiable qualities were so distinguishing, that he invites his followers to learn them from his example." Maintain a wise sobriety of mind, and shew it in your outward behaviour, neither assuming honours and preeminent which do not belong to you, nor unseasonably and importunately challenging those that do; but rather leaving others to find out, and freely acknowledge what is valuable in you, than pointing it out to them, and thereby making them think you are too sensible of it yourself.

Thus you will enjoy a rest and tranquillity of soul, which you must not otherwise hope for, and rise higher in favour both with God and man, according to our Saviour's observation, that "he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Despise none, and you will not be despised by any. Command your own passions, and you will have the greater ascendant over the passions of other men.

A well-regulated temperance in respect of the pleasures of sense, alike remote from a superstitious austerity on the one hand, and what-

m Mat. xi. 29.  n Luke xiv. 11.
whatever borders on too great delicacy or indulgence on the other, will be of use to preserve your faculties in their clearness and vigour, to guard the freedom of your mind, to convince the world that the pleasures of knowledge, of virtue, and devotion, are the proper happiness of the man, and esteemed by you, and to give you the higher relish of these purer and more sublime delights.

By simplicity and godly sincerity, a frank open behaviour, void of all guile and artifice, you will at once gain the esteem and love of those you converse with, and be let into their very souls, when they can see into yours; having no reason to suspect you of any design upon them, but what you avow, they will give the greater heed to all you say, as sincerely intended for their good.

Especially, as this sincerity is usually, if not always, joined with an elevation and greatness of soul, that makes a man scorn every thing mean and fordid. One of this character never loves money so well as, for the sake of it, to act a niggardly, unfriendly, dishonourable, not to say an unjust part; and, if he take the oversight of the flock of God, does it not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind. He values riches only for their use, not for themselves, and believes that as God knows what portion of these things is safest and best for him upon the whole, he will give it him; considering which, he can
can be contented without them, and, as the consequence of that, will descend to no base arts to get them, and of what he hath (if he hath more than necessaries) will rather be over liberal than too sparing. Nothing makes a man look so truly great in the eyes of the world as this noble disposition, while covetousness sinks the character of any man, and most of all of a Minister.

Love, follow, and make peace. It is the happiest temper, the most divine employment. Besides the reward immediately attending a state of tranquillity, you will have an opportunity of doing more good, the fruit of righteousness being, in this sense, sown in peace, in a calm halcyon season, by them that make peace. There are few things, truth and honesty excepted, which a man should not be willing to sacrifice for peace-fake. And blessed are all they who are so disposed, "for they shall be called the children of God.

Let your charity never fail. Let not a diversity of sentiments (but, because this alone is a small thing, I therefore add) or unfair insinuations and reflections, manifest misrepresentations, or even spiteful and injurious usage, be able to cool, much less to extinguish, this sacred fire in your breast. Do good to all; think well of as many, and as long as you can; and speak evil of none.

What—

* Mat. v. 9.*
Whatever success a blind intemperate zeal may have for a time, charity must get the victory in the end.

Nor will your pursuing peace and charity at all interfere with boldness and courage, and an inflexible constancy, in a good cause. While you allow others a sort of latitude in thinking and acting, according to the different light and manner in which the same things may appear to the minds of sincere Christians themselves, you are not to vary a hair's breadth in your own profession and practice from what you apprehend to be right and true. Be zealous, resolved, and stedfast, though always with a spirit of meekness, and a mind open to conviction, from whomsoever or from whencesoever it comes. Thus you will best answer the common objection against the advocates for peace and liberty, and charity; that it is not a zeal for these things, but an indifference to the principles of Religion, that is the true spring and reason of their conduct.

Finally; By no means think prudence, as long as it is such, and does not degenerate into craft, a thing to be ashamed of; but get as much of it as you can, and make as much use of it (always coupling it with sincerity) since all you can get will be sure little enough as times and men now are. I will not say, that part of our Saviour's advice to
to his Apostles, *be wise as serpents,* is as much in season now at it was at the time of its being first given; but this I will venture to say, that the present is a season in which it can very ill be spared. A man hath occasion for a great deal of prudence, that his very good be not evil spoken of.

So many notions, tempers, passions, interests, prejudices, as a Minister hath to deal with; so many proud, busy, officious, ill-designing men as there are, on the one hand, and so many weak, how well-meaning soever, on the other; in order to keep clear of all offence, he must steer with uncommon caution, and, if possible, make himself a thorough master of the art of prudence; the art I say, which hath no other bounds but those which the virtue of prudence prescribes to it. I pray God to quicken you in the pursuit, and assist you in the attainment of this, and every other good gift; as you have no reason to doubt he will, on condition that, humbly sensible of your dependance upon him, you entreat the illumination and aids of his Spirit, and do not receive them in vain.

The other head of advice is, *Take heed to your doctrine*; that you teach truth, and nothing but truth, if you can help it, at least nothing apparently inconsistent with the fundamental principles of Religion, natural, or revealed; and when I say apparently, I mean

*Mat. x. 16.*
mean to every honest mind, of tolerable capacity, and not clouded with prejudice; which too often happens.

But what is truth? And where shall we find it? As our Saviour foretold, the time would come when they should say, Lo here is Christ, or Lo he is there; so fares it with truth, amidst the several contending parties in the Christian world, each pretending to have the sole possession of the true doctrine of Christ, and the sole right of dispensing it. If you would know the truth, come to us. But I shall venture to say in this, as our blessed Lord did in the other case, believe it not, go not after them; which I intend of following them with an implicit faith, and imitating their party-spirit; not against hearing what they have to say for themselves. To seek after truth in this way, laying aside the Scriptures, or understanding them by the comments of the several parties, would be a desperate undertaking. Nay, I do not see how a man could come to any determination at all, unless he was able to reconcile contradictions, or resolved right or wrong to stick to the side he was bred up in, or which some secular view led him to espouse. Truth is best sought, and easiest found in the Scriptures themselves; here therefore you should seek for it, yet so as not to neglect any assistance that offers towards your advancement in this sort of knowledge,
ledge, which is the method you take in the other parts of learning, still reserving a right of judging for yourself upon the whole. Give your attendance to reading, meditate on these things, give yourself in a manner wholly to them; and, as the reward of your thus diligently searching the Scriptures with a pure, an upright, and a humble mind, you may reasonably expect to succeed better, and to have greater degrees of the divine acceptance and illumination, than in any other method. Honest men that think for themselves, will value you the more for doing what they themselves have done, though the consequence should be your differing from them in some opinions; and as for the censures of others, who want honesty, or whose notions are not properly their own, but their party's from whom they have taken them, they are not worth regarding.

Besides more direct evidence, truth hath very often the advantage of some marks by which it is characterised and distinguished from falsehood. Errors are apt to clash, and contradict one another, but there is a constant harmony in truth; and therefore the more connected the several parts of your scheme are, and the more support they lend one to the other, and derive from those general principles which are common to every system, so much the better. Where there is a manifest inconsistency between the
the principles of Religion universally acknowledged amongst Christians, and some other notions which men endeavour to fasten on to them, so that they cohere no better than the iron and clay in the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's visionary image, or rather destroy one another, like fire and water (and it were easy to name some doctrines in which this happens *) you may be sure of the

* That God is a Being of the most perfect rectitude of nature, infinitely holy, one that loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity, is a principle acknowledged by all Christians; and yet even among Christians there are those who hold every man's character and actions, good or bad, to be originally owing to the absolute decree of God; so that whatever causes the evil action immediately flows from, the will of God is the first and supreme cause, in obedience to which all other causes necessarily produce the effects they do, and cannot possibly produce any other: the consistency of which two, viz. God's hatred of sin, with his decreeing or willing its existence, they that can shew, are humbly desired to do it.—The same persons profess to believe, agreeably to the general sense of mankind, and the constant language of Scripture, that God is just, and good, and gracious, in the highest degree of perfection; notwithstanding which, they suppose the first man's disobedience to affect his posterity in such a manner, by imputation or propagation, that they are all deserving of eternal misery, and much the greater part of them actually suffer it, as the unavoidable consequence of an action which they could not help. Is there no contradiction, I do not say to infinite goodness, or to any goodness, but to justice, in this proceeding? Surely, he must wink hard that does not see it. It is a dictate of universal Reason, that God is true, and not denied by those very men, who,
the falsity of all such notions; notwithstanding the unnatural alliance in vain attempted between them and the most sacred truths.

Another mark of truth in Religion is, the good influence it hath upon holiness, or a right temper of mind, and all the duties and virtues of a christian life. Practical truth grows out of speculative; at least, can no more

who, at the same time give such a sense to the most solemn, the most express, the most numerous, and most unlimited exhortations, declarations, invitations, entreaties and promises of the word of God, as makes them signify nothing at all, or, what is worse than nothing to the major part of the christian world, serving only to delude them with false hopes now, and to aggravate their condemnation at last.—Either this is representing God as acting inconsistently with sincerity and veracity; or sincerity and dissimulation, veracity and unfaithfulness are the same things. —While, in words, all men own the truth of this proposition, that God is no respecter of persons, ratified by the consenting voice of Reason and Revelation, how many really, or in effect, deny it, by teaching that, in the distribution of final recompenses, the foundation of God’s different proceeding with the children of men, is not their having acted or not acted according to their different abilities, and improved or not improved the talents committed to them; but their being of a certain number arbitrarily ordained to eternal life, or the contrary? Upon the whole, the peculiar principles of this odd scheme of doctrine are evidently repugnant to the first principles of natural and revealed Religion professedly embraced by all Christians, and therefore must needs be false; and those places of Scripture that seem to favour them ought to be taken in another and milder sense, of which they are easily capable, and which indeed they require, according to all the rules of just and fair construction.
The End aimed at

more be hurted by it than one speculative truth can be contrary to, and disproved by another. This is that found doctrine of which the Apostle Paul so often speaks in his Epistles to Timothy and Titus; as any one may soon convince himself that will but consult the places, particularly 1 Tim. i. 10. Tit. ii. 1, and following verses. What promotes the morals of the Gospel, and, among these, relative virtues, tending to shew the necessity, the advantages, and the loveliness of them, is found doctrine; whatever, in its natural consequence, vacates the obligations to a holy life, and discourages the practice of virtue in the whole, or in any particular branches of it, is contrary to found doctrine, and can never make a part of the Christian Revelation, which is a doctrine according to godliness *.

Among

* The scheme mentioned in the marginal note just before will, upon trial, be found to stand this test (viz. of the natural tendency of doctrines to promote or hinder a good life) no better than it did the former. Whatever principles destroy the very notion of moral good and evil, i.e. of virtue and vice, holiness and sin, and all distinction between them, have a plain tendency to banish virtue or holiness itself from the earth; for, if once a man believes that all actions are alike indifferent, as to any moral good or evil that is in them, any praise or blame they deserve, there can be no room for conscience, which always supposes an intrinsick immutable difference in actions, and applauds or reproaches men according as they observe or neglect this difference in the conduct of their lives. But are the principles before-mentioned thus subversive of the moral differences of actions? Most certainly. Were there
Among other fruits of sound doctrine, there is one that deserves to be more particularly taken notice of, and that is love, the noblest passion of the human soul, and highest perfection there any thing morally and unchangeably good, it must be a rule of action to God himself; whereas, according to the notion advanced by some men of the divine sovereignty, the supreme Being conducts all his proceedings by mere arbitrary will and pleasure. Again, if all things (actions as well as events) are in pursuance of absolute decrees, it is certain that men are not free agents; and if men are not free, so as to have a power to do good or evil, they cannot be obliged to do the one, and to forbear the other; nor can any thing they do be properly good or evil, in a moral sense, being the pure effect of necessity. — The same principles enervate all the motives to holiness from the perfections of God, his goodness manifested in Creation, and in the course of his Providence, his unspeakable love in giving his only-begotten Son, that whoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life; the death of Christ, and his love in dying for us; in a word, from the promises and threatenings of the Gospel. God, as represented by some, would not be a proper object of our imitation, having no moral perfections for us to imitate; or, which is much the same, we having no ideas of these perfections of holiness, justice, goodness and truth, as in God, and no other way to guess at them but by the effects, which, if such as are described by those men, would make it the most unsafe and deceitful rule in the world, to act in imitation of the Deity. The goodness of Creation and Providence would quite vanish, as to the non-elect, when set over-against the miseries of an everlasting state, to which it was designed to be introductory, and does inevitably lead them: no benefit being intended to the non-elect by the mediation of Christ, they could be under no obligation for it. And as to the promises and threatenings of the Gospel, the non-elect having no concern with the former, nor the elect with the
The End aimed at

Fection both of Morality and Religion. Nothing can inspire a rational love of the Deity, but truth, because nothing else can represent him as truly amiable. Just notions of God do this; while others, instead of cherishing that love of God which casteth out fear, and fills the reasonable mind with the most transporting pleasure in the contemplation of his perfections and works, are, in their own nature, good for nothing else but to beget superstition in some, pride and uncharitableness in others, a secret disgust, or endless doubts and perplexities in others, according to the different tempers of men's minds.—And there is the same difference in respect of mutual benevolence, or love to our fellow-creatures, on which some principles have the most friendly; others the most malignant aspect; some soften and enlarge the heart, others harden and contract it; some produce a strong and universal

the latter, one of them would be without hope, the other without fear, one of them desperate, the other secure, according to men believing themselves to be in one or the other class. And should it be suggested, that the decree is unknown to them; the answer is easy, that they know thus much, that whatever it be, it will certainly take place in its proper time, any thing they do, or can do, notwithstanding. The consequence of all which is, that the restraints from evil, and all motives to that which is good, being removed, men, following these principles, would give a loose to their passions, and be much worse than they now are. Whereas, did they act up to the contrary doctrines, man would bear a very great resemblance to God, and earth to heaven.
by a faithful Minister. 219

attraction among souls, others change the attractive into a repelling quality. The former notions are certainly true, the latter as undoubtedly false.

The

* Such are the notions which have been tried by the two former marks; they are inconsistent with the most evident dictates of Reason, and destructive of sound Morals. I now add, fatal above all, to love. Is the belief of God's having appointed one man to salvation, another to damnation, without any reason for it in the persons themselves, only because he will do it, a proper foundation to be laid for the love of God, whether we take that word as signifying a delightful veneration of God's perfections, or grateful sense of his goodness to us? No, certainly; not even on supposition I am fully persuaded of my being in the number of the chosen few. Since, if I rightly consider it, I can never approve a conduct in the greatest of beings, and in the highest instances, the lowest degrees of which I should abhor and condemn in any other. The greater the Being, and the more extensive and terrible the dissolution made by his arbitrary decrees, the more displeasing, instead of lovely and venerable, must his character appear. And as to his benefits, how great ever, being conferred, not from any delight he takes in my happiness, but with the very same design as he makes others miserable, that is, purely to shew his irresistible power, they cannot inspire love: much less shall I be disposed to love God, if under an uncertainty of my election; and least of all can I be obliged to love God, or capable of doing it, if I think myself reproved by him. By the way, this shews the difficulty, if not impossibility of proving our election upon rational grounds, according to these principles. I have no good reason to conclude myself elected of God, unless I love him; and I cannot love him except I first believe myself elected, i.e. according to this scheme, not to be arbitrarily rejected by him.——As for the love of our neighbour, what support can that receive from these ill-natured principles?
The next care to that of teaching the truth, and nothing else, ought to be, to insist most frequently and most earnestly on those truths that are most necessary, most useful, most seasonable. Necessary as essential, or at least very important points of the Christian Revelation, without which the general doctrine of the redemption of the world by Jesus Christ, and the wisdom of God in the Gospel-constitution, cannot so well be apprehended; Useful, for enlightening the mind, informing the conscience, purifying the heart, regulating the passions, and directing the course of the life; and seasonable, by being adapted to the necessities, the characters, and the circumstances of hearers.

And that the truth may lose nothing by the manner of communicating it, you must be sensible that way ought to be chosen in which it is conveyed with the greatest clearness to the conceptions of men, the most convincing evidence to their judgments, and the most forcible and

Will not those, whose inclinations agree too well with their principles, think themselves justified to hate whom they believe God to hate, and be apt to make a sort of merit of conforming their wills and their conduct to his?—On the contrary, when we believe the mercies of God to be over all his works, and his intention to save all who, by their obstinate continuance in sin, do not exclude themselves from the common salvation, the thoughts of such a glorious design naturally dilate the heart in love to God and man, and place all men in the most amiable point of view, as good, or capable of being so, and our companions in bliss for ever.
and winning address to their affections; to the intent they may at once discern the truth, receive it in the love thereof, and be engaged to resolve and act agreeably to it. When your own thoughts of things are just and distinct, and your words and expressions, which are the dress of the thoughts, like a transparent veil, do not hide your meaning, but let it be plainly seen through; when you neither treat your subjects in such a cold dry argumentative way as if you were talking of things of no importance to yourself or hearers, and the truth had no charms but for the understanding; nor yet raise the affections without laying an answerable foundation in the judgment to support them, but endeavour to have a proper mixture of strength and sweetness of light and warmth in your discourses; it is then you are likely to do most service to truth, and to the souls of men. Reason and argument there must be, or we do not deal with mankind as reasonable beings: but Reason itself dictates that there ought to be something besides, because human nature is not made up entirely of Reason, but of Reason and Affection.

Some other things might be named, to which you should, and I hope will take heed; such as performing all the parts of publick worship in a decent and edifying manner, agreeable to the Scripture rule, and the nature of Gospel institutions: privately conversing with, advising, admonishing, and comforting your flock,
The End aimed at

flock, as there is occasion; constantly in your secret devotions, and making them subservient and preparatory to your publick work. But I shall content myself to have just mentioned these things, not only because the Apostle faith nothing of them in this place, but also and chiefly because of their visible dependance upon what hath been before said; it being impossible that a pious Minister, who hath a due concern for his own and the salvation of his hearers, and labours to conform his faith as well as his life to the holy Scriptures, should be careless and indifferent about his publick ministrations, or any thing else that may forward or prejudice his principal design.

I have very little time left to consider the success promised to the steady observation of the method here laid down. Take heed to thyself, and to thy doctrine, continue in them; for in so doing thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee. The saving yourself and others is supposed to be the greatest end you have in view (as was said before) and it seems in this way you have the greatest probability of attaining what you aim at; for though men of very indifferent lives may sometimes be instrumental in saving others by the goodness of their doctrine, and some who hold pernicious doctrines may do much by the goodness of their lives, and the influence of those truths which are mingled with their
Jfors*, yet it may justly be expected, that the greatest execution will be done, where both these, a good conversation and good doctrine, are found united. Not that the effect, after all, will follow, as to the salvation of others, without their concurrence, in which they are free; but because, having taken the course now mentioned, you have discharged your duty, which is all that you are answerable for, so as to have rejoicing in yourself, and a humble assurance that your reward is with God, and have used the most probable means of bringing your hearers to concur with you; since truth and goodness are the best engines we can imploy in laying siege to the hearts of men:

* It was promised by our Saviour to his first disciples, that if they drank any deadly thing it should not hurt them. We may say something like this of the pernicious doctrines embraced by some good men. They embrace them, and yet are not hurt by them; nay, and notwithstanding them, are, it may be, useful to others, among whom they at once propagate their virtues and their mistakes. But then, as in the former case, what the disciples drank was nevertheless deadly in its own nature, because the operation of it was prevented by miracle; so here, mens escaping an hurt themselves, and being the instrument of good to others, is no argument of the insencence, much less the usefulness, of their notions. They may be exceeding pernicious in themselves for all that; only, an honest heart, and the virtue of some excellent truths, like a vigorous antidote, happily counter-act them. A noble medicine may cure, notwithstanding some improper ingredients mixed up with it; yet still we should be very much mistaken to attribute the good effect of the medicine to these ingredients, which, at best, help nothing towards it, perhaps, very much diminish it.
men: nor as if, where the effect does follow, we were to ascribe the glory of it to men, but to God, by whose Word and Spirit it is brought about. The necessity of the divine assistance, or co-operation, is one of those things which they that take heed to their doctrine will not fail to teach and inculcate; but then as this assistance is necessary, so it may be depended on by all those, whether Ministers or private Christians, who sincerely pray for it, and faithfully improve it, though they are not without their imperfections.

Upon the whole. What an excellent work is it you are engaged in! And what a glorious prospect lies before you! Enough to put life and spirit into your endeavours, and to render labour itself a pleasure. That God may guide, assist, comfort, and prosper you in the future course of your ministry, is my heart's desire and prayer to God for you; to which, I doubt not, all this numerous assembly of Christians will say, Amen.
QUERIES

Proposed to the

CONSIDERATION

Of all such as think it

An Injury to Religion

To shew the

Reasonableness of it.

In malice be ye children, but in understanding be men. 1 Cor. xiv. 20.

1732.
CURIES
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TO THE READER.

THE offence taken at a passage or two in an Ordination Sermon*, being that which gave rise to the following Queries, it is hoped the Reader will not be displeased to have the obnoxious passages laid before him; especially when some of the Queries cannot be so fully understood without them.

"We should take all opportunities of shewing them [our hearers] the excellency of the doctrines and precepts of our holy Religion, (which, by the way, makes a part of the proof of its truth;) and observing to them how admirably they all conspire in one great end, the glory of God, and the perfection and happiness of man. It should be our endeavour to convince them of the reasonable-ness of those duties that are required of them, and the goodness of God in requiring them.—It became Christ, as a Lawgiver, to teach with

with authority; letting men know what God required of them, and what they, according to their behaviour, might expect from God; without entering into the particular reasons of his commands, and proving the divine original of his doctrine from a distinct consideration of its nature and tendency, tho' he himself hints at this. And much the same method is taken in those sacred Writings by which the Christian Revelation is conveyed down to us. The doctrine they contain is perfectly reasonable, but there is very little reasoning upon it. This part is left to those who are only the Expounders of the Scripture Revelation, and who owe it to the Author of their Faith, to the Faith itself, and to them that believe, to trace and mark out those footsteps of the divine holiness, wisdom, and goodness, that are so conspicuous in the frame of our Religion. — And further on in the Sermon — 'If it be granted that there is a real sanctifying virtue in the Gospel, under the influences of the holy Spirit, this virtue must proceed from a fitness in the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel, to beget in us the love of God; and of those qualities and actions that will render us like God: which love must be the effect of a conviction, that the things which the Gospel ascribes to God are adorable perfections, and requires of man, in order to his resembling of God, are, in their own nature, lovely and excellent. Even the pro-
promises and threatenings of the Gospel, do not perhaps so directly influence the conversion of the heart to God, and our endeavours after holiness; but rather, indirectly, as they work upon our passions, and thereby engage us to consider more seriously and attentively than we should otherwise do, the reasonableness of Religion; the intrinsic value and native beauty of holiness, and great excellence of all those divine and spiritual attainments which Christianity obliges us to aspire after.

The Reader will judge whether there be anything so criminal, or doubtful, in these passages, as to call for an apology or explanation.

The Author of the Queries is sensible he could have reduced them to a smaller number; but he considered that they were likely to be of more use to the generality of readers in the present form, in which the thoughts are drawn out, and placed in different lights, than they would have been, had the thoughts been crowded into a very narrow compass, and rather implied than expressed.

He hath one more favour to beg, and that is, that having, in reading a Reformation-Sermon by Dr. Wishart, lately published, among many other things excellently observed by that judicious Divine, been particularly struck with the representation there made, of the mischiefs attending the neglect of a rational and virtuous Education, he may be pardoned the liberty he hath...
To the Reader.

bath taken to transcribe a part of it, being so agreeable to his own sentiments and design.—' I speak it with very great concern; I cannot help being apprehensive that the looseness and debauchery so much lamented in many, who are observed to have had a religious Education, may often be found to proceed, in a great measure, from that very Education itself, as it is managed: for I may appeal to attentive observers, whether that which obtains the name of a religious Education, does not often turn out in such a shape as this? The care of Parents or Instructors, about the religious part of Education, is almost wholly spent in inculcating upon young ones the Shibboleth of a Party; making them acquainted with, and instilling into them a regard for the particular doctrines, or peculiar forms of their own sect; in which there may oft-times be found a mixture of things absurd or trifling; which yet are inculcated with as great earnestness, and by the same methods, with the most weighty and important points;—and instead of forming their minds to a rational sense of good and evil, a taste and relish for true piety and virtue, upon such principles as will stand the test of a most strict examination; any instances of good practice they are taught, are recommended and enforced by mere authority, or by the awe of future rewards and punishments; which, as they are made use of, without ever explaining the nature and justice of them, can
contribute no more to promote a liberal piety and virtue, a relijo for true goodness, and favour of honesty in the mind, than whips and sugar-plumbs: while, in all the offices of Religion to which they are accustomed, they are detained before the Lord against their will; forced to run the round of certain forms they know no good in; no care being taken to instil into them a just sense of true piety and devotion, or a regard to any valuable purpose in such observances, save only the pleasing of their Parents; whose devotion and piety at the same time they observe to be exerted in such a way, as tends to give them no amiable and inviting, but rather a disgusting and forbidding view of it. —Is this to train up a Child in the way that he should go?—

When a creature (thus neglected shall I say, or rather) with great care misguided, comes to be emancipated from such fetters, and get rid of such awkward restraints; when the raw unformed Youth comes once (as perhaps with a scanty portion of understanding, and very slender exercise of Reason he may) to discover a flaw or weakness in some things, that, it may be, he hath been taught to look upon as equally sacred with God and virtue, goodness and honesty, must it not be natural for him, upon such a discovery, with the concurrence of wild passions, used to no regular government, to draw very general and hastily conclusions, and to throw up at once every thing he hath been for-
merly taught, and which his Education hath furnished him with nothing to say for, more than for some things he hath now found to be trifling and absurd?"

Here may it not be justly made a Query, Whether Parents and Instructors were not first led into this error, in the Education of Children, by Divines? And, whether therefore these latter, as they led them in, are not concerned to do their endeavour to lead them out of it again?
QUERIES
Proposed to the
CONSIDERATION &c.

QUERY I.

Is not Reason that faculty of the mind by which we perceive the truth or falsehood of Propositions (as well as their meaning) that is, indeed, the evidence of their truth or falsehood? Even shewing the reasonableness of things, what is it else but shewing the truth of some Proposition relating to their reasonableness? As he that proves or sees the reasonableness of gratitude, does, in effect, prove or see the truth of this Proposition, that gratitude is a reasonable thing. Is not this a right notion of Reason? And is there any thing of carnality in Reason thus explained? Is not carnal Reason, in this sense of the word, a contradiction in terms? There

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being, in fact, no worse foes to Reason, or greater hinderances and obstructions in reasoning, especially concerning matters of Religion, than those which the Scripture calls the lusts and the works of the flesh.

**QUERY II.**

Is not Reason a gift of God with which we ought, in the best manner we can, to glorify the giver? And do we not then glorify God with our Reason, when we trace and mark out those footsteps of the divine wisdom, holiness, and goodness, which are so conspicuous in the frame of our Religion? *Wisdom is justified of her children*; how, but by their having right apprehensions themselves of the wisdom of God in his Dispensations and Laws, and becoming advocates for them to others? And in what way can this be done without reasoning?

**QUERY III.**

Is not Reason one way of God’s speaking to men, as Revelation is another? If so; after God hath spoken to us by Revelation, are we no longer to attend to him, as he speaks to us, and instructs us, by our Reason? Why? If he does not speak contrary things; which cannot be affirmed without blasphemy.
QUERIES.

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QUERY IV.

Is it not our duty to honour God as our Creator and Governor? And of this are we not more capable, when we observe that the Nature and the Laws which he hath given us, are more exactly adapted to each other, so as to produce an immediate connection between our duty and our happiness? And what else is this but reasoning in Religion?

QUERY V.

In respect of all the Moral Precepts of the Gospel, is not the Will of God founded in the Reason of things? In other words; is not the reasonableness of some actions, and the unreasonableness of some others, one ground, at least, of God’s commanding those and forbidding these? And may we not allowably make that a reason for our doing a thing which is God’s reason for commanding it?

QUERY VI.

Does not what we call the excellency of the Christian Religion depend, in a great measure, on the reasonableness of it? And is not that man then the best judge of its excellence (ceteris paribus) who most clearly discerns its reasonableness? And, this being granted, does he not do good service to Religion by shewing it to be reasonable?
QUERIES.

QUERY VII.

Are miracles alone as strong a proof of the truth of Christianity, as miracles in conjunction with the Nature of its Doctrines and Precepts? If not, how is this proof from the Doctrines and Precepts to be managed, without entering, more or less, into the consideration of the reasonableness of the Precepts; the usefulness of the Doctrines to enforce them, together with their agreeableness to, or, at least, their consistency with, the principles of right Reason? Or, laying aside all external evidence from miracles, as well as intrinsic from the Doctrine, are we to trust entirely to the inward testimony of the Spirit? They that assert this, will do well to explain what they mean by the testimony of the Spirit, and to reflect on the dangerous consequences of their notion.

QUERY VIII.

Is there not an order in duties? And are there not degrees in the guilt of sins? How is this to be discovered and fixed, but by Reason?

QUERY IX.

Are not the love of God and our neighbour, and living soberly, righteously, and godly,
godly, the sum and substance of practical Religion? And are not a great many good reasons to be given for all these, from the nature of the duties themselves? And when such reasons can be given, ought they not to be given? Is it not for the glory of God they should?

Is not the Christian Religion a more perfect Dispensation than the Law of Moses, consider’d as a reasonable Service? But if we make the mere Will of God the entire Ratio of both, wherein will the mighty difference appear between them? Or, how is the Gospel the good, and perfect, and acceptable Will of God, any more than the Law?

Were a Minister to preach on the following Texts, and a great many others like them, could he do it to any good purpose, without Reasoning? In keeping of them (the Commandments of God) there is great reward. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul. My yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Prove all things, hold fast that which is good. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled. Whate’er things are true, ve-
QUERIES.

nervable, just, pure, lovely, of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think of those things.

QUERY XII.

Is a man's acting out of regard to the Reason of the thing, inconsistent with his having a proper respect to the Will and Authority of God? On the contrary, the greater the necessity and importance of a thing is by Reason discovered to be, is not that thing more apparently the Will of God? This being supposed; who conforms most exactly to the Will of God, and is most likely to be vigorous and steady in the practice of his duty, be that acts with a view to the several reasons and motives of action that are of weight, doing what God wills, because he wills it, and for the same reasons that he wills it, as far as they appear; or be that only considers the thing as commanded? Will not this latter be more apt, under a strong temptation, to question, whether he hath not mistaken the meaning of the command; or whether the command may not be dispensed with, never having considered the morality of it, and the unchangeable nature of moral good and evil?

QUERY XIII.

Was it possible that the Christian Church should have been overspread so early with the grossest
grosseft corruptions in Doctrine and Worship, if men had made a right use of their Bibles and Reason, and judged for themselves, not blindly following their blind Guides? Or could they believe and hold fast the plainest inconsistencies, which hath been formerly done, and is so still, if Reason were not discarded; which would convince them that Propositions true and false about the same thing, the best of principles with some of the worst, were not fit company to lodge together in the same head? St. Austin, when a Manichee, was a believer of two opposite and coeternal principles of things, the one good, the other evil: afterwards, when a Catholick, he asserted the unity of the first principle; but by representing every thing that is done as the accomplishment of an absolute decree, he did, in effect, teach that the sovereignly good Being was the uncontrollable author both of good and evil. And must not a man silence his Reason, before he can entertain such an inconsistent notion, that the fountain of living waters does at once send forth sweet water and bitter?

**Q U E R I E S. XIV.**

Is there not a fitness in the Doctrines and Precepts of the Gospel to beget in us the love of God, and of those qualities and actions which will render us like God? And does not their
their fitness, as means to this end, arise from
their apparent goodness and reasonableness? As to the promises and threatenings of the Gospel, do they not conspire to the same end, by working on our passions, our hopes and fears, and thereby engaging us to consider more seriously and attentively than we should otherwise do, the reasonableness of Religion, the obligation we are under from all the principles of gratitude and ingenuity to serve God, whose service is the most perfect freedom; the intrinsic value, and native beauty of holiness, and great excellence of all those divine and spiritual attainments which Christianity obliges us to aspire after? &c. So that the efficacy of Gospel-promises and threatenings in kindling the love of God in the soul, and of those actions and dispositions in which the image of God consists, (which by the way is true vital Religion) is not exerted so much in a direct and immediate manner, as indirectly and more remotely, by being the occasion of our considering and discerning the loveliness of these things. Take, for an example, those two places of Scripture, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. As far as such passages influence men in a moral way, not only determining their resolutions to deny themselves sinful gratifications, and to lead a sober, righteous, and godly life, but actually possessing them with a relish and appro-
approbation of that which is good; how do they produce this effect if not chiefly as motives by which men are persuaded to consider the nature and necessity of this qualification, and the happiness resulting from the free intercourse of a holy soul with a holy God; the consideration of which being joined with their own experience in the course of a good life, works in them a deep conviction of the reasonableness of Religion, as this conviction tends to bring them heartily in love with it? Without this, how can the Christian properly delight in God, or have any tolerable notion of the blessedness of enjoying him? The same thing is much more evident of some other threatenings; for what direct efficacy hath the threatening of eternal wrath and destruction to inspire men with the love of God, and of goodness, and with the hatred of sin as sin?

In whatever state we consider men, whether in that before conversion or after, is it of no use to set before them the reasonableness of those duties that are required of them, and the goodness of God in requiring them? May not those who are engaged in a vicious course of life, especially persons of some tempers, be first awakened by such rational considerations, which apply to their understandings and ingenuity, dating the occasion and beginnings of their
their conversion to God from thence; or at least of such a degree of reformation and amendment as brings them nearer the kingdom of heaven than they were before, and renders them much more useful members of society? And may not the progress of others who are entered upon a holy life, and the pleasure they have in the practice of piety, the adherence of their hearts to God, the elevation of their affections, and liveliness of their devotions, be greatly prompted by the same means? They who deny this, are desired to shew why, when the Spirit of God does not, we may say cannot, work Grace where there is not the faculty of Reason, the free exercise of that faculty should hinder rather than invite his operations, and conspire to render them more successful?

**QUERIES XVI.**

Did not Christ teach as a Lawgiver; and his Apostles as persons inspired? But for the ordinary Ministers of the Gospel, what are they else than Expounders of the Christian Revelation; above mere Readers, and below men inspired? Now the question is, whether the lawgiver and the inspired person do not act agreeably to their character, though they should require obedience, without assigning any other reason for it besides the authority which the command is built on, or the promises and threatenings by which it is enforced? Was
Was it not after this manner the *Decalogue* was delivered from mount *Sinai*, and the other laws were recorded by *Moses*? Notwithstanding which, is it not allowable for them whose business it is to expound the Scripture, yea, and their duty too, according to the best of their capacity, to unfold the meaning of the *sacred Text*, and by Reason and Argument to vindicate every part of it from the objections raised against it by *pride*, *ignorance*, and *sinful prejudices*? Could they who sat in *Moses’s Seat* have given the *Rationale* of the Law, assigning the ground and occasion of every particular precept, ought they not to have done it, in order to demonstrate, with the greatest evidence, that *no one nation had statutes and judgments so righteous as all that Law which Moses in the name of God set before the people of Israel*? As this, with regard to the Laws and Institutions of Christ may be more easily done, is it any mark of respect to Christ, as *Lawgiver of the Christian Church*, to neglect it?

*QUERIES.*

If because our Saviour and his Apostles, in the short accounts we have of the Doctrine taught by them, proposed things without much or frequent reasoning upon them, the Preachers of the Gospel must not venture to reason with their hearers, though in the most familiar way, and in things that are the proper sub-
subjects of reasoning, or must do it very sparingly; may we not argue in like manner, that forasmuch as we seldom meet with any but general commands and prohibitions in the sacred Scriptures, we ought therefore to confine ourselves to generals, and not presume to bring down general rules to particular cases and circumstances? Why is not their example a rule, from which we are never to depart, in one case as well as in the other, so that, for instance, we ought not to explain the meaning and extent of that command, _Lyce not one to another_ , (shewing that equivocations, mental reservations, and deceiving by actions, as well as by words, are included under it; which, by the way, too cannot be done without proper arguments) any more than to prove the reasonableness of it, by setting forth the evil of the thing forbidden? If he that reasons pretends therein to be wiser than Christ and his Apostles, and to have a better way of preaching than they had, does not he do the very same who explains?

**Q U E R Y XVIII.**

What a bulk must the Writings of the New Testament have grown to, did they not only present us with a short view of the Doctrines, Precepts, and Promises of the Christian Religion, but contained also particular and copious enlargements upon each. On the other hand,
QUERIES.

hand, without such enlargements, and building on the foundation laid in Scripture, within how short a compass will a Minister's work, as a Preacher, be reduced? How little will he have to say upon particular subjects, and how hard be put to it to avoid endless and tiresome repetitions, supposing him to continue several years with the same People?

QUERIES XIX.

Who express the truest regard to the Scripture in the manner of their preaching, they who make it their aim to keep close to the meaning and intent of the Holy Ghost in every part of it, especially when any Point of Doctrine is to be established; or others, who satisfy themselves with the sound of words, taking the sense upon trust, and sometimes have not even that poor foundation for their discoveries, but choose a Text for no other, or better reason, but that being of the allegorical and figurative kind, it will afford their fancies full scope to ramble, and give them an opportunity to prove strange things, which cannot be proved any other way? e.g. That men are passive in the work of conversion, able to contribute little or nothing more to it than if they were so many flocks and stones, is a notion highly injurious to the honour of our Maker, contradictory to the plainest assertions of Scripture, and destructive of
of every exhortation and motive to a holy life. But now only take for your Text those words of God to the Prophet—*Can these bones live? Prophecy over these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord*—and you carry your point at once. Rare way of evincing the truth, which is equally fitted to demonstrate the greatest absurdities! Witness those lovers of the marvellous, and devourers of nonsense and contradiction, the Papists; who in that figurative expression, *This is my Body*, have found the doctrine of Transubstantiation as plainly taught, as some good Protestants have several articles of their faith in other metaphorical and mystical places of the Bible.

**Queries XX.**

Is not the judicious, understanding Christian, whose piety is substantial, his charity extensive, and his zeal according to knowledge, a more amiable character, of greater credit to Religion, and more weight and authority in the world, than another who is stiff and positive, he hardly knows why, or for what, and very often in the wrong place; apt to confine Religion to his own party, and childishly troublesome to all about him? Does not one as a Minister, a Master, a Parent, or in any other station and relation of life, take the way to allure to a love and esteem for Religion those
those who are within the sphere of his influence; the other to frighten them from it? And under what sort of Preaching is each of these characters most likely to spring up, and prevail? Were it not much to be wished, that some men, in their great zeal for Religion, would argue and reason for it more than they do; and not run the hazard of exposing it to the ridicule of enemies, giving disgust to the wiser part of its friends, and making conceited enthusiasts, and peevish ignorant bigots of too many of the rest?

**QUERIES XXI.**

Ought not some consideration to be had of the prevailing genius and taste of the Age for rational knowledge, and freer inquiries? So that, allowing there have been times when a dogmatical way of asserting things without proving them, and raising the passions of people in a mechanical, rather than a rational way, answered the great ends of Preaching better than any other method would have done (which I am far from believing) yet now that the state of things is very much altered, and great numbers are no longer to be treated as children, nor will be contented to have their understandings amazed and dazzled, instead of being enlightened, Ministers ought in prudence to change their way, as far as they can do it with a good conscience. Would that
method which once did good, now do mischief; and another method, without doing the same hurt, do more good; and ought not that to be laid aside then, and this chosen? May not the rational, and the serious and pathetick sobriety and freedom of thought, be reconciled and united in our Pulpit-Discourses; and would they not do more execution if they were? Why should we scruple differing from a former Age in the method of Preaching any more than in the expression; if, as the change in the language makes the one expedient, so different circumstances do the other? Or, What reason have we to think, that the wiser part of our Forefathers would not have had some regard to men and things; not by giving up their Religion, but in order to procure it the greater success? As it is certain, these never went at all, or not so far, into the puerile and fancifull way of Preaching when it was most in fashion.

Are not some men averse to reasoning on religious subjects, from an apprehension of the ill consequence it will be of to their favourite opinions? First, You must not use your Reason upon the Doctrines of Christianity; because those which they teach for such, will not bear that examination; being as opposite to all the principles of Reason and Scripture too,
too, as darkness is to light; of which kind are absolute Decrees; God's giving men a Being, but never putting them into a proper capacity of obtaining happiness, or avoiding misery; which is to make their Being no favour, but the quite contrary; and consequently, to take away all obligation to God; and all foundation of guilt: that the Gospel is afforded to the greater part of those that enjoy it, only to render them the more inexcusable, &c.—

Next, You must not reason upon the Precepts of the Gospel, though they approve themselves to the Reason of all mankind; because should you be allowed to reason upon any part of Religion, the most apparently reasonable, you might be apt to go further than you should; attempt to prove that censoriousness cannot be christian zeal; bitter envyings and strifes, with a narrow, selfish, or at best, party spirit, is not that charity which the Gospel so earnestly recommends; nor a worldly, scraping temper, any mark of a man's setting his affections upon things above: and from hence might proceed to ask a reason of some other things, for which no good reason can be given, though placed by too many among the most precious truths of the Gospel. Is it not plain, (according to an old saying), that such men are against Reason, because conscious to themselves that Reason is against them; if not upon the same ac—
count, also, as the Pharisees opposed our Blessed Lord, because of the tendency and design of his doctrine to take off the people from a slavish dependence upon their dictates? This is known to be the ground of that great care which the Romish Church takes, to keep all of her Communion from examining those large and nauseous doses which she obliges them to swallow. And as far as the same spirit and practice prevail among Protestants, they forget, and put off their own character, and act in the borrowed one of Papists. Whether they do this because they have occasion for disguise and concealment, like the Papists, they that are guilty should consider; and all others will easily judge. — The next Query shall be founded on the Quotation in the Title-Page.

**Query XXIII.**

If repeating after others be the work of memory only, in which children very often, if not generally, excel grown persons, are those grown persons to be esteemed men in understanding, of whom the best that can be said, is, that they have not forgot the Catechism which they learned when they were children? Possibly, they may be able to bring, what they have been taught to call, Proofs of every Point of their Faith or Practice; but as long as they acquiesce in those Proofs, good or
or bad, as they were delivered to them, as it were sealed up, without all inquiry, reflection, or exercise of the least act of their judgment about them, are they Proofs to them? Let them deserve commendation as much as you please in other respects, is it not a melancholy truth, that, after all, they are but children in understanding? To conclude.

**Q. U. E. R. I. E. S. 251**

If because Reason, or rather a pretence to it, is liable to be abused, Reason therefore must be banished from Religion, will not this justify the Papists in laying aside the Scriptures too, which may be, and frequently have been, perverted to the worst purposes? Especially, when forbidding men to reason, but allowing them to read the Scriptures is only doing things by halves, and too much like leaving a man in possession of a sword * after you have put out his eyes, which should direct him in the use of it.  

*The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.*  
Eph. vi. 17.
A LETTER
To the Reverend
Mr. John Ball,
Of Honiton, Devonshire,
On his late
Pamphlet, entitiled,
Some Remarks on a new Way of Preaching, &c.

1737.
THE PREFACE.

I must beg the Reader's patience while I make two or three general observations concerning the Remarks, not mentioned in the following Letter to the Author. The first is on the Remarker's management with regard to the chief subject, and, I believe I may say, sole occasion, of his great work, viz. the * Ordination Sermon, and Defence of it, in a small Pamphlet, entitled, Queries proposed to the consideration of all such as think it an injury to Religion to shew the Reasonableness of it. The Remarks consist but of four and twenty pages. Of these the Author spends more than twelve before he comes to the consideration of the Sermon and Queries, which he quits again, p. 21; in the few pages between making a Diversion to Dr. Withart, whom, so impartial is he, he treats with as little ceremony as he does me. And how does he imploy that small pittance of

of his Book which properly relates to the passages excepted against in the said Sermon and Queries? Is it in briefly and fairly stating the matter in debate? Answering, or giving hints of answers, to the arguments urged in the Queries? Or advancing so much as one single argument, deserving that name, against the doctrine in the Sermon? Nothing less. He mistakes, he accuses, he rails, he exclaims and laments; and that's all. This, indeed, must be said for him, that he is a bright example of the dogmatical and mechanical way of writing, and of that aversion to Reason in Religion, with which it seems to be one principal part of his aim to possess his Readers.

Another observation is, that what hath most truth, and the greatest show of argument, in the Remarks, is nothing to the purpose; not, in the least, affecting the Author of the Proofs of a Future State. The Remarker makes a short flourish on the moral proofs of the immortality of the soul, and a life after this. And are not the moral arguments most largely insisted on by the Author of the Proofs himself? It is true, he lays the foundation in the natural immortality, or spirituality, of the soul, as a fair presumption of its being designed to continue for ever in Being, no counter probability appearing on the opposite side; but not as a full proof of it, without taking in the consideration of the superior excellence of the human soul; Proofs, Chap. III. §. 7, 8. which shews the learned
learned comparison of the setting dog to be quite impertinent to the present case. The Remarker, likewise, harangues upon sincerity; which, he truly observes, will not excuse men, when it signifies no more than their acting according to their present thoughts. And, where hath the Author of the Proofs supposed that it would? Where hath he given any such maimed and partial idea of sincerity? Hath he not, on the contrary, expressed himself with all the guard he could have been expected to have done, if he had foreseen such an attack; pleading for none among the Heathen but such as were honest minded, and had integrity of heart, did not hold the truth in unrighteousness, but were lovers of the things which are good and true, and sincerely desirous of knowing and doing their duty? p. 183, 184. But though this talk of sincerity, and the moral Proofs of a Future State, is nothing to the purpose, of confuting any thing said by the Author of the Proofs, it may, for ought I know, be to the Remarker's purpose, which is, too evidently, to give the world as bad a notion as he can of Mr. G——. But, in the mean while, I much doubt, were the Remarker to be tried by his own notion of sincerity, as including an endeavour to know the truth, he would not very soon be able to find a Jury of twelve good men and true, to acquit him in this particular point; for, as to his general character, I am far from calling that in question.
The last observation relates to the time of publishing the Remarks, six Years after the appearance of the Books against which they are levelled. This leaves the mistakes that occur in them, arising from passion and prejudice, without excuse. If they had been drawn up and printed in haste, it might have been pleaded, that the Author had been carried too far by the warmth of his temper, and a zeal for the truth, which he imagined to be injured by Mr. G—'s notions. But here was time enough for a greater fire than so small a matter should have kindled, to go out, and for the Remarker coolly and impartially to examine the criminal passages, which would have convinced him, that they were really very innocent, and so have prevented this shame to himself, and imposition on the zeal of his credulous Reader. But here lies the advantage of this late publication. The circumstances in favour of the Sermon, as its being approved by the Audience, and published at the unanimous desire of a great number of Ministers then present, it is to be hoped, are now forgotten; the Sermon itself not easily to be bad, and the minds of a great many people, by the prejudices industriously instilled and propagated against certain persons, for a considerable time past, better fitted to receive any suggestions of the Remarker, without suspicion of their being groundless, and to take the impression and ply he is willing to give them. This seems to

* The Queries excepted.
to be the truth of the case, as far as appearances will help us to guess at it. But how fair this sort of dealing is, I leave every candid and inquiring Reader to judge.

N. B. To make the Reader some satisfaction for this personal Debate, of which let the aggressor bear the blame; if Mr. Ball, or any friend of his, be disposed to enter into a sober inquiry, Whether, and how far, the Use of Reason is to be allowed in Religion, the Author of the following Letter promises, God willing, to give what is offered a fair examination, and either frankly own himself a convert to his Reasons, or shew cause why he is not.
A LETTER
TO THE
Rev. Mr. BALL, &c.

Taunton, Jan. 4, 1736-7.

Reverend Sir,

I HAVE read over your late extraordinary performance, and have the satisfaction to be able to say, that I heartily forgive the Writer, and wish him no other harm than a better spirit. Your Book is certainly an original in its kind; and as such, it represents me an unusual appearance, or new light, which the world had not seen for many hundred years; one that exalt myself above Christ and his Apostles, and teach most dangerous opinions. In the very Title you bring me
me upon the stage, like an ecclesiastical criminal, dressed in a sort of Sambenito, and both there, and in your Book do, as it were, cry out as loud as you can—"Fellow-Christians, mark this man, and avoid him; let no one admonish him as a Brother, for so I never did, but count him an enemy, a grievous wolf entered in among you, not sparing the flock, and therefore not to be spared, nor treated according to the laws of honourable war."

Now, though, after the most serious and impartial reflection, I am not sensible of my having given the least just occasion for the least part of all this outrage, and owe you no thanks for attempting to ruin my reputation and usefulness in the Church of Christ, yet I shall have great reason to bless God, if the unkind usage I have met with prove the motive to my fitting every part of my temper and conduct more narrowly than I had ever done before, humbling myself before God for my most secret errors, and improving in those excellent, but too much neglected virtues, of meekness, gentleness, humility, forgiveness of injuries, brotherly kindness and charity. As an instance of this last, I shall endeavour, Sir, to convince you, that, under the specious notion of zeal for your Master, you have, without any authority for it from him, been unmercifully beating your fellow-servant, and doing him the greatest wrong. Small
Small matters (though such only comparatively) I pass over, nor think it worth my while to complain, that there is not one good-natured passage, nor a single sentence that shews the least relentings of humanity, much less that breathes a christian spirit, throughout your Book; contented to point out the grosser misrepresentations, which, in case they were as wilful as they are groundless, it would be difficult to reconcile with the character of an honest man; and, with all the softness of which they are capable, discover such an amazing degree of prejudice, as, perhaps, is scarcely to be paralleled in an Author of any learning, sense and piety.

The Articles of my accusation are as follow—Because I freely declared, as many other greater and better men than myself have done, against that inhuman, let me add, and unchristian opinion, which damns all the Heathen world without exception, and without mercy, (Proofs of a Future State from Reason) therefore I am a friend to the free-thinkers, or deists of the age, and intended what I wrote for their service and encouragement, that they might think themselves in no danger, provided they were sincere, (Remarks, p. 7, and 8.) though the two cases, of men bred up in the darkness of heathenism, and our modern unbelievers, who live where Christianity is the Established Religion, and are apostates from it, are as widely
widely different as can well be; and I had expressly observed in favour of the charitable notion, (Proofs of a Future State, p. 139.) That it greatly facilitates the answer to an objection against the Gospel, from its imperfect promulgation, not more common than plausible, and, according to the scheme which some men have framed of Christianity, utterly unanswerable.

This reason (and it were easy to add others) is so obvious, of the peculiar acceptableness of this notion, of the salvability of the Heathen, to those who are concerned for the honour of their Religion, and would effectually vindicate it against the reproaches of its enemies, that it is surprising you could think of no other reason for this than that ill-natured one you mention. If I have mistaken your meaning it is unwillingly, and must be imputed to the obscurity of the passage, of which I can hardly make sense without supposing an error or two of the Press. Your words are, I can think of no other reason for mens pleading the case (cause) of the Heathen, than because, as our Author tells us, we are in an age of free-thinkers, even against the plainest Scriptures. They may think themselves in no danger if they are sincere. The sentence, I apprehend, is wrong pointed, and, with the addition of a single word, should run thus. I can think of no other reason for mens pleading the cause of the Heathen, than because we
we are in an age of free-thinkers, that, even against the plainest Scriptures, they may think themselves in no danger if they are sincere. For to whom does the word they refer but to free-thinkers? And who are the free-thinkers but, those commonly meant by that name, the deists? Though, what passage you have in your eye, when you say, The Author tells us we are in an age of free-thinkers, I cannot guess, unless it be Query twenty-one, where the question is put—Whether some consideration ought not to be had of the prevailing genius and taste of the Age for rational knowledge, and freer inquiries? But as these expressions of rational knowledge and freer inquiries, are very innocent in themselves, so, I never knew them used or understood in that invidious sense which you seem to affix to them, as I dare say the Author of the Queries did not so intend them. You might therefore, at least, have allowed me to have designed well; and if you thought my arguments did not come up to the point, you would have done much better to shew where the inconclusiveness of them lay, than, letting alone his arguments, to attack the secret intention of the Writer, of which you had no commission to erect yourself into a judge. What my thoughts are of the case of the deists you might have seen in my Discourse of Saving Faith, p. 90, 91, 92. to which I refer you for satisfaction.
Because I had said, I did not see why we might not have charity for those that were sunk deeper into idolatry (than the persons that had been just before mentioned) provided they were honest minded, and did not so much want integrity of heart as a clearer knowledge of divine things. (Proofs of a Future State, p. 183.) You first change the word deeper into deepest, and instead of the words honest minded, and not so much wanting integrity of heart, &c. substitute not scandalously vicious, and then ask, What shall we say to this man’s profession of friendship to Revelation? (Remarks, p. 8.) While others, when they meet with this, and several instances more of immorality in writing, will be apt to think there is much more reason for putting the question, Where is the Remarker’s regard to the rules of common equity and truth?

Because I did not apprehend what St. Paul faith in the first Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, to include every individual person amongst the Heathens in all ages and nations of the world, but only to express their general character, you are pleased to put me in mind of another translation of the Bible, which it seems the Rational Divines (among whom I have the honour to be ranked) hope for; in the marginal notes to which they are desired to acquaint the world, when the Apostle is to be believed, and when not; after which you cry out, Is this the use of Reason in Religion,
Religion, to exalt it against the Scriptures? Further, very kindly insinuating a parallel between me and Socinus, who, you say, would not believe a thing because he found it in Scripture; to which you add, You see then there are some that come up pretty near to his way of using the holy Scripture. (Remarks, p. 8, 9.) And all this notwithstanding I had expressly entered a caveat against any such perverse construction of what I said. (Proofs of a Future State, p. 164.) My words are, "This Author (Mr. Hallett) having painted "that a vast deal blacker which was but too "black before, I hope I shall not give any just "occasion of offence if I turn advocate for the "accused, not in opposition to the Apostle Paul, "(N. B.) every tittle of whose charge against "them I am ready to subscribe to, but to Mr. "Hallett, who setting up for the Apostle's in-"terpreter, hath mistook his meaning, and "aggravated things beyond all truth and cha-"rity." I dare believe you are not angry "with me merely for differing from Mr. Hal-"lett, but because Mr. Hallett in the present "case hath the happiness to agree with Mr. "Ball and his friends, whose comments are no "more to be disputed than the text itself. But "you ought to have forgiven me, because, till "now, you had never let the world know "your opinion in this matter, nor offered your-"self to me for an infallible guide; though, if "you had, I very much doubt, I should have 

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taken the Protestant Liberty to judge for myself, not having heard that the Apostle Paul had deputed any one, whether at Rome or Honiton, or elsewhere, to declare his mind for him.

Because I had recommended to Ministers (Sermon, p. 18, 19.) “The taking all opportunities of shewing their hearers the excellency of the doctrines and precepts of our holy Religion—The reasonableness of the duties required of us, and the goodness of God in requiring them, and this the rather, because our Saviour himself, as a Lawgiver, did not see fit to enter into the particular reasons of his commands (i.e. to enlarge upon them) and to prove the divine original of his doctrine from a distinct consideration of its nature and tendency, though he himself hints at this,” (as when he exposes the absurdity of the suggestion, that he cast out devils by Beelzebub the prince of the devils from hence, that then Satan would be divided against himself, and so his kingdom could not stand; which, I take it, is arguing from the nature of his doctrine in conjunction with his miracles.) For this and no other reason, unless one that shall be considered presently, I am accused of taking a new way of preaching, of which we have no example in Christ’s preaching; that I think my own a better way, and to shew the excellence of it above that of Christ, offer at several things; that I cast the greatest reproach upon
upon Christ, and think myself wiser, and more compassionate to the souls of men than he was. And the truth is, if this were really the case, you might well say, Whither will pride carry men? You say, philosophical pride; to which question give me leave to reply first, that unphilosophical pride is no more a virtue of the Gospel than philosophical; and that the truly humble man is the furthest of any from so much as rashly suspecting others of pride, and much more from causelessly charging them with it in the face of the world, and with being puffed up with a fleshly mind; the best language you can bestow upon Dr. Wishart and me. Besides I do not know where in the Sermon I have said any thing of philosophy, much less made empty boasts, and a vain ostentation of my own.

To the substance of the article I answer, that I verily believe the precepts of the Gospel to be in themselves excellent and reasonable (i.e. founded in the nature of God and of man, the nature of the relations subsisting betwixt them, as of Creator and creature, parent and off-spring, sovereign and subject, benefactor and beneficiary, redeemer and redeemed; and finally, the nature of the circumstances men are placed in) that this internal excellence of the precepts of Christianity is one chief glory of our Religion, and included in the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, mentioned by the Apostle Paul;
Paul; that God did not only design to shew his authority, but also his wisdom and goodness in the Gospel constitution; all this I firmly believe, and fancy you yourself will hardly deny. I further observe, that our blessed Lord frequently subjoins to his commands one or more reasons of them (though he does not distinctly and largely enter into them, and argue from them to the truth of his Religion) for which I appeal to his admirable Sermon on the Mount (see particularly Chap. v. ver. 37, 45, and 48. Chap. vi. ver. 8, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25—34. Chap. vii. ver. 1—4. 7—11, 12, 13. in all which places he shews himself to be no enemy to the reason of things.) And, Oh, how much is it to be wished, that the amiable virtues in-joined by our blessed Saviour, and to which he annexes a beatitude, were better practised by his followers! Those not excepted, who are such engrossers of the knowledge and love of Christ, that they will hardly allow their neighbours to have any share of them.

And now, if you please, let us reason a little upon the premises. It is a terrible word, I own, but you will forgive it. Can there be any harm in shewing the commands of the Gospel to be what they really are? To point out the wisdom and goodness of God in them? Or were these perfections displayed, that we should take no notice of them? To amplify upon those reasons which Christ hath mentioned
mentioned of his commands, and to produce others that are of weight and importance, and have a tendency to strengthen the conviction of their duty in the minds of our hearers? Is doing this a mark of disrespect to our Saviour? Casting the greatest reproach upon him, and making ourselves wiser than he? What, to shew that he is the Author of a Religion every way worthy to come from God; a Religion most apparently calculated to promote the glory of God, and the happiness of man, private and social, present and future? This, I own, is making ourselves wiser than the Author of our Faith in the same sense, and no other, as we make ourselves wiser than the Creator of the world, when, by the right use of that Reason which he hath given us, we shew his infinite wisdom in framing it.

But shall Ministers presume to do what Christ and his Apostles did not? And, good Sir, do not they do this when they make entire discourses, of a great length, nay and several, upon single subjects, as upon a particular doctrine or duty of Christianity, methodize them according to the rules of art, collect under distinct heads those things which lie dispersed in the word of God, and digest into a regular body the scattered parts and branches of Christian doctrines, as in Catechisms and other Summaries of Religion? By all which, according to this new way of thinking, they
they reproach the Scriptures as wanting perspicuity, fulness, method and order, or something else; nor is there any way of amending this but by a Minister's contenting himself barely to read the Scriptures; though this would hardly content the people, who would be ready to think they could do this as well themselves, without being beholden to a Minister for it.

Only consider the character and office of our blessed Saviour, and the circumstances of his Ministry. Our divine Master planted a new Religion, wrought miracles, taught with authority, spent less than four years in his whole Ministry; during which time he did not confine his teaching to one single place, but went up and down doing good, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. And I hope, all these things laid together, he needed not that I should make any excuse for him (to use a modest and pious phrase of your own) which you reckon I ought to have done, when I could make excuses for the Heathen. The wisdom is obvious to every one of the method he took. But what is all this to the ordinary Ministers of the Gospel, who are no workers of miracles, do not teach with authority in the same sense Christ did, are not infallible teachers of a new Religion, but fallible expounders of one already fully taught, and labour years togethe-
ther among the same People, who are bred up in the knowledge of the Christian Religion, have the Bible in their hands, and perhaps, as to the words of it, are many of them, as well acquainted with it as their guide himself is? As to the Apostles, we have little more than the substance of their doctrine, either in the Acts or in their Epistles, as it could not indeed have been otherwise without swelling the Records of our Religion to an inconvenient bulk; besides that some of the same observations made concerning our Saviour will hold of them too.

Because in opposition to the way of representing the work of conversion by some men, as of such a nature that Reason and consideration have little or no influence upon it, and the means made use of are not so properly the means as an arbitrary condition of the change produced, an immediate and irresistible operation of the Holy Spirit doing all, and Faith as a moral cause or motive nothing; because in opposition to this false account of the matter (as I cannot but think it) I make the change of the heart in conversion, under the influences of divine Grace, to be the effect of rational conviction, and that of serious consideration, and suppose that it is by means of this latter, and not so directly, or immediately, that the promises and threatenings of the Gospel produce their intended
intended effect, you charge me *, for daring to talk after this manner, with despising Christ's way of converting souls as indirect and round about, and as taking upon me to shew a more direct and ready way to heaven, and as relying, not upon the Holy Spirit, but upon the dint of Reason, in order to convey Religion into the heart (for I suppose you include me with Dr. Wisbart) Remarks, p. 14, 16, 20. and then at last, in the ebullition of your zeal against the Doctor and me, and with an enthusiasm which no man in his sober senses will reckon divine, break out in these

* In the passages referred to above, after having asserted a proper subserviency in the Gospel to promote the work of conversion, I add, Sermon, page 26. "And if it be granted that there is a real sanctifying virtue in the Gospel, under the influences of the Holy Spirit, this virtue must proceed from a fitness in the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel to beget in us the love of God, and of those qualities and actions that will render us like God; which love must be the effect of a conviction, that the things which the Gospel ascribes to God as adorable perfections, and requires of man in order to his resembling God, are in their own nature lovely and excellent. Even the promises and threatenings of the Gospel, do not, perhaps so directly (and immediately) influence the conversion of the heart to God, and our endeavours after holiness, but rather indirectly (or mediately) as they work upon our passions (of hope and fear) and thereby ingage us to consider more seriously or attentively, than we should otherwise, the reasonableness of Religion, the intrinsic value and native beauty of holiness, and great excellence of all those divine and spiritual attainments which Christianity obliges us to aspire after."
these extraordinary words, "Woe to our " Saviour when he falls into the hands of " Philosophers and Rational Divines! His " enemies in his life-time called him a " madman; and what do these men call him " when they tell us he used a method in " preaching fit only to please children and " fright fools?" Really, Sir, I can hardly forbear catching a little of the contagion, and crying out with an indignation, I hope better grounded and more decent and charitable, " Woe to the most reasonable Religion in the " whole world, when it falls into the hands " of men that are the avowed enemies of " Reason; the Goths and Vandals of the " Christian Church! Woe to the Rational " Divines should they fall under the power " of blind and merciless bigots!"

But to return from our transports; let me appeal to yourself as judge, when the hot fit is over, if your distemper be intermitting—Whether the whole glory of our conversion is not ascribed to Christ in the passages just now quoted out of the Sermon? To the Gospel he taught, and the Spirit he communicates? Is not Christ stiled the glorious subject of the Gospel-Revelation, as well as the divine Author of it, of whose person and offices, his life and death, &c. and astonishing affection to the children of men, every faithful Minister of Christ is supposed to discourse with pleasure, and to take every opportunity of
of returning to them, and pressing the duties of the christian life from these motives? And is it not further allowed that he is the best preacher of Christ, whose way of preaching is best fitted to convince men of their need of Christ, and to bring them to trust in him for grace and glory, according to the tenor of his promises, and to esteem and love him, in the way which he himself describes? (Serm. p. 26, 27.) It is true, consideration is made necessary on our part (in the Scripture, if I mistake not, as well as the Sermon, and, if it was not, instead of teaching a more direct I should have taught a more round about way to heaven than Christ did, contrary to what I am accused of doing) and, more than this, I suppose it to be the Minister's part to assist his hearers in the practice of this duty, setting before them the subjects of consideration in a proper and affecting light; among others, the grounds of that divine affection of love which is every where in the New Testament represented as the perfection of Religion, and in which the conversion of the heart to God does principally consist, as laid in the real loveliness of the object; the nature of the christian blessedness; the necessity of holiness, not barely as the condition of obtaining this blessedness, but an essential qualification for the enjoyment of it: to produce the love of God as the most amiable Being,
Being, the love of holiness as holiness, and the hatred of sin as sin (of which I am speaking in that place, and) which a bare abstinence from the outward act of sin, the bare promise or threatening, without any sense and consideration of the nature of the objects, is not of itself sufficient to do; they may, indeed, immediately produce hope and fear, or great emotions and raptures of joy, upon a persuasion of our being interested in the promises, and exempted from the threatenings, especially when this is apprehended to be by an absolute grace, which leaves out others. And it is sad to consider, that conversion is too often placed in these affections to the ruin of many souls. But the love before described, the love of the righteous Lord, and of righteousness, is, ordinarily at least, the fruit of knowledge and consideration, under the conspiring influences of the Divine Spirit. If herein I am mistaken you would have done well to have set me right; which you have not attempted by a single argument, or what hath the face of one, and you cannot imagine I have my notions so much at command, that I can part with them as with my money, whenever a stern inquisitor bids me deliver them; or that if it was in my power I ought to do it, to avoid suffering for them. But enough of this. To proceed now to another article.
Because the Author of the Queries (Query 21.) had allowed that there might have been times when a dogmatical way of asserting things without proving them from Reason, or Scripture, (for impertinent Quotations from Scripture are no proofs) and raising the passions of people in a mechanical way was practised by some men, without naming them or their Party, (by mechanical, meaning whatever strikes the imagination, and works up the affections without imparting any light to the understanding, or receiving any assistance from it) you will needs have it I tell the world that Christ took a dogmatical way in his teaching (notwithstanding his proving the truth of his Mission, and consequently of his Doctrine, by miracles and other ways.) Nay, you roundly assert the dogmatical way of preaching is the phrase I give to Christ's, and that I am sensible the mechanical way of raising mens passions was the very way that Christ took. (Rem. p. 13, and 18.) This sounds as if you really thought that Christ was a dogmatical and mechanical Preacher; but be your thoughts what they will, I assure you, Sir, I should reckon it a very high dishonour to our blessed Lord to say any such thing of him. Nor hath the Author of the Queries said any thing like it, unless his supposing it of certain Preachers must be construed to this sense.

I have
I have heard indeed of some men who fancied such a proper commutation of persons betwixt Christ and them, that their sins are Christ's sins, and Christ's righteousness is their righteousness; not barely as to the effects, but the things themselves, mutually transferred by imputation; in which this doctrine is almost the reverse of that of Transubstantiation, and quite as unintelligible; the same individual qualities, in one case, wandering from subject to subject, while, in the other, the substance of the bread and wine is changed into the body and blood of Christ, the accidents or qualities still remaining. But I cannot find the maintainers of this communicatio idiomatum have ever carried their notion so far as to say, that whoever takes notice of any little peculiarity, error, or imperfection in these unhappy favourites, does, ipso facto, impute the same to Jesus Christ, and Christ takes them on himself, if truly theirs. I beg, Sir, for the future, you will not make me say what I never said, and abhor saying. Let the Reader have my own words, without mutilation, or addition, or any of your stretching paraphrases and consequences. Charity I expect none, no, not pagan charity, much less christian, I know some men too well for that; but for credit, if not for conscience, sake, let us have a little justice; do not, either to gratify your own spleen, or that of another man, be guilty
of doing what in a court of human judicature would be deemed an iniquity to be punished by the Judge.

To the instances of false-witnessing already mentioned give me leave to add a most notorious one from p. 17. of your Remarks. You can I see leave out or put in words at pleasure, as best serves the design you have, to blacken and defame. In your quotation, p. 16. you, not quite so fairly as cunningly, drop those words which would have shewn the passage to be nothing at all to your purpose; but here of your great bounty you insert the following ones of your own, printing them in the same character with mine, that the Reader might imagine the whole to have been transcribed from me, We shall love and thank God more (sc. as the effect of this new way of preaching) than we should do by Christ's way of preaching. After which my own words begin, For such a man contemplates God, &c. You need not be told that I had not been saying a word in that place (Pref. to the Proofs of a Future State *) of

* It may not be disagreeable to the Reader to have the whole passage set before him; "Whoever demonstrates the intrinick beauty of holiness, and the foundation which the commands of the Gospel have in the reason of mens minds, and the nature of things; who ever goes further, and shews the doctrines of Christianity to be either the result of the best and purest Reason, an improvement upon it, or not contrary to it, does good service to the cause of the Gospel, and, if
of Christ's way of preaching, and that it is quite foreign to my subject. But no matter for that, having begun to fling dirt you was resolved I should have enough of it. Let me further ask you a few civil questions—Where do I acknowledge that my way of preaching—

"he does it from an inward veneration to Christ and his Religion, is to be esteemed a better friend to both than another, who, in all matters of faith or practice, looks only to the evidence and authority of Revelation; which is putting the Christian Religion upon much the same level with the Jewish. Among the doctrines of the Gospel, which we should expect to be not only consistent with Reason, but taught by it, that of future recompences is one; and when the Christian finds that this is actually the case, that Reason proclaims a Judgment to come as well as Revelation, though it does not set it in so clear and affecting a view, he hath a pleasure which the man who never observed this harmony between Reason and Revelation, however pious he may be, is a stranger to; and, other things being equal, is less likely to make shipwreck of Faith and a good Conscience. Nay, the homage which such a one pays to the Divine Being is more compleat; for he contemplates God both as the God of Nature and the God of Grace, and hears him speaking to him in divers manners, by his Works, and in his Word, by his own Conscience, by the universal Reason of mankind, by the Prophets and Apostles, and by his own Son, the brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express image of his Person; he attends to the voice of God in whatever way directed to him, and reverences every notification of his will, and certainly then is very unjustly charged with not having a due regard to Revelation, which is one of those ways in which God hath manifested himself to his creatures, and by him esteemed the most perfect, because his regard to that is not joined with a neglect of all the rest."
preaching is never used by Christ or his Apostles *? Where have I said that Christ used a method of preaching fit only to please children and fright fools? Or, Where have I given you any ground for that scandalous suggestion, That I do not believe the Scriptures are able to make men wise to salvation? Or, Where but seem to complain that St. Paul reasoned upon nothing? Though you have

* N. B. The lower rank of Readers, for whose use Mr. B. must be presumed to have published his Book, which is suited to them only, when they hear me charged with a new way of Preaching, which he says is acknowledged by myself to be so, will be apt presently to conclude, either that I preach some new doctrine not taught by Christ and his Apostles, and not barely plead for the reasonableness and excellency of that which they taught; or that I suppress some doctrine of theirs, laying aside for instance the promises and threatenings of the Gospel, and not merely contend for the necessity of considering that these promises and threatenings may produce the effect designed by them, viz. the conversion of the heart to God. Which latter is the truth of the case. And there is too much room to suspect Mr. B--'s willingness that his Readers should thus understand him, for where else is my crime? But if this were his view, his accusing me of a new way of preaching, having nothing to support it, cannot be cleared of the greatest uncharitableness. It would have been impertinent, and something worse, to bring the promises and threatenings of the Gospel into my discourse, if I had not believed the accomplishment of them; and much more to talk of their usefulness to lead men to consideration by working upon their passions, at the same time insinuating to my hearers, that the object of their hope or fear was purely chimerical. So that the only thing on which the Remarker can ground this vile innuendo is an argument of the contrary to what he would infer from it.
have been pleased to use these more than friendly freedoms with me, I can scarcely think you take them to be a part of that liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. For my own part, I do not know he hath given his followers any such licence as this, to say all manner of evil against others, falsely, for his sake. On the contrary, to those who are thus used, he says, Blessed are ye.

The use and pertinence of what you add about Episcopius, Archbishop Tillotson, Dr. Clarke, &c. it is hard to divine, unless to help extend your bulky Pamphlet to the number of twenty four pages, and to draw a further odium upon the Author of the Sermon, as if he was a flavish admirer of those celebrated writers, and espoused their notions, right or wrong; particularly, that of Mr. Locke, that the wicked after death shall have no Sense or Being, which you say I mention without blaming him for it. False again. Since I spend several pages in disproving Mr. Locke's interpretation of the first threatening, In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die; unless you mean, that I blamed the notion but not the man; this I own, because I thought my business was not to cenfuse the man but to confute his notion.

Though I have not by any act of mine made myself answerable for anything advanced by these great men, yet I shall take this oppo-

U 3 portunity
portunity to declare, that I honour their names, as esteeming them an honour to their Country; that I bless God for the gifts and talents he hath bestowed upon these, or any other Writers, by which they have been serviceable to mankind; that I look upon good sense, and knowledge, and truth, wherever I find them, pure or mixed, in Protestant or Papist, Orthodox or Heretick, as lawful prize, of which I make all the advantage I can; that I can distinguish between the man and his opinions, highly valuing the one while I dislike the other: and to the question, which you introduce and ask with so much triumphant scorn, These are the men that are for rational inquiries, and free thoughts, and shall the Dissenters lackey after them? I answer, by no means; either after them, or any other men, however named or reverenced, if by lackeying you mean taking things upon their authority, and not that of the Scripture; though I will frankly own that, were I to take my faith upon trust, it should be from those that appear to have used the most pains to find out the truth; not from those who while they assume a power to dictate, and determine for others, seldom or never think and reason for themselves. If by lackeying you understand imitating them in such things as a man verily believes to be laudable, I reply, not after them only, but after any other persons, be they
they who they will, in whom we find things worthy of our regard and imitation; for I must own I hate that narrow way of thinking, which confines merit to any particular Party, or neglects and undervalues it when it is found in any other.

I thank you for the honourable mention you make of those two Persons whose memory will be ever precious to me, with whatever sinister view you might do it. It is with pleasure I recollect the example they gave of the reality and excellence of every christian virtue in their own lives; how far their parental instructions were from having anything lower, austere, and discouraging in them, and their government from being severe and rigid; and that they finished life with great christian decency, not busied in spreading scandal against their fellow-Christians, not with their spirits imbittered and ruffled by envious and uncharitable passions, but wholly taken up in exercises becoming their age, and in preparation for that better world on which they were about to enter. I repeat my thanks, Sir, for your having given me an opportunity to offer up this small tribute of grateful acknowledgement to the memory of those, to whom, under the supreme Author of my Being, I am so much indebted. If they were no philosophers, as you tell the world they were not, yet that they had no
aversion to philosophy they shewed by giving their Son a liberal education.

After having poured out all this calumny from the fulness of your heart, or some body's else, you conclude, in a most surprising manner, with a solemn appeal to heaven, calling God to record upon your soul (as you had done before in your Letter to the Reverend Mr. D——) To what? Not that you were not conscious to any evil passion by which you were biased; but, directly, that you did not write out of envy (I suppose you intend this of other passions too) but because you could not be silent to see the way that our Lord took in preaching vilified. But, Sir, had you not thought your manner of writing would naturally make your Readers suspect the contrary, what need was there of this unusual appeal, and repeated too? As the Psalmist's words would have been more modest, so, the world will think, more proper and reasonable too, in your case, Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

You must allow me, while it is in my thoughts, to be your remembrancer of a friendly admonition you received some years since from a Reverend and Learned Doctor in L——n, on a like occasion, but which by your practice you seem to have forgotten,
Not to take the Devil's work out of his hands, and turn accuser of the brethren, which of all persons a good man hath the least warrant to do.

Upon the whole, your Pamphlet serves but the more to confirm me in my resolution, not tamely to submit my Faith or Practice to the haughty dictates of any man, or party of men whatsoever; and in my notion of the necessity of men making more use of their Reason in religious matters, than they ordinarily do; and that Ministers especially should study well the foundations, and immutable nature, of moral good and evil; since to their not doing this it must in a great measure be ascribed, that persons of sincere piety can be guilty of the most shameful indecencies of passion, and even of things which the censorious world will be apt to call by a worse name, and yet put all to the account of christian zeal, making a kind of merit of that part of their conduct which a man of natural honour and benevolence, without much sense of Religion, would blush to imitate.

And now, Sir, I can truly say, that I am sorry for your having publickly exposed yourself, as you have done, in the judgment of all unprejudiced and sensible Readers, who are acquainted with the truth and merits of the cause; and, as for the rest, you
you may, in case you think it worth your while, please yourself with the ignorant flatteries they bestow upon you. It was with no little concern that I found myself obliged to write to you in this manner. But though, I confess, there are not many compliments in what I here send you, the occasion not admitting them, yet I would fain believe that there is nothing that offends against Religion and good manners. It is without my being aware of it, if I have let any thing of that nature escape me. You know, Sir, notwithstanding some Letters written by you to two very worthy Divines in this neighbourhood which were shewn me on the same argument, and in the like opprobrious file, I continued silent; I drew up an answer indeed, once and again, but suppressed it, being willing to try if I could not this way overcome you, and loath, if it could be avoided, to give you any disturbance in your old age. And even now that you have carried the affair into the publick, and made the world judges of it, endeavouring to possess all you can influence with the same ill opinion you yourself have of me, I should, I believe, have trusted the issue to the judgment of disinterested persons, without any more ado, if several of my friends had not again and again told me, that I should be wanting to myself, to the cause
of truth and liberty, and even to you, Reverend Sir, if I suffered so many heavy charges brought against me to pass uncontradicted, and uncensured. One thing that helped to determine me was, that I perceived your authority began already to be quoted. What, said a man of great zeal and little knowledge, to another that would not submit to his opinion concerning the sense of some passages in St. Paul's Epistles, You are one of those too that are for a new Translation of the Bible! But pray, let us know when the Apostle is to be believed, and when not.

I shall conclude my Letter with a few good wishes, viz. That the Ministers of the Gospel may have salt in themselves, and peace one with another, especially having so many other difficulties and discouragements to struggle with. For you, Reverend Sir, that what remains of the evening of your days may be calm and serene, useful and happy; and when the time comes for your departure out of this world, you may leave it in a more Christian temper than that which you at present discover. And finally, for myself, that in simplicity and godly sincerity I may have my conversation in the world, not giving any real ground for reproach; and then, whatever quarter it comes from, not troubling myself about it, regarding it only as an exercise of that charity and pati-
patience which I desire may always have possession of my breast. These are my unfeigned prayers to God, in which, I hope, notwithstanding any other differences between us, you will join with,

Reverend Sir,

Your once obliged, and

ever faithful Servant,

Henry Grove.
POSTSCRIPT.

Dr. Wishart is such a strange man that I doubt nothing but Reason and Argument will do any good upon him. It will be to little purpose to bring railing accusations against him, to pelt him with ill language, and exclaim, when you do not like an expression, because you do not understand it, Was this man past all blushing? As these are methods which the Doctor is above using himself, so he knows how to despise them when made use of against him by others. Nay, you will scarce make a convert of him, should you be able to produce twenty more such notable sayings of good men on their death-beds, as that of his Father in Law Mr. Halyburton, who, we have your word for it, was a much greater man than the Doctor; which, I suppose, you expect we should believe on the credit of this weighty sentence*, O Sirs, I dread mightily that rational

* Since the above was sent to the Press, I am able, by the assistance of an ingenious Friend, to set the matter relating to Mr. Halyburton in a clearer light than I could
tional sort of Religion is coming among us!
Now, so far am I from dreading this, pro-
vided this Religion which some men are so
apprehensive of be truly rational, that I ven-
ture to say, come and welcome; since what-
ever Religion is rational, in the propriety of
the term, must needs be divine. I hope,
Sir,
could before; not having seen the memoirs of his life
till very lately. It is not easy to produce from any
Author, the Remarker himself always excepted, so fla-
grant an instance of unfair quotation as this of Mr. Hal-
burton's dying words. Would one have thought that he
had immediately explained himself, what he meant by
a rational Religion, when he faith that he dreaded migh-
tily that such a Religion was coming in among us? And
that the explanation added shews him to have intended
quite another thing than he is cited for by the Remarker?
Yet this is actually the case. His words, as they are
related by the Collector of them, are, O Sirs, I dread
mightily that a rational sort of Religion is coming in
among us! I mean by it a Religion that consists in a bare
attendance on outward duties and ordinances, without the
power of godliness. (Memoirs of his Life, p. 199.) I
have transcribed the passage, that the Reader may judge
how little trust is to be given to some men, when they
are alleging authorities to countenance an absurd opi-
nion, or to support an ill-natured accusation of an ad-
versary. The Prefacer to these Memoirs (who I am in-
formed is an old Minister still living in the neighbour-
hood of St. Andrew's, and Brother in Law to Mr. Ha-
lyburton) says p. 4. of that Preface—
"As to what we have of his dying words annexed
"to the memoirs of his life, it is but a little we assure
"you of what he spoke the last five days before his
"death; some of the sweetest and most favoury dif-
courses he had are wholly lost, being so mangled by
"the Writer that we were forced to drop them; for
"great care was taken not to insert any thing but what "he
Sir, though the Doctor was but a little man, a person of whose weight and authority you had no great apprehension, when you published your Pamphlet, you will now allow him to be somebody, since the Magistrates and Town Council of Edinburgh, agreeable to the inclinations (as it is thought) of most of the

he spoke. The occasion of this was, The Writer was forced to stand at a distance, and out of his sight, because when he observed him writing he was displeased, and would not allow it. Likewise the noise that sometimes was in the room, with People’s speaking to him, their coming in or going out, and ordering things about him, made the Writer oft lose half a sentence; neither was it possible for those that revised his dying words to help this."

Now if we compare this account with the oddness of the epithet rational applied to a Religion that consists in a bare attendance, &c. it is highly probable (as my Correspondent justly observes) that the expression used by the good man was a notional sort of Religion; and this, perhaps, is not the only instance in which a wrong hearing in the Collector of these dying words may have occasioned a wrong rehearsing of them. And it may be left to the judgment of every understanding person, whether, in the circumstances above recited, it was possible for those who revised these dying words, with all their care, to make us sure of their having transmitted them to us exactly as they were spoken. But allowing the epithet rational, as it stands, to be genuine, though certainly exceeding improper to denote a mere formal outside Religion, I may appeal to the conscience of Mr. Ball, or, if he never read the Book quoted, that of the Person who furnished him with this passage, whether he really believes either Dr. Wishart or myself to be an advocate for a Religion that consists in a bare attendance on outward duties without the power of godliness; and, if not, what name this way of citing authors, in
the Members of the University, as it was with the advice of the Ministers of the Town, who are by the Foundation to be advised with in that matter, have chosen him their Principal, and the Town of Edinburgh have made choice of him to be one of their Ministers there. If I congratulate him upon this advancement, it is not so much from the personal and private regard which I have for the Doctor, though very great, as on the account of the Publick, to which he will have opportunities of being more extensively serviceable in this higher station of life; and because I am well

in which they are made to say what they are known not to mean, deserves to be called by. I make no doubt, the very Reverend Principal will join with me in dreading mightily that such a fort of Religion is coming in among us; and in thinking that whenever it prevails it will in a great measure be owing to mens discarding the use of Reason and common sense in Religion; since no man who considers things as he ought, and reasons upon them, will imagine that, when the means, as means, have no value but with regard to their end, a bare formal attendance on the external services of Religion, can be acceptable to God, or profitable to man, not answering the great design of all such duties, viz. to promote that temper of mind, and course of life, which is the very soul and vital power of all true Religion. For my own part, I see no other way of guarding against the two extremes of formality on the one hand, and enthusiasm on the other, but a sober use of our reasoning faculty, without which true Religion and false, the appearance and the reality are all upon a level.

My Correspondent adds, I am well assured that none of Mr. Halyburton's Writings which have been printed since his death were by him intended for the Publick, or finished with that view.
well satisfied, if he accepts the service, he will not deceive the expectations the world hath from his abilities and integrity.

Before I close the Postscript I would recommend to your consideration, in your calmer minutes, the following places of Scripture, among many others, *Mat.* vii. 12. *John* xv. 12. *Phil.* iv. 8. *1 Cor.* xiii. containing a description of Charity, which, I am sorry, when it is so particular and elevated, should warm and impress the hearts of Christians no more; *James* iii. 17. iv. 11, 12. Next to these, when you have leisure, you will do well to peruse some passages of the excellent Mr. Baxter, that *Rational Divine*, to whose judgment, I take it, you formerly payed some regard, whatever you do now.

Mr. Baxter's *End of Doctrinal Controversies*, Chap. 16. of the State of *Heathens*, and others, that have not the Gospel; particularly, §. 6. "They think (viz., those that believe the Heathens may be saved, of whom Mr. Baxter himself was one) that the contrary minded, by over-doing, are the greatest hinderers of the Christian Faith, and promoters of infidelity (mark that) while they make it seem to contrary to God's own attributes, and to human interest, and to be a doctrine not of glad but of saddest tidings to mankind, viz. That none shall be saved that hear not the Gospel, when
it is few comparatively that ever heard it, or can hear it."

And again, § 37. "Having delivered that in this great question, which seemeth to me agreeable to God's word, I advise those that use to assault such things with reproach, which they find reproached by their party, to remember that God is love, and Christ is the Saviour of the world, and the pharisaical appropriators of mercy and salvation seldom know what spirit they are of."

Saints Everlasting Rest, Pref. to the Second Part, § 5. "Another great exception of the same man is, that, I seek to satisfy Reason so much of the Scriptures authority. —It is too near the Socinian way.—Is it not a shame that learned men should charge this very opinion in Chillingworth, Dr. Hammond, and others, as guilty of Socinianism?—How could all the wits in the world do more to advance Socinianism than these men do, by making men believe that only the Socinians have Reason for their Religion? Which, if it were true (as nothing less) who would not turn to them? And what more can be done to the disgrace and ruin of Christianity, than to make the world believe we have no Reason for it?"

And again, § 8. "If Reason were of no more use here then some make it, as
"it were in vain to preach or write in this
point (for Christianity) so it would follow,
that he that is drunk or mad, or an in-
fant (if not a brute) were the fittest to
make a Christian; which is so vile an
imagination, that I dare say, he that hath
the best and rightest Reason, and by consi-
deration makes the most use of it is the best
Christian, and doth God best service; and
that all sin is on the contrary, for want
of right Reason, and the using it by con-
ideration. But, methinks I should not need
to plead for Reason, till beasts can speak and
plead against me. But yet I must tell you
if you heard the accusation, you would
excuse my apology. If none but the ign-
orant be an enemy to knowledge, sure
none but the unreasonable is an enemy to
Reason."

"I perceive not that any considerable number
are troubled with doubtings of the truth
of the Christian Faith, in a prevalent de-
gree, who are well convinced of these an-
tecedent verities of the Deity, and of the
natural obligation and necessity of holiness,
and of the immortality of the Soul, or of
a future life of rewards and punishment,
and that live in any reasonable conformity
to those natural principles which they
profess; for when natural evidence hath
sufficiently convinced a man that he is
X 2 " obliged
"obliged to be holy, in absolute obedience
and love to his Creator, through the hopes
and fears of another life, he is very much
prepared to close with the design and doc-
trine of the Gospel, which is so far from
contradicting this, that it doth but confirm
it, and shew us the way by which it may
most certainly be brought to pass. And
therefore my observation and experiences
constrain me to think, that there is no
point I have insisted on which so much
calls for my vindication, as the third,
about the life to come. I know there is
a sort of over-wise, and over-doing Di-
vines, who will tell their followers in
private that the method of this Treatise is
perverse, as appealing too much to natu-
ral light, and over-valuing human Reason;
and that I should have done no more, but
shortly tell men, that all which God
speaketh in his word is true; and that
propria luce it is evident that the Scrip-
ture is the Word of God; and that to all
God's elect he will give his Spirit to cause
them to discern it; and that this much
alone had been better than all these dis-
putes and reasons: but these overwise
men, who need themselves no Reason for
their Religion, and judge accordingly of
others, and think that those men who
rest not in the authority of Jesus Christ
should rest in theirs, are many of them
"
To what you say, p. 24. against taking the Confeffion of Candidates for the Miniftry only in Scripture words, let Mr. Baxter anfwer, Saints Everlafting Refh, Preface to the Second Part,—"Two things have fet the Church on fire, and been the plagues of it above one thousand years. 1. Enlarging our Creed, and making more fundamentals than ever God made. 2. Composing, and fo imposing, our Creeds and Confeffions in our own words and phraſes. When men have learned more manners and humility than to accuse God's language as too general and obscure (as if they could mend it) and have more dread of God, and compaffion on themselves, than to make thofe to be fundamentals or certainties which God never made fo; and when they reduce their Confeffions, (1.) To their due extent. And, (2.) To Scripture phrase (that Diffen ters may not scruple fubfcribing), then, and (I think) never till then, fhall the Church have peace about Doctrinals. It feems to me

X 3
no heinous Socinian notion which Chillingworth is blamed for, viz. Let all men believe the Scripture, and that only, and endeavour to believe it in the true sense (and promise this) and require no more of others, and they shall find this not only a better, but the only, means to suppress heresy, and restore unity."
FOUR
ESSAYS
ON
Benevolence, Benevolence, Novelty, and the Human Soul.
1714.
ESSAY I.

On the Pleasure of Beneficence.


MAN may be considered in two views, as a reasonable, and as a social being; capable of becoming himself either happy or miserable, and of contributing to the happiness or misery of his fellow creatures. Suitably to this double capacity, the contriver of human nature hath wisely furnished it with two principles of action, self-love and benevolence; designed one of them to render man wakeful to his own personal interest, the other to dispose him for giving his utmost assistance to all engaged in the same pursuit. This is such an account of our frame, so agreeable to Reason, so much for

* These Four Essays were first printed in the Eighth Volume of the Spectator. No. 588, 601, 626, 635.
for the honour of our Maker, and the credit of our species, that it may appear somewhat unaccountable what should induce men to represent human nature as they do under characters of disadvantage, or, having drawn it with a little and fordid aspect, what pleasure they can possibly take in such a picture. Do they reflect that it is their own, and, if we will believe themselves, is not more odious than the original?

One of the first that talked in this lofty strain of our nature was Epicurus. Benevolence, would his followers say, is all founded in weakness; and, whatever he pretended, the kindness that passeth between men and men is by every man directed to himself. This, it must be confessed, is of a piece with the rest of that hopeful philosophy, which having patched man up out of the four elements, attributes his Being to Chance, and derives all his actions from an unintelligible declination of atoms. And for these glorious discoveries the Poet is beyond measure transported in the praises of his hero, as if he must needs be something more than man, only for an endeavour to prove that man is in nothing superior to beasts.

In this school was Mr. Hobbes instructed to speak after the same manner, if he did not rather draw his knowledge from an observation of his own temper; for he somewhere unluckily lays down this as a rule, "That
That from the similitudes of thoughts and passions of one man to the thoughts and passions of another, whatsoever looks into himself, and considers what he doth when he thinks, hopes, fears, &c. and upon what grounds, he shall hereby read and know what are the thoughts and passions of all other men upon the like occasions." Now we will allow Mr. Hobbes to know best how he was inclined; but in earnest, I should be heartily out of conceit with myself, if I thought myself of this unamiable temper, as he affirms, and should have as little kindness for my self as for any body in the world. Hitherto I always imagined that kind and benevolent propensions were the original growth of the heart of man, and, however checked and overtoped by counter inclinations that have since sprung up within us, have still some force in the worst of tempers, and a considerable influence on the best. And, methinks, it is a fair step towards the proof of this, that the most beneficent of all beings is he who hath an absolute fulness of perfection in himself, who gave existence to the universe, and so cannot be supposed to want that which he communicated, without diminishing from the plenitude of his own power and happiness.

The Philosophers before mentioned have indeed done all that in them lay to invalidate this
this argument; for placing the gods in a state of the most elevated blessedness, they describe them as selfish as we poor miserable mortals can be, and shut them out from all concern for mankind, upon the score of their having no need of us. But if he that siteth in the heavens wants not us, we stand in continual need of him; and surely, next to the survey of the immense treasures of his own mind, the most exalted pleasures he receives is from beholding millions of creatures, lately drawn out of the gulph of non-existence, rejoicing in the various degrees of being and happiness imparted to them.

And as this is the true, the glorious character of the Deity, so in forming a reasonable creature he would not, if possible, suffer his image to pass out of his hands unadorned with a resemblance of himself in this most lovely part of his nature. For what complacency could a mind, whose love is as unbounded as his knowledge, have in a work so unlike himself; a creature that should be capable of knowing and conversing with a vast circle of objects, and love none but himself? What proportion would there be between the head and the heart of such a creature, its affections and its understanding? Or could a society of such creatures, with no other bottom but self-love on which to maintain a commerce, ever flourish? Reason, it is certain, would oblige every man to pursue
of Beneficence.

pursue the general happiness, as the means to procure and establish his own; and yet if, besides this consideration, there were not a natural instinct prompting men to desire the welfare and satisfaction of others, self-love, in the defiance of the admonitions of Reason, would quickly run all things into a state of war and confusion.

As nearly interested as the soul is in the fate of the body, our provident Creator saw it necessary, by the constant returns of hunger and thirst, those importunate appetites, to put it in mind of its charge; knowing, that if we should eat and drink no oftener than cold abstracted speculation should put us upon these exercises, and then leave it to Reason to prescribe the quantity, we should soon refine ourselves out of this bodily life. And indeed it is obvious to remark, that we follow nothing heartily, unless carried to it by inclinations which anticipate our Reason, and, like a bias, draw the mind strongly towards it. In order, therefore, to establish a perpetual intercourse of benefits amongst mankind, their Maker would not fail to give them this generous prepossession of benevolence, if, as I have said, it were possible. And from whence can we go about to argue its impossibility? Is it inconsistent with self-love? Are their motions contrary? No more than the diurnal rotation of the earth is opposed to its annual; or its motion round its own center,
center, which might be improved as an illustration of self-love, to that which whirls it about the common center of the world, answering to universal benevolence. Is the force of self-love abated, or its interest prejudiced by benevolence? So far from it, that benevolence, though a distinct principle, is extremely serviceable to self-love, and then doth most service when it is least designed.

But to descend from Reason to matter of fact; the pity which arises on sight of persons in distress, and the satisfaction of mind which is the consequence of having removed them into a happier state, are instead of a thousand arguments to prove such a thing as a disinterested benevolence. Did pity proceed from a reflection we make upon our liableness to the same ill accidents we see befall others, it were nothing to the present purpose, but this is assigning an artificial cause of a natural passion, and can by no means be admitted as a tolerable account of it, because children and persons most thoughtless about their own condition, and incapable of entering into the prospects of futurity, feel the most violent touches of compassion. And then as to that charming delight which immediately follows the giving joy to another, or relieving his sorrow, and is, when the objects are numerous, and the kindness of importance, really inexpressible, what can this be owing to but a consciousness of a man's
man's having done something praise-worthy, and expressive of a great soul? Whereas, if in all this he only sacrificed to vanity and self-love, as there would be nothing brave in actions that make the most shining appearance, so nature would not have rewarded them with this divine pleasure; nor could the commendations, which a person receives for benefits done upon selfish views, be at all more satisfactory, than when he is applauded for what he doth without design; because in both cases the ends of self-love are equally answered. The conscience of approving oneself a benefactor to mankind is the noblest recompence for being so; doubtless it is, and the most interested cannot propose any thing so much to their own advantage, notwithstanding which, the inclination is nevertheless unselfish. The pleasure which attends the gratification of our hunger and thirst, is not the cause of these appetites; they are previous to any such prospect; and so likewise is the desire of doing good; with this difference, that being seated in the intellectual part, this last, though antecedent to Reason, may yet be improved and regulated by it, and, I will add, is no otherwise a virtue than as it is so.

Thus have I contended for the dignity of that nature I have the honour to partake of, and, after all the evidence produced, think I have a right to conclude, against the Motto
Motto of this Essay, that there is such a thing as generosity in the world. Though if I were under a mistake in this, I should say as Cicero in relation to the immortality of the soul, *I willingly err*; and should believe it very much for the interest of mankind to lie under the same delusion. For the contrary notion naturally tends to dispirit the mind, and sinks it into a meanness fatal to the godlike zeal of doing good. As on the other hand, it teaches people to be ungrateful, by possessing them with a persuasion concerning their benefactors, that they have no regard to them in the benefits they bestow. Now he that banishes gratitude from among men, by so doing stops up the stream of beneficence. For though in conferring kindneces, a truly generous man doth not aim at a return, yet he looks to the qualities of the person obliged, and as nothing renders a person more unworthy of a benefit, than his being without all resentment of it, he will not be extremely forward to oblige such a man.
ESSAY II.

On Benevolence.

Notwithstanding a narrow contracted temper be that which obtains most in the world, we must not therefore conclude this to be the genuine characteristick of mankind; because there are some who delight in nothing so much as in doing good, and receive more of their happiness at second hand, or by rebound from others, than by direct and immediate sensation. Now tho' these heroick souls are but few, and to appearance so far advanced above the groveling multitude, as if they were of another order of beings, yet in reality their nature is the same, moved by the same springs, and endowed with all the same essentia qualities, only cleared, refined, and cultivated.

Water is the same fluid body in winter and in summer; when it stands stiffened in ice, as when it flows along in gentle streams,
On Benevolence.

gladdening a thousand fields in its progress. It is a property of the heart of man to be diffusive; its kind wishes spread abroad over the face of the creation; and if there be those, as we may observe too many of them, who are all wrapt up in their own dear selves, without any visible concern for their species, let us suppose that their good-nature is frozen, and by the prevailing force of some contrary quality restrained in its operations. I shall therefore endeavour to assign some of the principal checks upon this generous propensity of the human soul, which will enable us to judge whether, and by what method, this most useful principle may be unfettered, and restored to its native freedom of exercise.

The first and leading cause is an unhappy complexion of body. The heathens, ignorant of the true source of moral evil, generally charged it on the obliquity of matter, which, being eternal and independent, was incapable of change in any of its properties, even by the Almighty Mind, who, when he came to fashion it into a world of beings, must take it as he found it. This notion, as most others of theirs, is a composition of truth and error. That matter is eternal, that from the first union of a soul to it, it perverted its inclinations, and that the ill influence it hath upon the mind is not to be corrected by God himself, are all very
very great errors, occasioned by a truth as evident, that the capacities and dispositions of the soul depend, to a great degree, on the bodily temper. As there are some fools, others are knaves, by constitution; and particularly, it may be said of many, that they are born with an illiberal cast of mind, the matter which composes them is tenacious as birdlime, and a kind of cramp draws their hands and their hearts together, that they never care to open them unless to grasp at more. It is a melancholy lot this; but attended with one advantage above theirs, to whom it would be as painful to forbear good offices, as it is to these men to perform them; that whereas persons naturally beneficent often mistake instinct for virtue, by reason of the difficulty of distinguishing when one rules them and when the other.

Men of the opposite character may be more certain of the motive that predominates in every action. If they cannot confer a benefit with that ease and frankness which are necessary to give it a grace in the eye of the world, in requital, the real merit of what they do is enhanced by the opposition they surmount in doing it. The strength of their virtue is seen in rising against the weight of nature, and every time they have the resolution to discharge their duty, they make a sacrifice of inclination to conscience, which is always too grateful to let its followers go without
without suitable marks of its approbation. Perhaps the entire cure of this ill quality is no more possible, than of some distempers that descend by inheritance. However, a great deal may be done by a course of benevolence obstinately persisted in; this, if any thing, being a likely way of establishing a moral habit, which shall be somewhat of a counterpoise to the force of mechanism. Only it must be remembered, that we do not intermit, upon any pretence whatsoever, the custom of doing good, in regard if there be the least cessation, nature will watch the opportunity to return, and in a short time to recover the ground it was so long in quitting: for there is this difference between mental habits, and such as have their foundation in the body, that these last are in their nature more forcible and violent, and, to gain upon us, need only not to be opposed; whereas the former must be continually reinforced with fresh supplies, or they will languish and die away. And this suggests the reason why good habits, in general, require longer time for their settlement than bad; and yet are sooner displaced; the reason is, that vicious habits (as drunkenness for instance) produce a change in the body, which the others not doing, must be maintained the same way they are acquired, by the mere dint of industry, resolution, and vigilance.
Another thing which suspends the operations of benevolence, is the love of the world, proceeding from a false notion men have taken up, that an abundance of the world is an essential ingredient in the happiness of life. Wordly things are of such a quality as to lessen upon dividing, so that the more partners there are, the less must fall to every man's private share. The consequence of this is, that they look upon one another with an evil eye, each imagining all the rest to be embarked in an interest, that cannot take place but to his prejudice. Hence are those eager competitions for wealth or power; hence one man's success becomes another's disappointment; and, like pretenders to the same mistress, they can seldom have common charity for their rivals. Not that they are naturally disposed to quarrel and fall out, but it is natural for a man to prefer himself to all others, and to secure his own interest first. If that which men esteem their happiness were like the light, the same sufficient and unconfined good, whether ten thousand enjoy the benefit of it, or but one, we should see men's good-will, and kind endeavours, would be as universal.

Homo qui erranti comiter monstrat viam,
Quasi lumen de suo lumine accendat, facit,
Nibilominus ipsi luceat, cum illi accenderit.
But, unluckily, mankind agree in making choice of objects which inevitably engage them in perpetual differences. Learn therefore, like a wise man, the true estimate of things. Desire not more of the world than is necessary to accommodate you in passing through it; look upon every thing beyond, not as useless only, but burthensome. Place not your quiet in things, which you cannot have without putting others beside them, and thereby making them your enemies; and which, when attained, will give you more trouble to keep, than satisfaction in the enjoyment. Virtue is a good of a nobler kind; it grows by communication, and so little resembles earthly riches, that the more hands it is lodged in, the greater is every man's particular stock. So, by propagating and mingling their fires, not only all the lights of a branch together cast a more extensive brightness, but each single light burns with a stronger flame. And lastly, take this along with you, that if wealth be an instrument of pleasure, the greatest pleasure it can put into your power, is that of doing good. It is worth considering, that the organs of sense act within a narrow compass, and the appetites will soon say they have enough. Which of the two therefore is the happier man? He who confining all his regard to the gratification of his own appe-
On Benevolence.

appetites, is capable but of short fits of pleasure? Or the man, who, reckoning himself a sharer in the satisfactions of others, especially those which come to them by his means, enlarges the sphere of his happiness?

The last enemy to benevolence I shall mention is uneasiness of any kind. A guilty, or a discontented mind, a mind ruffled by ill fortune, disconcerted by its own passions, fowerd by neglect, or fretting at disappointments, hath not leisure to attend to the necessity or reasonableness of a kindness desired, nor a taste for those pleasures which wait on beneficence, which demand a calm and unpolluted heart to relish them. The most miserable of all beings is the most envious; as on the other hand, the most communicative is the happiest. And if you are in search of the seat of perfect love and friendship, you will not find it till you come to the region of the blessed, where happiness, like a refreshing stream, flows from heart to heart in an endless circulation, and is preserved sweet and untainted by the motion. It is old advice, if you have a favour to request of any one, to observe the softest times of address, when the soul, in a flush of good humour, takes a pleasure to shew itself pleased. Persons conscious of their own integrity, satisfied with themselves, and their condition, and full of confidence in a supreme Being, and the hope of immortality,
survey all about them with a flow of goodwill. As trees which like their soil, they shoot out in expressions of kindness, and bend beneath their own precious load, to the hand of the gatherer. Now if the mind be not thus easy, it is an infallible sign that it is not in its natural state. Place the mind in its right posture, it will immediately discover its innate propension to beneficence.
Mr. Spectator,

When I have seen young Puss playing her wanton gambols, and with a thousand antick shapes express her own gaiety at the same time that she moved mine, while the old Grannum hath sat by with a most exemplary gravity, unmoved at all that past, it hath made me reflect what should be the occasion of humours so opposite in two creatures, between whom there was no visible difference but that of age; and I have been able to resolve it into nothing else but the force of novelty.

In every species of creatures, those who have been least time in the world appear best pleased with their condition: for, besides that to a new com'er the world hath a freshness on it that strikes the sense after a most agreeable manner, Being itself, unattended with any
any great variety of enjoyments, excites a sensation of pleasure. But as age advances, every thing seems to wither, the senses are disgusted with their old entertainments, and existence turns flat and insipid. We may see this exemplified in mankind. The Child, let him be free from pain, and gratified in his change of toys, is diverted with the smallest trifle. Nothing disturbs the mirth of the Boy, but a little punishment or confinement. The Youth must have more violent pleasures to employ his time. The Man loves the hurry of an active life, devoted to the pursuits of wealth or ambition. And lastly, Old Age, having lost its capacity for these avocations, becomes its own insupportable burthen. This variety may in part be accounted for by the vivacity and decay of the faculties; but I believe is chiefly owing to this, that the longer we have been in possession of Being, the less sensible is the gust we have of it; and the more it requires of adventitious amusements to relieve us from the satiety and weariness it brings along with it.

And as novelty is of a very powerful, so of a most extensive influence. Moralists have long since observed it to be the source of admiration, which lessens in proportion to our familiarity with objects, and upon a thorough acquaintance is utterly extinguished. But I think it hath not been so commonly remarked,
remarked, that all the other passions depend considerably on the same circumstance. What is it but novelty that awakens desire, enhances delight, kindles anger, provokes envy, inspires horror? To this cause we must ascribe it, that love languishes with fruition, and friendship itself is recommended by intervals of absence: hence monsters, by use, are beheld without loathing, and the most enchanting beauty without rapture. That emotion of the spirits in which passion consists, is usually the effect of surprize, and as long as it continues, heightens the agreeable or disagreeable qualities of its object; but as this emotion ceases (and it ceases with the novelty) things appear in another light, and affect us even less than might be expected from their proper energy, for having moved us too much before.

It may not be an useless inquiry how far the love of novelty is the unavoidable growth of nature, and in what respects it is peculiarly adapted to the present state. To me it seems impossible, that a reasonable creature should rest absolutely satisfied in any acquisitions whatever, without endeavouring further; for after its highest improvements, the mind hath an idea of an infinity of things still behind worth knowing, to the knowledge of which therefore it cannot be indifferent; as by climbing up a hill in the midst of a wide plain, a man hath his prospect
pect enlarged, and, together with that, the bounds of his desires. Upon this account, I cannot think he detracts from the state of the blessed, who conceives them to be perpetually employed in fresh searches into nature, and to eternity advancing into the fathomless depths of the divine perfections. In this thought there is nothing but what doth honour to these glorified spirits; provided still it be remembered, that their desire of more proceeds not from their disrelishing what they possess; and the pleasure of a new enjoyment is not with them measured by its novelty (which is a thing merely foreign and accidental) but by its real intrinsic value. After an acquaintance of many thousand years with the works of God, the beauty and magnificence of the creation fills them with the same pleasing wonder and profound awe, which Adam felt himself seized with as he first opened his eyes upon this glorious scene. Truth captivates with unborrowed charms, and whatever hath once given satisfaction will always do it; in all which they have manifestly the advantage of us, who are so much governed by sickly and changeable appetites, that we can with the greatest coldness behold the stupendous displays of omnipotence, and be in transports at the puny essays of human skill; throw aside speculations of the sublimest nature and vastest importance into some obscure corner of the mind,
mind, to make room for new notions of no consequence at all; are even tired of health, because not enlivened with alternate pain, and prefer the first reading of an indifferent author, to the second or third perusal of one whose merit and reputation are established.

Our being thus formed serves many useful purposes in the present state. It contributes not a little to the advancement of learning; for, as Cicero takes notice—That which makes men willing to undergo the fatigues of philosophical disquisitions, is not so much the greatness of objects as their novelty—It is not enough that there is field and game for the chase, and that the understanding is prompted with a restless thirst of knowledge, effectually to rouse the soul, sunk into the state of sloth and indolence; it is also necessary that there be an uncommon pleasure annexed to the first appearance of truth in the mind. This pleasure being exquisite for the time it lasts, but transient, it hereby comes to pass that the mind grows into an indifference to its former notions, and passes on after new discoveries, in hope of repeating the delight. It is with knowledge as with wealth, the pleasure of which lies more in making endless additions, than in taking a review of our old store. There are some inconveniences that follow this temper, if not guarded against, particularly this,
this, that through a too great eagerness of
something new we are many times impati-
ent of staying long enough upon a question
that requires some time to resolve it; or,
which is worse, persuade ourselves that we
are masters of the subject before we are so,
only to be at the liberty of going upon a
fresh scent; in Mr. Locke's words, we see a
little, presume a great deal, and so jump to
the conclusion.

A further advantage of our inclination for
novelty, as at present circumstantiated, is,
that it annihilates all the boasted distinctions
among mankind. Look not up with envy
to those above thee. Sounding titles, stately
buildings, fine gardens, gilded chariots, rich
equipages, what are they? They dazzle every
one but the possessor; to him that is ac-
customed to them they are cheap and re-
gardless things; they supply him not with
brighter images, or more sublime satisfactions
than the plain man may have, whose small
estate will just enable him to support the
charge of a simple unencumbered life. He
enters heedless into his rooms of state, as
you or I do under our poor sheds. The
noble paintings and costly furniture are lost
on him; he sees them not: as how can it
be otherwise, when by custom, a fabrick in-
initely more grand and finished, that of
the universe, stands unobserved by the inha-
itants, and the everlastig lamps of heaven
are
On Novelty.

are lighted up in vain, for any notice that mortals take of them? Thanks to indulgent nature, which not only placed her children originally upon a level, but still, by the strength of this principle, in a great measure preserves it, in spite of all the care of a man, to introduce artificial distinctions.

To add no more,—Is not this fondness for novelty, which makes us out of conceit with all we already have, a convincing proof of a future state? Either man was made in vain, or this is not the only world he was made for: for there cannot be a greater instance of vanity, than that to which man is liable, to be deluded from the cradle to the grave with fleeting shadows of happiness. His pleasures, and those not considerable neither, die in the possession, and fresh enjoyments do not rise fast enough to fill up half his life with satisfaction. When I see persons sick of themselves, any longer than they are called away by something that is of force to chain down the present thought; when I see them hurry from country to town, and then from the town back again into the country, continually shifting posture, and placing life in all the different lights they can think of, Surely, say I to myself, life is vain, and the man beyond expression stupid or prejudiced, who from the vanity of life cannot gather he is designed for immortality.
ESSAY IV.

On the large capacities of the Human Soul, and the perfection of happiness for which it is designed.

Sentio te sedem hominum ac domum contemplari; quae si tibi parva (ut est) ita videtur, haec celestia semper spectato; illa humana contemnito.

Cicero Somn. Scip.

If the universe be the creature of an intelligent mind, this mind could have no immediate regard to himself in producing it. He needed not to make tryal of his omnipotence, to be informed what effects were within its reach; the world as existing in his eternal idea was then as beautiful as now it is drawn forth into being; and in the immense abyss of his essence are contained far brighter scenes than will be ever set forth to view; it being impossible that the great author of nature should bound his own power by giving existence to a system of creatures so perfect that he cannot improve upon it by any other exertions of his almighty Will.
Will. Between *finite* and *infinite* there is an unmeasured interval, not to be filled up in endless ages; for which reason, the most excellent of all God's works must be equally short of what his power is able to produce as the most imperfect, and may be exceeded with the same ease.

This thought hath made some imagine, (what, it must be confessed, is not impossible) that the unfathomèd space is ever teeming with new births, the younger still inheriting a greater perfection than the elder. But as this doth not fall within my present view, I shall content myself with taking notice, that the consideration now mentioned proves undeniably, that the ideal worlds in the divine understanding yield a prospect incomparably more ample, various, and delightful, than any created world can do: and that therefore as it is not to be supposed that God should make a world merely of inanimate matter, however diversified; or inhabited only by creatures of no higher an order than brutes; so the end for which he designed his reasonable offspring is the contemplation of his works, the enjoyment of himself, and in both to be happy, having, to this purpose, endowed them with correspondent faculties and desires. He can have no greater pleasure from a bare review of his works, than from the survey of his own ideas, but we may be assured that he is well pleased in the

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satis-
satisfaction derived to beings capable of it, and, for whose entertainment, he hath erected this immense theatre. Is not this more than an intimation of our *immortality*? Man, who when considered as on his probation for a happy existence hereafter, is the most remarkable instance of divine wisdom; if we cut him off from all relation to eternity, is the most wonderful and unaccountable composition in the whole creation. He hath capacities to lodge a much greater variety of knowledge than he will be ever master of, and an unsatisfied curiosity to tread the secret paths of Nature and Providence: but, with this, his organs in their present structure, are rather fitted to serve the necessities of a vile body, than to minister to his understanding; and from the little spot to which he is chained, he can frame but wandering guesses concerning the innumerable worlds of light that encompass him, which, tho' in themselves of a prodigious bigness, do but just glimmer in the remote spaces of the heavens; and, when with a great deal of time and pains he hath laboured a little way up the steep ascent of truth, and beholds with pity the groveling multitude beneath, in a moment, his foot slides, and he tumbles down headlong into the grave.

Thinking on this, I am obliged to believe, in justice to the Creator of the world, that there is another state when man shall be better
better situated for contemplation, or rather have it in his power to remove from object to object, and from world to world, and be accommodated with senses, and other helps, for making the quickest and most amazing discoveries. How doth such a genius as Sir Isaac Newton, from amidst the darkness that involves human understanding, break forth, and appear like one of another species! The vast machine, we inhabit, lies open to him, he seems not unacquainted with the general laws that govern it; and while with the transport of a philosopher he beholds and admires the glorious work, he is capable of paying at once a more devout and more rational homage to his Maker. But, alas, how narrow is the prospect even of such a mind! And how obscure to the compass that is taken in by the ken of an angel; or of a soul but newly escaped from its imprisonment in the body!

For my part, I freely indulge my soul in the confidence of its future grandeur; it pleases me to think that I who know so small a portion of the works of the Creator, and with slow and painful steps creep up and down on the surface of this globe, shall e'er long shoot away with the swiftness of imagination, trace out the hidden springs of Nature's operations, be able to keep pace with the heavenly bodies in the rapidity of their career, be a spectator of the long chain
of events in the natural and moral worlds visit the several apartments of the creation, know how they are furnished and how inhabited, comprehend the order, and measure the magnitudes and distances of those orbs, which to us seem disposed without any regular design, and set all in the same circle; observe the dependence of the parts of each system, and (if our minds are big enough to grasp the theory) of the several systems upon one another, from whence results the harmony of the universe. In eternity a great deal may be done of this kind. I find it of use to cherish this generous ambition; for besides the secret refreshment it diffuses through my soul, it engages me in an endeavour to improve my faculties, as well as to exercise them conformably to the rank I now hold among reasonable beings, and the hope I have of being once advanced to a more exalted station.

The other, and that the ultimate end of man, is the enjoyment of God, beyond which he cannot form a wish. Dim at best are the conceptions we have of the Supreme Being, who, as it were, keeps his creatures in suspense, neither discovering, nor hiding himself; by which means, the libertine hath a handle to dispute his existence, while the most are content to speak him fair, but in their hearts prefer every trifling satisfaction to the favour of their Maker, and ridicule the good man for the singularity of his choice. Will there
there not a time come, when the free-thinker shall see his impious schemes overturned, and be made a convert to the truths he hates; when deluded mortals shall be convinced of the folly of their pursuits, and the few wise who followed the guidance of heaven, and, scorning the blandishments of sense and the sordid bribery of the world, aspired to a celestial abode, shall stand possessed of their utmost wish in the vision of the Creator?

Here the mind heaves a thought now and then towards him, and hath some transient glances of his Presence; when, in the instant it thinks itself to have the fastest hold, the object eludes its expectations, and it falls back tired and baffled to the ground. Doubtless there is some more perfect way of conversing with heavenly beings. Are not spirits capable of mutual intelligence, unless immersed in bodies, or by their intervention? Must superior natures depend on inferior for the main privilege of sociable beings, that of conversing with, and knowing each other? What would they have done had matter never been created? I suppose, not have lived in eternal solitude. As incorporeal substances are of a nobler order, so be sure, their manner of intercourse is answerably more expedite and intimate. This method of communication, we call intellectual vision, as somewhat analogous to the sense of seeing, which is the medium of our acquaintance with this visible world.
world. And in some such way can God make himself the object of immediate intuition to the blessed; and as he can it is not improbable that he will, always condescending, in the circumstances of doing it, to the weakness and proportion of finite minds. His works but faintly represent the image of his perfections, it is a second-hand knowledge: to have a just idea of him, it may be necessary that we see him as he is. But what is that? It is something that never entered into the heart of man to conceive; yet, what we can easily conceive, will be a fountain of unspeakable, of everlasting rapture. All created glories will fade and die away in his Presence. Perhaps, it will be my happiness to compare the world with the fair exemplar of it in the divine mind; perhaps, to view the original plan of those wise designs that have been executing in a long succession of ages. Thus employed in finding out his works, and contemplating their author, how shall I fall prostrate and adoring, my body swallowed up in the immensity of matter, my mind in the infinitude of his perfections!
FIVE

LETTERS

To the Author of the

St. JAMES'S JOURNAL,

CONCERNING

The PRESBYTERIANS, Civil Power, Liberty of the Will, and the Immortality of the Soul.

1722.
LETTER I.

A Defence of the Presbyterians.

Sir, Taunton, June 27, 1722.

I HOPE your Readers will pardon me, if for once I beg the favour to entertain them, by taking up a part of your paper which you could have filled much more agreeably yourself; the occasion of this request is a Letter of Cato in the London Journal, of the 16th Instant, proving, that the Church can be in no danger from the Dissenters, and therefore need not grudge them their Toleration, or fear giving them the Test Act into the bargain, which is certainly a very honest and obvious argument; but there are several passages in it which we beg leave to consider.

"The

* These Letters were first published in the St. James's Journal. N°. 10, 16, 17, 42, 47.
"The Independents, Anabaptists, and Quakers, have, he says, much more favourable opinions of the National Clergy than of the Presbyterians, (the only rivals for Church Power) from whom they apprehend, and have always found much worse usage than from the Church." This, you must know, he speaks out of a pure kindness to the Dissenters, whose interest and peace he hath very much at heart, and not to set them together by the ears. But the meaning lies so bare, that, it is to be hoped, the wiser part, at least, of every Denomination, will be cautious how they give into the snare, or by mutual jealousies destroy that happy harmony to which they owe all their credit and weight as Dissenters. If there was a time when the Presbyterians bore too hard upon those of other persuasions, it ought to be considered that this was when the spirits of the nation were chafed with civil dissensions, which left them not the power of thinking so coolly of things as they might otherwise have done, and was really more the error of the times than of the men; the true principles of liberty, both civil and religious, not having been stated with that clearness, or defended with that strength of argument, then, as they have since been by the incomparable Mr. Locke, the excellent Bishop
Presbyterians.

Bishop of *Hereford*, and other good hands. And one fault surely, committed in the times of ignorance, may be forgiven; and ought not, in justice, to be imputed to those, who, besides that they were never personally guilty themselves, are far from justifying them that were.

Did they not, on the contrary, in the beginning of Queen Anne's reign, readily concur with the two other Denominations in a Letter to their friends in New-England, in behalf of the Quakers there? Than which Letter, by the way, I hardly know whether I have seen any thing that breathes a better spirit, or is more handsomely and strongly penned on the side of liberty, in so small a compass. And, if my memory does not deceive me, the first Address to his present Majesty from the Dissenting Ministers of the three Denominations, contains a glorious testimony to the same cause. All this, methinks, might atone for one slip, not their own, and merit an act of perpetual oblivion. And, of all men, the Baptists and Quakers should be least forward to upbraid the Presbyterians of this age with what was done in a former, when they themselves would reckon it an extreme hardship to be made answer for all the extravagances that have been formerly said or done, by people passing under the same names that they are now known by.

There

* The Reverend and Learned Dr. Hoadley, now Bishop of Winchester.*
There have been fanaticks, enthusiasts, and persecutors in all forms of Religion; but it would be the unjustest thing in the world, to charge whole bodies with the faults or follies of particular men; and, in successive generations, to imagine, that tho' the persons are different, their characters and opinions must be exactly the same. At least, let there be equal dealing, that if the failings of their Predecessors must be placed to the account of the Modern Presbyterians, they may be entitled to a share in their virtues too; and, upon these terms, they need not be ashamed of their name, or blush at a comparison with their fellow-christians of other distinctions.

Now I am upon this head, there is one thing I cannot but remark, as arguing either vile disingenuity, or as gross ignorance; and that is, that though our Author carefully distinguishes between the Presbyterians and the Independents, yet that the former may not want their load, the sufferings of some in New-England on the score of their opinions, are laid to their door, while everybody knows that the Churches of New-England are of the Congregational Way: which I mention not out of any prejudice to the persons of that persuasion, (since as the American Independents are now in as generous sentiments as any of the known friends to liberty can be, so their brethren here in England,
gland, did in the year 1669 express, by Letter, their dislike of all rigorous proceedings on account of religious differences) but to shew the temper of the man. When he afterwards tells his Readers, that the Presbyterians are candidates for Church Dominion, it is a sign he does not know the men, or their scheme; there not being one of many, by what I can judge from the acquaintance I have with them, but is of opinion—that every particular Church or Society of Christian shath full power within itself to regulate its own affairs: nor are their assemblies any proof of the contrary, being no other than prudential and voluntary associations of men, whose business is not to dictate but advise, and, at most, to agree upon Rules for their own conduct, not to frame Canons and Decrees for others.

Their Priests, if his account of them be true, have hawks eyes at the Church-Preferments. And so they had need, to spy them at such a distance; and if they have the eyes, I would be glad to know who have the talons? But when did they discover such a zeal for Preferments? Was it, when some of the most considerable dignities of the Church were offered to Mr. Baxter and others, and refused? Was it, when about two thousand Ministers left their Places in the Church, because they could not keep them with a good conscience? As remarkable an example of a great
great number of men acting upon principle, as perhaps any that can be produced since the first golden age of Christianity. Such a noble contempt did the Fathers express for the Temporalities of the Church, when they must either forego them, or resolve to buy them at the price of what they held dearer than life.

And wherein have their Sons shewn themselves to be so perfectly degenerated from this excellent pattern? Many among them are not so very much inferior to the major part of the Established Clergy, but that in case they were minded to venture in the Church-Lottery, they might have the chance of a prize as well as their neighbours; and, at worst, might make a better hand of it than they do among the Dissenters. But, in regard they must offer violence to something in their bosoms, before they can bring themselves to a compliance with the present terms of Conformity, they judge it their best way to continue where they are, without giving themselves the liberty, in the mean while, to censure others, who having different views of the matter, can very honestly go greater lengths than they are able to do. They are not conscious to their having forfeited the testimony which King Charles the Second formerly gave some of the principal affer tors of the Presbyterian opinions, *viz.* "That to "his great satisfaction and comfort, he "found
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"found them persons full of affection to " him, of zeal for the peace of the Church " and of the State, and neither enemies to " Episcopacy or Liturgy; but modestly to " desire such alterations in either, a with- " out shaking foundations, might best allay " present distempers."

In short, insinuations of ambition and worldliness in others, unsupported by facts, if they prove any thing, do only betray the predominant passions of the man that makes them; and this they do too plainly, for a frank, honest nature is the furthest in the world from entertaining and propagating evil suspicions of the appearingly innocent: such a one can easily believe that others may have the same indifference to wealth and grandeur, and the same aversion to artifice and disguise, that he finds in himself:

We agree with the Author of the Journal, " That the Presbyterians are too inconsidera- " ble both for number and figure, to give the " Church any just apprehensions;" but then we beg leave to add, that their inclination to disturb the Establishment is even less, much less than their power. They are well content that the Established Church, as the fa- vourite daughter, should carry away the for- tune; nor do they envy her her beauty, tho' they think it would appear with never the less advantage, if she dressed somewhat more plainly. There is further, I doubt, too much
much truth in the observation, "That when
any grow rich, and leave estates behind
them, their Sons, for the most part, desert
the Disenting Congregations and Interest;"
but how is this more to their reproach, than
it was to St. Paul's, that Demas forsook him
out of love to the present world? That their
cause hath the fate to be espoused by so few
of the great men of the world, doth not at
all lessen it in their own esteem; for tho'
Bellarmine makes numbers and external splen-
dor marks of the true Church, I do not re-
member that any Protestant Divine or Lay-
man hath advanced such an assertion.

He compliments the Non-Subscribers with
being the most considerable for fortune and
understanding; how deservedly, let those
judge who are best able. I fancy they will
hardly take it for so great a compliment to
their understandings what he subjoins, "that
by degrees many of these will in all proba-
" bility come into the Church;" all I can say,
if they do so, is that they will act even more
inconsequentially than Cato reasons. His re-
flections on the Church of Scotland have so
little of justice or good-manners in them,
that he seems to have forgotten that the form
of government in that part of Great Britain,
is as much the Legal Establishment, as Epis-
copacy is here; and to be in a disposition to
attempt, what he faith no wise man would,
the removing of the antient land marks.

The
The truth of what he afferts concerning the 
Sacramental Tefl, I fhall not trouble myself
to dispute; I would only improve it as an
argument of the disinterestedness of the Pres-
byterians, in that their concern for the repeal
of this Act, by which, we have Cato's Au-
thority, they would be no gainer, but losers,
can be juftly attributed to nothing else but a
regard to the honour of Religion and the
Nation, which, they apprehend, suffers not
a little by the prostitution of this folemn action;
and to a principle of benevolence towards their
Protestant brethren and fellow-subjects, whom
they are difeours to have placed upon the
ffame foot with themselves for prefferment.

Before I conclude, I would beg the Reader
to look back on the general character and
behaviour of our fault-finder. He first at-
tacked the Clergy in a most outrageous man-
ner, profefledly thofe of the High Sort only,
but more covertly the whole order; in ho-
our of whom he observes, that any common
mechanick may perform what are ufually
reckoned the most peculiar parts of their
office, fuch as preaching and adminiftring
the Lord's-Supper; fo great is this Gentle-
man's fear, left the distinction fhould drop
between the Clergy and Laity in the Chri-
ftian Church! That they are the almsmen
of the people; fuch is their dignity! And,
as an instance of their ufefulnefs, and even
neeffity to the world, that tho' there have
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been near a million of them kept in constant pay for the best part of seventeen hundred years, to teach the world by their precepts, and to reform it by their examples, yet they will not pretend that Religion is plainer, the Scriptures better understood, or that mankind are more wise or virtuous for all their instructions.

His next step was to revile and libel human nature, in his draught of which he copied after good Mr. Hobbes, describing all men as knaves in principle and inclination, and virtuous only when they cannot help it, or are under no temptation to be otherwise: this is his Cant in several of the Journals. Then the Government is so unhappy as to fall under his displeasure, which, like a good subject of King George, and one that does all he can to expose the unreasonableness of the disaffection and prejudice conceived against him, he represents as ingaged in a conspiracy to destroy the Liberties of the Nation; of which good service of his there is no question, the Administration retains a grateful remembrance. After this he flies at lower game, and lays his dreadful paw on the poor Presbyterians, some imagine, with a design to make his peace with the Church, as in the former Journal he broke off from his antient allies the Republicans, to make his court to the Monarchy.
Presbyterians.

There were at Athens a sort of refuse people, whom they called αδαμαντια and οφειξυματα, as esteeming them good for little else but to be sacrificed and flung into the sea, to reconcile and propitiate the gods to others. The Presbyterians have been often put to a like use. This inclination of our Author to draw upon every one that comes in his way, or rather, like a true knight errant as he is, to ramble out of it in quest of adventures, brings to mind a witty epitaph, that I have met with, on the famous Aretin, written in Italian, and thus translated into English.

Here lies a man that no man spar'd,
When th' angry fit was on him,
Nor God himself had better far'd,
If Aretin had known him.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble Servant.

N. B. The Princes of those times were so gauled by Aretin's satyrical Writings, that, as the Historian takes notice, he came to be better known by the title of the Scourge of Princes, than under the Name of Aretin. He made Kings tributary to him by his Pen, glad that they could so redeem themselves.
It is not impossible but a certain scribner among us may flatter himself with hopes of becoming formidable the same way, and obliging his superiors to purchase peace of him upon his own terms; which he will be never likely to do, as long as there is any difference between ill-nature and wit, and between calumny and truth.
LETTER II.

Of the Origin and Extent of Civil Power.

SIR,

Taunton, August 1, 1722.

Among our political Writers, two parties have distinguished themselves concerning the Original and Extent of Civil Power, the Popular and the Patriarchal; those who assert all Power to be a gift of the people transferring the Power, which nature had vested severally in them, into some publick hand, to be employed for the good of the community; and those that derive it from God, by an immediate and positive grant to the first man, from whom it descended to his next heir, and so downward, in a lineal succession, as far as the changeable nature of human things, and the reasons of Providence would permit. There may, possibly, be advantages peculiar to each of these schemes; and whether the patrons of them will own it or no, there are difficulties and objections too that embarrass both: tho' I verily believe, abundantly more, and more shocking, that of the hereditary inde-

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feasable right men, than the other. Now if there be any third hypothesis, which, having the main advantages of these two, provides against the ill-consequences of each, it ought certainly to have the preference, by what- ever hand it happens to be offered. I am mistaken if the following does not bid fair for it. The hypothesis, in short, is this, that all Power is directly from God, not by positive appointment, but, as he is pleased to signify his sovereign Will by the nature of things, leaving it to the choice and discretion of people, among whom Governments are not yet established, in what form, by what persons, and on what conditions, this Power shall be exercised. The Power itself flows from the Will of the Creator, declared with that plainness and evidence, that no part of mankind can be ignorant of it. The least reflection discovers it.

And here before I pass any further, I must desire my Reader to look back to the distinction just mentioned between a Positive Appointment of God, and the Will of God as signified by the nature of things; because a little explanation of this distinction may be of use to let him more fully into my meaning. A Positive Appointment of God is the same as the Will of God, respecting the conduct or duty of his creatures, in some particular instance, made known to them not immediately by the light of their own Reason,
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Reason, but by a supervening Revelation, like that we Christians believe to be contained in the Books of the Old and New Testament. Every Injunction or Command of these Sacred Writings about which human Reason is silent, or which we should not have come to the knowledge of but in this supernatural way, is a Positive Appointment, and, properly speaking, nothing else.

By the nature of things I understand the frame and constitution of man, his body and his mind, and of the world about him, the various relations and circumstances in which men are capable of being placed, together with the tendencies and effects of human actions in this variety of relations, both with regard to the agent himself, and to others. Whatever moral conclusion or rules of practice can be gathered from an accurate survey of these things, the nature of things may properly be said to signify or discover, and are as truly Divine Laws, as if they were in so many words and syllables to be found in some written Revelation. Why are the Doctrines and Laws that compose such a Revelation looked on as divine, or from God, but because God is the Author of that Revelation? Now that God is the Author of Nature, (or, which is the same, that all things receive their existence and powers from God, and are by him directed and over-ruled in all the events which they
give
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give birth to in the course of time) is not less evident than it can be ever made concerning any Revelation, that God is the author of it. And must not the Author of Nature be the Author of those practical propositions that result from a contemplation of Nature, in the same propriety of sense as the Author of a Revelation is the Author of all the truths which that Revelation delivers? It matters not what the signs are which the Supreme Being chooses for the indications of his pleasure, whether words or things. Have these signs one plain and determinate meaning? If so, the divine Will is equally manifest in either case. Whoever takes the force of this way of arguing, will without further trouble perceive the reason of assigning a Divine Original to Civil Power; provided by the nature of things, that is of mankind, and of human Society, we are sufficiently instructed in the degree of Power which it is fit the Heads of Society should be trusted with; which is the thing I undertake to shew.

Nothing is more easy than to assign the rate or measure of that Power which in a state of nature every man is possessed of. It is exactly so much, and no more, as every man finds necessary to his own preservation and happiness, consistently with the preservation and happiness of the rest of the species. He that gave me Being did, together with that, confer a right, not only of defending,
fending, but adorning, enriching, and accommodating that Being; God cannot but design, and be well pleased with the safety and perfection of his own work. This, which, in a larger sense, may be stiled self-preservation, is plainly a natural right. But then as I and all other men had the same Author of existence, I cannot be supposed to have any right, but every other man must have the same; and consequently the preservation and well-being, not of this or that, but of every man, is the end proposed by their common Maker and Lord. From whence the next inference is, That no particular person may pursue his private interest, but in such ways, and by such actions as are reconcileable with the general good of mankind. The reason is, that in any other way, and by any other actions, he must contradict the intention of his Maker; which, undoubtedly, no one can have a right to do. This alone overthrows Mr. Hobbes's imaginary state of nature, in which every man hath a right to every thing; the most absurd and self-repugnant notion that ever politician started, and which the parent of it would have stifled in the birth as a monstrous conception, if he had known in what to found that lawless dominion, with which he was resolved to compliment his Leviathan, but in a like boundless and exorbitant right of nature.
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From a state of nature, let us pass into Civil Society, and apply what hath been said of the one to the illustration of the other. It being first proved, or granted, to be the Will of the Supreme Being, that mankind should incorporate themselves into Bodies Politick (with the same evidence that self-preservation, as before explained, appears to be the original right of every individual) it follows, that every distinct Society or Body Politick hath full Power and Authority to make use of all those methods which carry in them a likelihood of promoting its welfare, without any injury thereby offered to other Societies; all independent Societies having the same right to subsist and flourish that any one can have: which they can no otherwise do, than by fixing upon such measures as are at least inoffensive to all, though advantageous, it may be, but to one or two. The man who is his own judge (as every one is, that is subject to no other laws but those of nature) reasons thus with himself. "On the fairest examination of the matter, I do not apprehend how I shall secure myself but by doing this or that; I therefore conclude myself to have the permission, and even command, of God to do it." In like manner they, to whom the conduct of a Society is committed, may argue the justice of any Laws, or Resolves, from their subserviency to the preservation and support of that Society.
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The Will of God is as manifest in this latter case, as in the former, or rather more so, in that the welfare of a Society is of vastly greater importance than the fate of a single man can be.

I hope by this time the Reader is fully apprized of my notion, and sees wherein it is distinguished from the two before mentioned; from the popular one it differs, in asserting God to be the immediate Donor or Fountain of Civil Power; and both from that and the Patriarchal, in this, that, when searching after the Will of God, it does not run back to the original, or any former state of things, but only considers in what way the general good is best promoted, and by this one consideration cuts off all other inquiries. If I have said any thing of the state of nature, it was not in order to deduce Civil Power from thence, but only by way of illustration and comparison, and to shew that the preservation and happiness of a Political Body is the sole foundation of Political Power, just as the power of the individual, out of Society, is founded in the law of self-preservation.

Here then we have a decisive rule, here we may fix our foot; Civil Power, wherever lodged, is fure Divino, and extends to the doing every thing which the good of the State requires, and no further. If the Magistrate advance but a step beyond this, the ground
ground fails him, and he hath no foundation left to support his authority. The following are some of the considerations that recommend the hypothesis now laid down.

The manner of deriving Power from this original is intelligible to all, even those of the meanest capacities. All must acknowledge it agreeable to Reason, that considering the present constitution of human nature, and circumstances of human life, men should unite together in Societies, if not existing in such Combinations before; and that, these Societies once formed, the governing part of them should have all that Power that can be desired for the right ordering the affairs of the Commonwealth, and answering the great ends of Government: this all can see to be highly agreeable to Reason; nor need they further be told, that what is agreeable to Reason, is agreeable to the Will of God. Reason is the only universal interpreter of the Divine Will; whatever that speaks to mankind, it speaks in his name, who is the great Author and Fountain of Reason.

To the inquiry—Who gave the Magistrate his Power? The answer then is easy—that whatever makes the Magistrate, whether Election or Inheritance, God gives him his Power. Every one can understand this, who is capable of understanding plain Reason; whereas the pretended donation to Adam first, and afterwards to Noah and his Heirs, is liable.
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...ble to a thousand disputes, which are likely to have no end but with the world: and for the other way of tracing Civil Power, to the Power every man hath in a state of nature, it is more round about than this, and, by that means, less obvious to common view. If, for the satisfaction of a plain countryman, that questioned any Power hisGovernours had to enact certain Laws under such and such Penalties, you should observe to him, That it is no other than what he and the other members of the Society had stripped themselves of, to make a Present of it to the Magistrate, he would hardly comprehend your meaning: but now, tell him, that the Publick Good renders it necessary, of which, in many cases, his Superiours are the best Judges, and he presently perceives what you would be at, and is sooner convinced that you talk Reason.

...I am sensible that in our enlightened Age, and among many of my fellow subjects, such a supposition as this—That their Governors standing upon higher ground than they, may sometimes see further—is hardly to be made. They scorn an implicit faith, and will not allow any thing to be well done of which they do not clearly discern the reason. The truth is, we are become a Nation of Politicians; every three half-penny author, or Coffee-house orator, is fit to be of the Privy-Council, and, if he were advised with, would quickly
quickly set matters upon a better foot. Cineas, in his account of the Roman Senate, tells his Master Pyrrhus, that it looked like an Assembly of Kings. Should a stranger come into many of our Coffee-houses, and observe with what a solemn air and magisterial tone the company criticize the Publick Administration, what could he imagine but that every board was filled with Statesmen, impatient to display their fine talents in the service of the publick, and retrieve dying Liberty? I heartily congratulate my Country on this increase of wise heads; however, would recommend to their consideration the following ingenious fable. The fable I borrow from de la Motte, the moral of it is new.

A ship, laden with a whole People of Apes, was just come into Port, a sort of commodity for which there was a very great demand. Our Baboon Merchants were gone into the City to advertise what they had to sell, the men making merry ashore, and none but the Apes left behind in the ship. Their Dean, a person of uncommon sufficiency, rising flow, speaks to this effect — "Comrades, faith be, I have a thought in my head, which may be for the general good; what if we took this opportunity to make our escape out of slavery? The occasion is inviting, by all means let us improve it. You have been eye-witnesses to the manner of governing the winds and waves; let
our first essay be this master-piece of art, "I will be the pilot, and you shall be the "Mariners." "A lucky contrivance! cry'd "the whole Assembly, let us about it imme- "diately. Liberty! Liberty!" In the instant you might have seen the ship under sail, and scudding along before the wind; it was pleasant enough to observe the busy crowd running from yard to yard, and climbing up the masts; while the old Ape, placing himself at the helm, affected the grimace of a thoughtful Pilot. By his gravity you would have taken him for another Cato: "Mef- "fieurs, faith be, there's a storm coming, "the clouds yonder hang low, and the face "of the deep looks black and frowning; I "doubt we shall have but an ill time on't, "however do not be discouraged." He was right enough as to the storm, but for what he hinted of his art, it was a different case. In a moment the winds let loose their rage, and the thunders rattling about their ears, put the poor crew in a terrible fright to think there was but a finger's breadth or two between them and death. Yet, what they had formerly seen the seamen do in a like distress, they attempted to imitate; but shewed themselves to be errant bunglers at the trade. Should the sails be lowered; they do the quite contrary; instead of avoiding the rocks, they run directly upon them. To what purpose is all their blind industry? The vessel strikes,
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strikes, breaks to pieces before their eyes; and the whole colony of simpletons sinks at once in the abyss.

You Apes of Politicians! See here what the fate of the ship would be, if left to your management! The first storm that happened, there would be an end of your Art and You.
LETTER III.

Of the Origin and Extent of Civil Power.

THAT Political Power is from God, in opposition to those who suppose it to be a gift of the People; and that it is from him, not by way of positive donation to the first man from whom it is transmitted in the manner of an inheritance to his posterity, but as declaring his Will by the nature of things, so that the Publick Good is the rule by which we are to judge of the Divine Will and of Civil Power; hath been shewn in a former Paper. I then proposed to offer some considerations in favour of this opinion. One of which I have mentioned already. I shall now add some others.

In what way Civil Polities had their rise, is a question of fact, not more obscure than needless upon the present hypothesis. For, however decided, or if not decided at all, it makes no odds in this case. Let those that have leisure and inclination continue to dispute
dispute — Whether men were ever in a state of nature, and by common consultation and agreement exchanged that for a Political State; or Magistracy rose insensibly out of Paternal Dominion, following the order of Primogeniture, so that mankind were always born under Government — Let them, I say, dispute whether either, or both of these, or any other way, ought to be pitched on for the first formation of Societies; and after all, let them agree or differ upon the point, it is certain and demonstrable, that every Society hath a right to preserve itself, and so much Power inherent in it as serves to this end, and no more. Which leads me to another observation.

That the bounds of Sovereign Power, and the submission to be paid to it, are better ascertained and marked out by the help of this than of either of the other schemes. Supposing, for argument’s sake, such a grant to the first Parent of mankind as some contend for, it was either unlimited, or restrained. If the Power bestowed was unlimited, it lies upon them who say so, to prove their assertion, and to prove it too by the most convincing arguments; since mankind are too tenacious of their Liberties to surrender them up without being compelled to it either by external force, or irrefitable reasons. Now, for any such reasons, I despair of ever seeing them,
them, and they must be violently attached to an opinion, who fancy, that any, yet produced, are of this kind. If the grant had any restrictions added to it, we must beg their assistance in discovering what they are, since they have too much contempt for our Sovereign Lords the People, to give us leave to estimate the Supreme Power by what is beneficial for them.

The Power accompanying the supposed state of nature cannot be a just standard of the Civil Power, for this reason, that it is notorious, these two have not always the same limits, but are each of them, in different instances, more extensive than the other; which proceeds from hence, that to the preservation of a Society more Power is sometimes necessary than to the preservation of the individual, at other times less. Out of Society, the severest punishment of a small injury may, in some circumstances, be justifiable, because necessary to prevent a greater; while, in Society, where sufficient caution may be taken without going to such extremities, the same may be unreasonable. Here the Power of the individual exceeds that of the Society. But, in most cases, it is the reverse of this, and the authority of Civil Governments reaches to many things not within the compass of a private Power. That man would usurp a Power that did not belong to him, who, in a state of disunion and
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independance, should take upon him to punish Drunkenness, idle and riotous Living, Swearing, Gaming, Whoredom between persons at their own disposal, &c. all which, notwithstanding, have been punished by the Laws of several States, and that justly too, because of the ill influence these, and such like vices, have upon the peace and good order of Society. And as in some cases, vices, not punishable in a state of nature, may be cognizable in Society, so in others the penalty may be aggravated and enlarged.

It would be hard to prove that, in a state of nature, the Children may be made to suffer in any degree or respect, that is avoidable, for the misbehaviour of their Parents; and yet we know this is practised in many parts of the world, where, for Treason, the Children of the Delinquent are deprived of their inheritance, and have sometimes been declared incapable of all future honours. It is enough to warrant any such Penalties, if it can be shewn that the Publick Good renders them expedient. Pursue the same principle, and you will be obliged to own that the Supreme Power can never be absolute, or of such a nature that, however exerted, though to the destruction of the lives and properties of the Subject, the Subject hath no other remedy permitted him but patience. Civil Power is unavoidably confined within certain bounds; it cannot rise above its fountain,
tain, the general good. So that, unless it could be made to appear, that it is more for the benefit of States and Kingdoms to be under Despotick Rule, than to have a Liberty, in extreme cases, of appealing to force, such an appeal, in such cases; must be allowed them, or, without being allowed will very warrantably be taken. Now, if they please, we will venture it upon this issue, and according as after a just comparison from history and experience, we find free men or slaves to be in the happier condition, will decide in favour of Resistance or Non-Resistance. A regard to one's Country ought to be superior to all private and particular obligations; from this must flow the respect and obedience due to Princes themselves; for upon supposition Societies might do better without Government than with it, this subordination among mankind, of many to a few, ought, as soon as possible, to be abolished.

This observation may satisfy all but those who are resolved not to be satisfied, that Passive Obedience, in all cases whatsoever, is very unlikely to be a doctrine belonging to Revelation; so very unlikely, that it ought not to be received for such, unless frequently delivered, in the most express terms, and those too not capable of any other reasonable construction. Revealed Religion is built upon Natural; no wise and considerate man there-
fore will be in haste to give the character of Divine to any doctrine that inverts the order of natural duties, as this of Absolute Power manifestly does, subjecting the greater to the less, the whole to an inconsiderable part, the end to the means. The Prince is but one of many thousands or millions, his pleasure of small moment, in comparison of the interest of the Commonwealth, and his Authority designed only as a means of securing the general tranquility. All that Christianity does, is to enforce the obligations which, by virtue of the relations they stand in to each other, men were before under. Yet (which ought to be carefully remarked) Authority and Submission are not such exact tallies to one another, but that where the Sovereign goes beyond the bounds of his Authority, the Subject may be obliged to follow him with his Submission; the common good being the invariable rule to both.

It is not every supposed or even real grievance that will justify Faction and Mutiny, much less change Rebellion into lawful Resistance. If the ground of complaint be a misfortune rather than a fault, arising from an unusual complication of causes, and the contingency of human affairs, this want of foresight may well be forgiven to any Administration; nor should that charity be denied to the Trustees of the Commonwealth, which every
every private man, that means well and is unfortunate, may challenge. Where the error is less excusable, yet not obstinately defended or repeated, it should be generously forgotten. Yea, though the mismanagements are more numerous, of wider extent, and more pernicious influence, still, if they are not in essential points, if they are sufferable, if having recourse to violent remedies will endanger the life of the State more than leaving it to time and the constitution to repel the venom of the disease, it cannot be made a controversy what every man should, and what every honest man will esteem his duty in this situation. Further,

This accounts for those extraordinary steps which a Government is sometimes necessitated to take in compliance with sudden emergencies, which could not be foreseen, or not so well guarded against. It is not indeed fit that certain cases should be put by way of supposition beforehand, because it is to be hoped they will never happen, or when they do, they will sufficiently explain themselves. The Constitution is a sacred thing: Agreed; and therefore, say you, not to be deviated from in the minutest particular; rather, say I, ought to be made free with in some junctures by those that have a love for it, and would save it from ruin, or from the evident danger of it. Our veneration ought not to be
be for names but things. It is not in the choice of any Society, or the Legislators and Representatives of it, so to tie up their hands by any Acts and Settlements of their own, that it shall be for ever after unlawful to break through them for the sake of the publick safety. *Salus Populi suprema Lex esto.* This is a Divine Law, by which all other, merely human, Laws are to be controlled, qualified, or interpreted.

The *Athenians*, on a certain time, lodged a thousand talents in the Citadel, making it criminal to propose or order the employing this money on any other occasion but the repelling of an hostile fleet, that should attempt a descent upon their coasts; which notwithstanding, they themselves, alarmed at the revolt of the inhabitants of *Chios*, did not scruple to revoke this Decree. And does any one imagine they were herein to blame? But then the necessity of the case ought to be very apparent, that there may be no handle given for drawing what is done into precedent, when there is no such necessity; a thing of the most dangerous consequence. Such a necessity, I should think, all the well-wishers to the present happy Establishment, and the Liberties of their Country, must acknowledge to have been for the *Septennial Act*. The continuance of it unrepealed, whether adviseable or not, I meddle not with, but leave
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leave it to the wisdom of the present Parliament, when it shall fit, to determine the matter; not precluding others, that are better able, from giving their opinion, which they may do and welcome, provided their zeal or confidence of being in the right, does not make them forget their duty.

There was a Law among the antient Britons, that no one should speak of the Common-wealth, and of publick affairs but in Council or Parliament; this was certainly carrying the matter too far. Every man ought to have the privilege of a freeborn Subject, to speak his mind, not forgetting, however, that he ought not to obtrude his advice upon those that do not want it, and should keep within the bounds of decency; in which, I must needs say, many of our modern Dealers in Politicks, and particularly some of the Journalists, seem to me to have been shamefully wanting; who, if one were to guess at the quality of the men by that of their Writings, must be deemed to be of the lowest of the People, and as great strangers to good breeding, as all of them are to good temper, and some of them to good sense. To add no more.

The character of the Magistrate is more strongly fenced, and guarded by this notion, than by the popular one. His Authority is more visibly divine, his Person more venera-
ble, and the Conscience of the Subject held under greater awe. His Subjects may nominate him, and they do no more; heaven delivers the ensigns of Power and Sword of Justice, into his hand, and clothes him with Imperial Dignity. When men are taught to look not only upon the Magistrate, but upon Magistracy as their Creature, and to believe that their Princes and Rulers have no Power but what they have graciously given them, the more unthinking fort will be apt, upon the least resentment, to treat them with very little ceremony; like those wise people, that first make their Gods, and then, if they are fallen, and will not gratify them in every request, from prayers fall to menaces, and from menaces to rougher methods, in hopes they shall either beat or fright them into a better humour. So we are told the Votaries of a certain Saint did lately; whom, because it happened to rain at the time they were carrying him in Procession, to procure dry weather, they very civilly threw him into the river. The guilt of Rebellion, will, by such, be thought to amount to no more than a breach of promise. The Scripture style, according to which the Magistrate is the Minister of God for good, does much more clearly point out the ground of those duties which Scripture and Reason do jointly command; such as not speaking evil of Dignities, obey-
ing Magistrates, being subject to the Higher Powers, not only for Wrath, but Conscience-sake; because the Powers that be, are ordained of God; and whosoever resiteth the Power, resiteth the Ordinance of God, and shall receive to himself damnation.
LETTER IV.

A Defence of the Liberty of the Will.

SIR,

The Author of the British Journal will, I hope, forgive me, when I declare myself to have had so little curiosity to know the subject of his Papers, that, to this moment, I should hardly have looked into them; if, by accident, I had not understood that, instead of Cato with his Politicks, Diogenes had of late been reading Lectures of Philosophy from his Tub, and instructing the Publick in a point, about which, if his notion be right, it were much better for mankind to continue ignorant and mistaken. That man is a mere machine, and all his actions, good and bad, wise and foolish, fatally determined, I always thought a most extravagant assertion, and should have been surprized to hear it from any but men who have been too long at war with common sense, to leave us room to wonder at any contradiction or absurdity, however gross, which they shall think fit to espouse.

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The first reflection this occasioned was on the odd jumble which the ideas of Political Liberty and Moral Necessity make in the heads and writings of these men. Freedom is a most glorious thing in the Commonwealth, the natural right of mankind, who cannot be too jealous of it, nor go too far in securing it; in human actions Freedom is a chimera, an impossibility: but, if this be truth, why so angry with those above you for not managing affairs to your liking, since they themselves are as very slaves as you can be, and all their motions, like those of other parcels of matter, are according to the force impressed, and in the same direction? In truth, following this scheme of things, the parallel is but too obvious between Almighty God and the Master of a Puppet-Show. This latter, from the despotick power he hath over his little people, makes them agree or differ, act now one part, immediately after a quite contrary, just as he pleases. For example, we will suppose him to entertain his customers with the representation of a Government distressed by factions and popular discontents. The sage Monarch sustains his character so well, as to merit the title of the Father of his Country; his Ministers are wakeful for the Publick Good, and equal to their respective posts, notwithstanding which, whispers are spread among the crowd of they know not what imaginary
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Of the grievances; the T—s, the H—s and the whole tribe of Demagogues fill up the cry of Male-Administration; and at the same time that they are thus opening against the State, some from among themselves start up, and very wisely observe that they are all from the King to the Cobler, but a company of wooden heads pulled this way or that, at the discretion of the man behind the curtain: however, that it is even beyond the patience of a piece of timber to bear such insults and provocations as they have met with. Tell me now, wherein the affairs of mankind, their Wars, their Treaties and Negotiations, their Intrigues and Conspiracies differ, as to the main, from this ludicrous and fantastick scene: and what we must think of that Being, who, for his diversion, brings us on the stage, and idly plays us one against the other.

I next considered with myself what valuable end our Tub-Philosopher could propose in writing after this manner, and whence his zeal for such an ill-favoured doctrine. It must certainly be of the last importance to mankind, a useful discovery, and adapted to serve the interests of Religion and Virtue. And, if this be the case, it is pity it should remain a secret. But, that we may not be too credulous, let us make a little trial of it. Here is a man strongly tempted to play the knave; but, believing himself master of his
his own actions, and answerable for them, he is secretly restrained thro' shame of the foulness of the crime, or fear of its consequences, in an after-life. Whether he be free, or no, matters not. He imagines that he is free, and shall deserve blame and punishment, if he does any thing injurious to his fellow-creatures, or dishonourable to his Maker; and by this thought he is awed, and kept within some bounds. This is Conscience; a persuasion of the natural and intrinsic differences of good and evil, and of our own liberty to chuse one or the other: which inward persuasion fills the mind with joy or sorrow, hope or fear, confidence or shame, according as we apprehend ourselves to have made a right or a wrong use of our freedom in observing or neglecting these essential and everlasting differences of things.

Let us now put the supposition, the other way, of a person in the same circumstances as the former, but not under the same restraint. Is he hired to write a Libel, or commit a Murder? He esteems himself as, properly, no more chargeable with these actions than the Pen or the Sword he employs in them. He directs these, while he himself is directed by a higher hand. He is but the Amanuensis or executioner of Fate. As long as he hath this view of the case, what is there left to be a check upon his inclinations? What room for Conscience to terrify or
or reproach him? With this apology at hand, will he not readily follow appetite and passion, where it can be done with safety, and execute whatever a present interest shall dictate? Cato had described mankind as a race of low, selfish and mischievous beings, void of all principles of Conscience or Honour. After him comes Diogenes, and gravely tells them that a knave can no more help being what he is, than a fool; the expression of a natural rogue being altogether as proper as of a natural fool, tho' not quite so common. And is not Society extremely obliged to this class of Writers, and in a likely way to flourish upon their principles?

But, that the Letter-Writer may not think I am begging quarter for an opinion which I despair of defending, I shall now proceed to give him one reason, among many, why I believe man to be a free agent, and possessed of a self-determining power. He himself allows of a supreme and self-existent Being, perfectly just, and wise, and good, the Maker and Governor of the world. Now upon this single concession I undertake to demonstrate the liberty of human actions. That mankind act irregularly in a thousand instances, or so as to violate the Laws of Reason, Religion, and the Civil Society, is a matter of fact, not to be disputed; the only question is—Whether they can avoid acting thus? Grant me that they can, and I have
have gained my point, since they will then
do what they have a power to forbear. Deny
it, and you are obliged to hold that the first
Cause is the source or origin of all evil, i. e.
that sin and folly are the necessary produc-
tions of infinite goodness and wisdom; which
is a manifest contradiction.

"The whole system of the universe (says
this Writer) is the care of God, and all
other inferior beings must be subordinate
to the interest of this great one, and all
contribute in their several stations and
actions to bring about at last the grand
purposes of his Providence." But will he
pretend to say that Lying, Fraud, Intempe-
rance, Inhumanity, Oppression, and the like
practices, have in their nature a tendency to
promote the good of intelligent beings; and
cannot therefore in the order of causes be
dispensed with by him who guides the whole
design? This were to make these things
good, and not evil. Or will any one con-
tend that particular Societies, and conse-
quentially the general system which compre-
hends them all, would not enjoy more har-
mony and peace, if they that compose them
were universally just, temperate, grateful,
kind, and beneficent? And why then are
they not all these, but too often the direct
contrary? The common answer, that man
being at present in a state of trial for the
happiness of a future life, is therefore left to

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his liberty to do good or evil, is a plain and rational solution of the difficulty; whereas the opinion that men are inevitably betrayed into all these mischiefs by a concatenation of causes, overthrows at once the idea of an Eternal Mind and of Moral Perfections, establishing in their stead a blind unintelligent Matter as the original of all things.

Did we see a regularity and consistency in the actions of rational creatures, were they all uniformly virtuous, conducted by Reason, and leveled at one certain end, the common interest and welfare of the whole, there might be then some little colour for doubt, whether they were not under a necessity, like that which retains the heavenly bodies in their several courses, which they perform with an amazing order and constancy, one age after another. But, for certain, wisdom cannot be the spring of an unequal, freakish and contradictory conduct; the fountain of all good can never necessitate his creatures to do evil. Nor must you think to escape by saying, that God himself is a necessary agent, that he could not but create man with an invincible bias to transgress his laws, and cannot but punish him for transgressing them, tho' without any fault of his. For whence should this necessity arise? Not from any thing without him, because he would not then be the first and independent Being; not from his own nature, which, containing in itself the most
most perfect wisdom, justice, and goodness, cannot, without the most evident absurdity, be supposed to force him to act in direct opposition to all these Perfections. "Almighty God, in compassion to mankind, hath annexed Rewards and Punishments to the observance or non-observance of his Laws."

Here let me ask, Whether he hath done this with a design they should be sufficient to operate upon all, or on those only whom they actually influence? If on all, they are all free; if only on some, they for whom they were never intended can have no concern in them. Who then are the persons to be punished?

I shall conclude with observing that there is such a natural conviction in the minds of men of this truth, that Epicurus himself, tho' by his principles obliged to deny the Freedom of the Will, was not yet hardy enough to do it, but in order to reconcile it with his Law of Gravity, invented a Motion of Declination for his Atoms; which, if allowed him, hath just as much to do with Liberty, as the idea of a Triangle with a good Dinner. I am,

S I R,

Your Obliged Humble Servant.

C c 2
LETTER V.

On the Immortality of the Soul.

There are persons so unhappily formed, as to be at the same time extremely sceptical and the most credulous of mankind. Their pretence for not believing some things, is, that they cannot comprehend them; and yet they can, without difficulty, swallow others that are a thousand times more incomprehensible than those they reject: they laugh at mysteries in Religion, and would think it a reproach to their understandings to submit to them; but in what favours their corrupt passions and designs, their preconceived opinions and irregular inclinations, mystery is so far from an objection, that contradiction to the common notions of mens minds is none; and they will believe not only without evidence, but even in defiance of it. As for instance, that the human Soul is a system of Matter, and that all its thoughts, volitions, reasonings, doubts and fears, result from the action and reaction of the particles of this system. Our British Diogenes is among those,
those, who, as if confederated in a design against the Soul of man, labour hard to degrade it from its dignity to a level with the clay it animates; and, when made by God in his own image, and but a little lower than the angels, would fain argue it into a likeness to stocks and stones, the deities worshipped by the heathens. Vain attempt! Conscious to her superior nature, the Soul mocks their feeble efforts, and dares meet their keenest arguments with as little fear as an angel would discover in the midst of a battle.

The Soul, secour'd in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.

But, in truth, it is too great a compliment to the objections of these men, to resemble them to such weapons, when they have neither point nor edge in them, and are more like arrows with leaden heads, and thrown by a weak hand, that either reach not home, or strike with a dead sound against the shield, and then fall off without doing the least execution. If any thing could tempt me to doubt of the Soul's Immortality, the confusion and incoherence of this Writer's reasonings would much sooner do it than the strength of them, there being in the former of these something very like what we might expect from the fortuitous collision of blind

C c 3
and wandering atoms. His Discourse, I own, bids as fair to be the work of Chance as most I have seen; however having in it some glimmerings of Reason, and faint traces of thought and meaning, I am convinced that it must have proceeded from a nobler cause.

Our Cynick tells his Coffee-house Readers, to their great edification, that Matter thinks; that is, is capable of various sensations and reflections. But if he can suffer a civil question, I would ask him, By what is this operation of Thinking produced? He will not say by a difference of magnitude; since the smallest particles are of the same nature, and have the same common properties with the greatest, as is plain from this single consideration, that the greatest are made up of the smallest: for upon dividing a greater and a smaller mass into equal parts, the greater will appear to have more such parts than the smaller, and this is all that will follow. Is it by a difference of figure? Not so neither. For figure is nothing else but a certain relation of the parts of Matter one to the other; so that if Thinking consists in figure (or, if you will, organization, which is no other than a proper configuration and structure of the constituent parts of bodies) it will be nothing absolute, but a mere external denomination. Whether a quantity of Matter exists under a spherical, a cubical, or any other surface, the difference will be
of just the same kind as that which arises from the various artful figures of a Dance, or the several ways of drawing up an Army; in the two latter of which cases the persons are manifestly the very same, neither wiser, nor stronger, nor more virtuous, as the Matter must needs be in the first; nothing new emerges from ever so many shiftings and changes of this sort.

Shall we then have recourse to Motion for the performance of these wonderful feats, no less strange than Transubstantiation, and of the same size of possibility? This seems to be what Cato's Second is most inclined to.

"When the Actions of exterior bodies strike "upon the organs of sense, they must cause "a second Action or Motion, and continue "it in Infinitum, unless it meets obstruction. "This first Action causes Sensation, and the "second Reflection, &c. Again, this Action "is called by different names, as it affects "the different parts of the machine: when it "affects the eye, it is called seeing, the ear "hearing, the palate tasting, the nose smelling; "but when the motion is continued further, "and gets to the brain, or other internal "part of the system, it causes that effect "which we call Thinking." All this I shall acknowledge to be very intelligible, when I can conceive that a set of organ pipes are ravished with their own musick, a painting room is agreeably entertained with the fine pieces hung up in it, or that a pin-cushion feels
On the Immortality

feels most tormenting pains upon its being stuck full of pins.

I shall not stop to take notice of some peculiar elegancies, in our Author's style, as, an action striking, i. e. an action acting; the sensation of vegetables, and the like; but I shall immediately proceed to examine what we can extract from the idea of Motion. The capacity of being moved, which is all that Matter can challenge, is a passive quality, and proceeds from a defect of Being and Power. A body is therefore moveable, because it is of a limited extension; that is, does not at once possess all space, nor, containing only a finite quantity of Matter, can make infinite resistance; upon which account it must yield to a force sufficient to overcome its resistance, and be thrust out of one place into another: consequently, the less the quantity of Matter in any body, cæteris paribus, the more easily is that body moved, because less capable of standing against the impulse of other bodies. And what similitude can we trace in all this to Thinking, which is an active principle, the highest excellency and perfection, and that from whence all the Moral Attributes of the Deity derive their original? The Deity, being immense, is immovable; but not incogitative. In God, therefore, Cognition is neither Motion, nor the effect of Motion; and is it not evident, that Cognition, Perception, or Consciousness, must be of the same
same general nature, in whatever Being it is found? For certain, it is not Motion in one Being, and in another something which hath not the least affinity to Motion,

It is further undeniable, that the Motion of bodies is only a successive application of their parts to different parts of space; which parts of space being perfectly uniform and alike, all the possibilities of Motion can never occasion the least alteration in the absolute natures and properties of things. Let a system of Matter be carried in any direction, and with any degree of velocity, its parts continuing relatively at rest, every body apprehends that it will acquire nothing by the career. Nor is the case a whit mended by changing the supposition, and imagining the parts in Motion among themselves; for here every distinct particle must be considered as a whole, and the very same observation will hold concerning the parts that was before made of the whole collection: they will remain unalterably the same; and tho' the whole may seem to pass under a change, yet that change is, in reality, no more than a different juxta-position of the parts. Besides which, we might venture to appeal to every one who attends to the operations of his mind, when he desires, deliberates, resolves, feels pleasure or pain, whether this inward consciousness or knowledge have any thing in it agreeing with the translation
lotion of a body, or of a single particle, from place to place, which is all that is meant by Motion. He that sees any great resemblance between these things, or does not see a wide difference between them, must have a much quicker or duller apprehension than is common to mankind.

But may not Motion be the cause of Thought? The occasional cause of divers modes of Thinking, I grant it may be; but not the proper cause of Thought itself, till colour is known to produce sound, and things entirely dissimilar shall naturally give birth to one another. The usual subterfuge of the Materialist, when driven from this hold, is, that we do not know all the hidden powers of Matter, nor the qualities that may spring from the endless combinations of which Matter is capable. I hope I shall never be backward to confess my ignorance both of Nature, and the God of it; yet I take leave to say, that Thinking cannot be a power belonging to Matter, unless it belongs to it originally and universally, i.e. unless it be an essential power: my reason is, that by all the transformations of bodies and shufflings of atoms, it is demonstrable, not a single power of an absolute and generical nature is superadded to the material mass. There is, it is true, an unexhausted variety of figures, magnitudes, and motions, and, by means of these, of mechanical operations and effects: but, in regard
regard all these are only so modes of the original attributes, or positions of bodies, or the parts of bodies with respect to each other; here is nothing answering to Thought, which is not a mere relation of things, or mode of some more extensive quality, but an inherent and primary attribute.

The sum is, Matter is immutably and eternally the same, of which I desire no better illustration than what Diogenes himself supplies me with, though brought by him to a quite contrary purpose. "Two Dice afford " six times as many chances as one, and three " as two." Very true, but let the number of chances keep increasing to infinity, the Dice continue as they were, and so likewise the Spots they are marked with, which sooner of them happen to turn upwards. So, notwithstanding an incredible number of Words may be formed out of four and twenty Letters, the Letters gain nothing at all by it; nor have these Letters or Words more sense and thought in one situation than in any other: Institution and Custom have indeed arbitrarily made them the signs of our thoughts. And, which deserves to be remarked, what Institution is in regard to Words, the Laws of Union, established by the Creator, are in reference to Sensations; there being in the nature and reason of things no more discoverable connection between the actions of the parti-
particles of Matter, variously figured and moved, upon the organs of sense, and the perceptions consequent on these actions, than between the sounds and figures of Words, and the meaning which mankind are agreed they shall convey. And where now is the ridiculousness of using the word Spirit, tho' we have no clear and positive idea of Immortal Substance? Not to take notice that we have as clear an idea of Spirit as of Body, neither of which is knowable but by its properties, it is enough that we can prove Thinking to be no Property of Matter; from whence it necessarily follows, that the Thinking Principle is Immortal. When it is said of God, that he is a Spirit, can the meaning be any other than that he is a pure incorporeal Mind? And if there be one Immortal Being in the universe, there can be nothing contradictory or ridiculous in the supposition of more. It is, on the contrary, most natural to conceive, that whatever Being resembles God in the faculties of Understanding and Will, is further like him in the Immortality of his Essence.

The Reader may observe, I have taken it for granted, that Thought is not essential to Matter, and that the Divine Being is Immortal and Immense; not, I can assure Mr. Dio-
Diogenes, from any apprehension I have of the difficulty of demonstrating these things, but as charitably supposing he is not yet so forsaken of all Reason as to deny them: when he shall do this, it will be time enough to set about the proof of them.
POEMS

ON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS.
POEMS
ON
SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

To Mr. WATTS,
On his Divine Poems.

SAY, human Seraph, whence that charming force,
That flame, that soul, which animates each line;
And how it runs with such a graceful ease,
Loaded with ponderous sense! Say, did not He
The lovely Jesus, who commands thy breast,
Inspire thee with himself? With Jesus dwells,
Knit in mysterious bands, the Paraclete,
The breath of God, the everlasting source
Of Love: And what is Love in souls like thine,
But Air, and Incense to the Poet’s fire?
Should an expiring Saint, whose swimming eyes
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Dd

Mingle
Mingle the images of things about him,
But hear the least exalted of thy strains,
How greedily he'd drink the musick in,
Thinking his heav'nly Convoy waited near!
So great a ftre'ss of powerful harmony,
Nature unable longer to sust ain,
Would fink oppreft with joy to endless rest.

Let none henceforth of Providence complain,
As if the world of spirits lay unknown,
Fenc'd round with black impenetrable night;
What tho' no shining angel darts from thence
With leave to publish things conceal'd from sense,
In language bright as theirs, we here are told,
When life its narrow round of years hath roll'd,
What 'tis implo ys the bless'd, what makes their bliss;
Songs such as W A T T S's are, and Love like his.

But then, dear Sir, be cautious how you use
To transports so intensely rais'd your Mufe,
Left, whilst th' ecstatic impulse you obey,
The soul leap out, and drop the duller clay.

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1706.
TEACH me the art, fair regent of the soul,
To raise the passions, or at will, controul;
That heav'ly art, which can our cares beguile,
Make envy pleas'd, and pensive sorrow smile.
Circe with magick spells the soul could bind,
And change the shape; here the reverse we find;
The brute, transform'd by you, assumes a nobler kind.
O had I but thy voice, and skill, and lyre!
Soon would I set the listening Swains on fire.
Virtue's majestick form before their eyes,
Her lovely train, her palace in the skies,
And high refulgent throne, should stand confept,
And with aspiring wishes swell each breast.
The tenants of the grove, a tuneful throng,
Should cease their lays, to hear my sweeter song;
Thy self too, transports feel, before unknown,
And in another, praise what was thine own:
Else the too modest Nymph will ne'er believe,
How soft the strains, the joys how vast they give.

D d 2

But
394 POEMS.

But while th' admiring audience sit around,
And faint beneath the rapture of the sound,
Calm and unaw'd she will her self appear,
And think we flatter what we scarce can bear.

Fond wishes these! To think she would impart
Heavn's inspirations, like the rules of art;
Or trust to any mean, unskilful hand,
(The speaking strings that knows not to command)
The golden gift, a welcome present made
By Gabriel; who with grace celestial said,
"Hail, thou of heavn belov'd! This harp is thine"
"So often fat to hymns and airs divine;
"Still let it sacred be to Praise and Love;
"'Twill kindle ardors pure as ours above,
"Assist thy rising soul, and bear her flight
"Beyond the rolling spheres, to realms of endless light:
"Morning and Ev'ning let me meet thee there."
No more he spoke—but mix'd unseen with air.

A Thought
A Thought on Death.

O Death! What pow'r is thine, that distant, thus,
By fancy seen, thou call'st up all our fears,
And shed'st a baleful influence on the soul!
Mine hangs her drooping wings, and, downward press'd
By foggy damps, attempts in vain to rise;
For still in ken of an untimely grave,
The daily subject of the pensive thought,
She hovers o'er, and views the sad recess.
If (which is seldom) I converse with joy,
And nature, lighten'd of her sorrows, smiles,
While pleasing objects dance before the sight,
A thought of Death comes cross the lovely scene,
And blots it out at once: So have I known
The rising Sun dart round his golden beams,
The welcome promise of a glorious Day;
When, lo, scarce have we felt his vital lamp,
But strait some fullen cloud hangs threat'ning o'er;
We sicken, the creation seems to mourn,
And all things wear a deep and heavy gloom.
A HYMN on SIGHT.

I.
Bless my God for ev'ry sense,
But most for thee, my darling Sight,
By whom I learn t' adore the pow'r
That won this beautious world from Night.

II.
When thou art not, the glorious scene
In darkness undistinguish'd lies,
Heav'n, Earth, and Seas are all in vain,
Nor can their wonders move surprize.

III.
Ev'n light, of all material things
Best emblem of the Deity,
Spreads to the blind unheeded charms;
For why? 'Twas made alone for thee.

IV.
Thou awful fears, and thoughts sublime,
Dost to the ravished mind convey,
Of him, who rais'd this ample Frame,
And o'er the whole extends his sway.

V.
With pleasure now I travel o'er
Heav'n's vast extent; amaz'd to see
Numberless worlds in order roll
With rapid motion thro' the sky.

VI. Infi-
VI.
Infinite pow’er, and equal skill
In all thy works, O Lord, I view;
Thy breath first kindled up these fires,
And thou their waftes dost still renew.

VII.
The Sun’s bright orb thy glory fills,
The nightly Moon reflects the same,
And all the starry globes diffuse,
With their own light, their Maker’s name.

VIII.
But ah, how soon my light is lost,
Hopeless to reach the bounds of place!
Yet where that fails, by fancy’s aid,
Remoter regions I can trace.

IX.
’Till, got within the verge of Stars,
Earth’s little ball escapes my ken;
The more I wonder thy delight,
O God, is with the sons of men!
On the Death of a Youth.

With joy, blest Youth, we saw thee reach the goal,
Fair was thy frame, and delicate thy soul,
Where, join'd at once, the softest manners met,
Truth, judgment, sweetness, innocence, and wit;
The Graces, and the Muses, came combin'd,
Those to adorn thy body, these thy mind:
So form'd, he flew his race, 'twas quickly won,
'Twas but a step, and finish'd when begun:
Nature, herself, surpriz'd, 'wou'd add no more,
His life compleat in all its parts before;
But his few years, with pleasing wonder, told
By Virtues, not by Days, and thought him old.
So far beyond his Age, those Virtues ran,
That in a Boy, she found him more than Man;
For Years, let wretches importune the Skies,
'Till at the long expence of anguish wise;
They live to count their Days by miseries.
Those win the prize, who soonest run the race,
And life burns brightest in the shortest space.
So in the Convex-Glass embody'd run,
Drawn to a point, the glories of the Sun;
At once the gathering beams intensely glow,
And fiercely thro' the straiten'd circle flow,
In one strong flame, conspire the blended rays,
Run to a fire, and crowd into a blaze.

To
To a Young Friend.

Should smiling joys on all thy steps attend,
And health, to Monarchs coy, be Strepnon's friend.
Gay should thy humour be, serene thy brow,
And, easy as thy thoughts, thy minutes flow:
Yet more, should Fame, adopting thee her Son,
With partial hand, thy wildest wishes crown,
And promise to thy mem'ry late renown:
While at thy feet, the Earth, and Ocean lay
Their wealth, and glittering heaps choak up thy way.

Say—Would it not disturb thy mirthful vein?
O'erturn the foolish Babel of thy brain?
The feeble charm dissolve of human praise,
And with grim phantoms haunt thy genial days?
Should e'er this thought intrude, the Drudge, and I,
And ev'ry hapless Wight alike must die:
They from a weary march, and toilsome strife,
By Death discharg'd shall cease to suffer life;
I, what I love, must quit, and when the Sun
A few times more its shining course hath run,

Down
Down to the melancholy coasts must go,
Which, nor his Morning beams, nor Ev'ning, know,
Where musick's soothing voice (tho' Fables tell,
That Orpheus once could charm the shades of Hell)
And the loud trump of Fame are never heard,
The heavy, leaden, gates by silence bar'd:
Silence, which, banish'd to those dre'ry plains,
O'er the wide waste in peaceful terror reigns;
'Tis thither, my unweeting feet, ye tend,
And there, alas, must all life's mock'ry end.
Thence, folded up in sleep, I ne'er shall rise,
'Till the last summons shake the vaulted skies,
And the Earth's dusty chambers, where we lay,
Catch all on fire, and blaze unnat'ral Day.
Say—Will the world then wear that tempting face?
Wilt thou then court, as now, its fond embrace?
Confess—the pious man alone is wise,
Who loose preserves his heart from earthly ties;
When life's a Comedy, can wish it done,
Heir to diviner joys above the Sun;
Yet does not as a bare spectator sit,
To laugh at follies, other men commit;
But takes the part of Providence assign'd,
And, by a generous aim, to serve mankind,
If great his lot, shews 'tis below his mind.

Regard-
POEMS.

Regardless of the world, he journeys thro',
To heaven's high arch he lifts his ardent view,
The narrow, rough, ascent of virtue treads,
Nor counts that painful, which to glory leads;
To those bright mansions, those serene abodes,
Where more than kings, rever'd on earth as gods,
The wiser few, whom true ambition fir'd,
Exalted shine, admiring, and admir'd.
Thither, his Soul, enlarg'd from fleshy bands,
Flies joyful; thence the prospect round commands;
And at the last, the great, decisive day,
He, fearless, shall the burning world survey;
There, safe, in holy peace, with angels fit,
While vast destruction raves beneath his feet.

Pride and Discontent silenced.

AFTER a fruitless chase, resolved to know,
Whether a world so lov'd, was more than show,
The good, and ill, a fretful mortal laid
In passion's scales, uncertain, which outweigh'd;
But quickly found the best of human things,
Light as the gloss that paints the insect's wings;
While
While troubles, such a weight, in fancy, have,
As brings down life, with sorrow to the grave.

Of Patience, quite forsook, 'twas here he cry'd,
No friendly power doth over man preside:
The scatter'd dust, at first without a name,
By chance this mass of wretchedness became;
And chance, with folly, shares the helpless prey,
'Till kinder death comes in, and sweeps him quite away.

As these last words, with fault'ring tongue he spoke,
Earth trembled, and his soul with horror shook,
All heav'n appear'd incens'd, and from the flame,
A voice, more terrible than thunder, came.
Where is this child of Pride, who to be mine,
Himself denies, fond of an abject line?
Stand forth, ingrate; if thou hast strength to stand,
When not upheld by my almighty hand.
Dare puny atoms, heav'n's decrees controul?
And counsel him, who guides the boundless whole?
Laws to their Sovereign, and their Maker, give?
And his existence doubt by whom they live?

Know,
POEMS.

Know, thankless man, when worms indignant swell,
As hardly us'd, it shews them us'd too well.
Take cheerfully the lot, forecast, as best,
And patience will deliver thee to rest:
Purg'd by afflictions, and by time approv'd,
Death will instruct thee fully, whom I lov'd;
But, if unhumbled still, thou dar'st my frown,
The bolt uplifted, hangs to crush thee down.

A Thought at Waking.

That Morning too will dawn, when I shall rise
Fresh from my dust, and, soaring, seek the skies.
Then, why should I lament that Night draws on;
And, tir'd, refuse to lay my burthen down?
Tho', others more, yet I enough have seen,
And guess what is to be, by what hath been.
And, since my youthful days now almost past,
Have pleas'd so little, welcome thou my last.
'Tis the least care, of all that fill this head,
What men design when I am stol'n to bed.
Closing my eyes, the world I now enclose,
And fancy, waking, murthers my repose;
But in the grave, the house of rich, and poor,
Fast I shall sleep, and dream of life no more.

Life
LIFE made Agreeable.

SE'ST thou yon sunny spot of rising ground?
How bright it looks amid the shade around!
Just opposite, a shining cliff on high,
Transmits the glories of the upper sky:
Such is the good man's life, so shines his way;
Befriended by religion's cheerful ray;
While guilty wretches sit in death's cold shade,
And clouds, with tempests charg'd, low'r o'er their head;
On him descends a constant stream of light,
Which gilds each common object to his sight;
Calm passions, joyous hopes, a mind serene,
Make all without to smile like all within;
Pleasures from ev'ry soil spontaneous rise,
And what is gloom to others, charms his eyes.
So when his beams the Sun on nature throws,
He stamps the beauteous colours which he shews.

To
To Mrs. SINGER,
Occasioned by a Copy of her Verses on Death.

ATTEND thou awful monarch of the grave,
And calmly hear a wretch thy pity crave.
Amaz'd I've seen thee over-run mankind,
Nassau, immortal thought, in fetters bind.
Greatness, and hoary fame thy call obey,
And, if thou frown, sink with a swift decay.
To stop thy progress and the field maintain,
Life still attempts, but still attempts in vain.
Let death approach; the daunted soul retire;
Extinguished are at once those vital fires
That mov'd the earthy lump, now left forlorn,
A breathless corpse, thy triumphs to adorn.
O spare thy conquest over me unknown,
Who need not feel thy power that power to own!
Go; let the fearless hero try thy rage,
And pamper'd Prelates at their feasts ingage;
Between the miser and his hoards divide,
And snatch the lover from his fair one's side;
Such acts thy empire will aloud proclaim,
And the survivors bless, or dread, thy name.

For
POEMS.

For me; believe the slave, 'twill scarce be said,
When I expire, the poor Philander's dead!
But 'twill not be; my life I must resign,
That life, which might I save, I'd not repine
To give thee up the whole Creation, were it mine.

'Twas thus, with pensive soul, and frightened look,
By coward nature taught, Philander spoke;
With horror then revolv'd, and silent dread,
The fatal moment that should speak him dead.
O had th' all-conqu'ring tyrant then appear'd,
Aim'd the dire stroke, and urg'd the fate he fear'd!
How dreadful had the meagre phantom been!
How doubly terrible his shape, and mien!
Struck with the sight the Youth had inly groan'd,
And, rent from life, the sad divorce bemoan'd,
Wrestling with fate, and struggling hard in death,
With strong convulsive throws h'ad giv'n his parting breath.
But the Almighty, kinder than his fears,
Delay'd the stroke, propitious to his prayers,
And fingling, from the myriads round his throne,
One of the gentlest spirits, sent him down,
To reconcile the shepherd to his fate,
And ease his anxious doubts about an after state.

The
The charming Singer's Voice and Form
and Air
He feigns, and personates so well the Fair,
Deceiv'd I thought the very Nymph was there.
A Saint the seem'd new risen to the skies,
I gaz'd, unable to remove my eyes
Till the recall'd my Soul, and bid me view
The mystic scene her ready pencil drew.
Here Death I saw, not that wan, ghastly shade,
By guilt and melancholy fancy made,
Of aspect stern, deform'd all o'er, and blind,
But soft, and blooming fair, and wond'rous kind,
Down by his side a golden quiver hung,
Full was the quiver, nor his bow unstrung.
A golden shaft he chose; 'twas tip'd with love,
"This to the man, he cried, most dear to heaven above:"
Then twang'd his bow, away the well-aim'd dart
Flew swift as thought, and pierc'd the favourite's heart,
A sudden night involv'd his closing eyes,
And the glad Soul dismiss'd, sought out her kindred skies.

Not distant far I spy'd a spacious cave,
The passage steep and gloomy, call'd the grave;
Dismal it seem'd, but after short descent,
Open'd into a plain of vast extent,
POEMS.

Where happy minds, from clay unfetter'd, rove,
Verdent the fields beneath, the skies serene above;
Nor summer's drought, nor wintry cold are there,
No lazy mists to clog the purer air;
Broad streams of bliss, from living springs supply'd,
In smooth majestic currents gently glide;
Along the banks the forms of angels thong,
And hymns divine are heard; the rapturous song
Begins before the birth of Time and Place,
Inquires who fill'd ev'n then th' unfathom'd Space,
Of his orig'nal glories wondring tells,
And how embosom'd in himself he dwells,
Himself a Universe; from thence the song
To the Creation falls, and flows along,
Circling with Providence, till with that it drown
In vast Eternity, from whence it first begun.

Delightful World! Did we but know how blest
Are all the virtuous minds of thee posses'd,
Like Philomela, unattach'd to sense,
We then should welcome Death that call'd us hence,
Impatient fly into his icy arms,
And breathe our Souls away amidst his killing charms.

Hymn
HYMN for the Morning.

I.

At Nature's birth, when on the Deep
Darkness and horror lay,
Let there be Light, th' Almighty said,
And strait sprung forth the Day.

II.

This thy first blessing, to the world
The Sun revolving brings;
And smiling comfort visits man,
Borne on the Morning's wings.

III.

Nature, imperfect, and undrest,
Abhor'd the prying Light:
A world of beauteous objects now
Each Morn reveals to sight.

IV.

Sweet is the Light, and bright the Sun
When he begins his race;
But neither Sun, nor Light is sweet,
If thou conceal thy face!

V.

The Day advances, Morning flies,
And blazing Noon comes on
In vain, while I, in Darkness hid,
Lament my absent Sun.

VI. Speak,
VI.

Speak, Lord, and to thy Servant's Soul
Thy quickening beams restore:
The Light with double luftre shines
When Darkness goes before:

For the Evening.

I.

FATHER of Lights, the Day is thine,
Thy hand its beams hath spread;
And, high in glory thron'd thy self,
Thou draw'ft the Ev'n'ing shade.

II.

The springing Day invites my song,
The fame its grateful close,
To praise the sweet vicissitude
Of labour, and repose.

III.

Its beauty if the Morning boast,
If the whole Day its light;
Silence and Rest, the foes of care,
Commend the sheltering Night.

IV.

Thus all the quiet of this world
Agrees with Darkness best;
Unlike the Peace that reigns above,
And in the pious breast.

V. The
V.
The good man's Conscience, like his God,
   In Light doth always dwell;
And what his Peace, his Calm, his Rest,
Not he himself can tell.

VI.
His Soul beneath thy care, O Lord,
   No anxious passion knows;
In drought his cooling stream thou art,
When weary his repose.

GOD the Creator.

I.
O Lord, how excellent thy Name!
   How glorious to behold;
Engraven fair on all thy works
   In characters of gold!

II.
On Heaven's unmeasurable face,
   In lines immensely great,
In small, on every leaf and flower
Creator God is writ.

III.
Tho' Reason be not given to all,
   Nor voice to thee, O Sun;
Their Maker all proclaim, and here
Their language is but one.
IV.
From land to land, and world to world,
Thy name is echo’d round;
And ages, as they pass, transmit
The never-dying sound.

V.
Angels, the eldest Sons of light,
Began the lofty song;
They saw the Heavens unfurl’d abroad,
And Earth on Nothing hung.

VI.
Then Man the last and noblest piece
Of all this nether frame,
With the first vital breath he drew
Consest from whence he came.

VII.
And thou, my Soul, what wilt thou do
To speak thy Former’s praise?
Harmonious hymns, and raptures high,
Thy Theme and Thee should raise.
POEMS.

GOD the PRESERVER.

I.

BEFORE the Lord our Maker we
With reverent awe should bow;
Thou, Lord, the Maker art of all,
And their Preserver Thou.

II.

The Being which thy power bestow'd
Thy Providence maintains,
And the whole mass of things is held
By strong tho' secret chains.

III.

The starry hosts in order move,
Observant of their bounds;
And every Year and every Day
The Sun repeats his rounds,

IV.

Thro' pathless skies he finds his road,
Bent of himself to stray,
For God directs his steadied course
Along the doubtful way.

V.

Nor less in things that subject lie
To Time's all-conqu'ring power,
Are thy eternal laws fulfill'd
By every short-liv'd hour.

VI. While
VI.
While generations rise and fall,
Immortal is the race:
And Time may shift the fading scenes,
But not the Earth displace.

VII.
What Winter's withering breath destroys
The following Spring supplies;
And Age, in vigorous Youth renew'd,
Beholds itself and dies.

VIII.
The Life by Thee preserv'd, my God,
Shall all be spent for Thee,
And flowing bear thy praise along
Into Eternity.

The Soul's Ascent.

I.
When I behold the Morning Lark
Begin her towering flight,
And hear her music, as she mounts,
Now less and less in sight,

II.
O that I had but wings, I cry,
Soon would I leave the ground,
See the world lessening to my view
Till it no more were found!

III. Tem-
III.

Tempests should rage beneath my feet,
And clouds and vapours fly,
While imitating Angel's songs,
I pierc'd a calmer sky.

IV.

Transported with unknown delight,
I should this Being scorn;
Forget from whence my humble birth,
And never more return.

V.

Thus from the bands of flesh enlarg'd,
My Soul will nobly rise,
With nothing but her in-born strength
To bear her to the skies.

VI.

Till then, Lord, lend her faith and love,
And with expanded wings
She to thy Throne her flight will aim,
And to celestial things.
The Divine Immensity.

An ODE.

I.

O Thou Supreme Eternal Mind, Who rul'st the fates of human To thy all-penetrating eye, [kind, The depths of Earth, and Sea, and heavenly [heights, Where Monsters creep, or Angels wing their [flights, Are all reveal'd; for in thy spacious hand [they lie!

II.

Forgive thy Creature who aspir'd, With pride of Reason madly fir'd, Reason which thou hadst just bestow'd, With swelling thought the ufmoff bound to [gain Of boundless Excellence; Enquiry vain! Yet pleas'd, discovers none can fill his heart but [God!

III.

When all things in th' unreal deep Of night and silence, lay asleep, Thou hadst eternal Ages seen: The narrow stint of planetary rounds Suits not thy Being; and, beyond the bounds Of Place, thy Essence overflows the vast Inane.

IV. This
IV.
This wide stretch'd Universe in Thee
Fares like an Atom in the Sea;
Nor bank nor bottom can be found:
Like dust we on thy bosom careless float,
Or overset by some unequal thought,
We lose ourselves, absorb'd in the abyss [
profound.

V.
The pathless Sea from shore to shore
A failing Dust may measure o'er,
And cast on lands forget to roam;
But should we with the switness of a ray
Millions of years thro' thy expansion stray,
Still an untravell'd Infinite would be to come.

VI.
Thy Attributes, a sum untold,
Resemble lamps of burnish'd gold
Hung all around the vaulted sky;
Or rather like ubiquitary light,
Which thro' all places spread, in all is bright,
A lustre they diffuse thro' dark Immensity.

VII.
Thrice happy who injoy the grace
To see the beauties of thy face,
Nor suffer from their love of change!
Still as they higher climb, new scenes arise,
The prospect widening still, dilates their joys,
And still from world to world, all worlds of [bliss, they range.

VIII. But
VIII.

But how shall Souls that dwell below,
In flesh confin'd, thy Presence know,
Invisible to mortal eye?
To these, when pure, thou dost thy self reveal,
Thy Spirit's vital energy they feel,
And secret whisper's tell them thou art ever nigh.

IX.

This slender Altar, Lord, I raise,
Compos'd of Wonder, to thy praise;
Accept what gratitude demands.
Amidst Earth's blended tongues, with th' Ocean's roar,
'Midst countless multitudes who Thee adore,
Thou hear'st my feeble voice, and fe'ft my lifted hands.
An ODE on the Author's Recovery from Sickness.

I.

Thee, bounteous Author of my days,
Thee, their Restor'er, let me praise;
Thee, gracious God, who from the gates of death,
Where I in pensive silence sat,
Waiting the last arrest of fate,
My Soul didst save, and snatch my fleeting breath.

II.

My voice with weakness faint become,
And hollow, like the empty tomb,
Hoarse and scarcely to be known;
Strong and animated grown,
Shall be impoy'd to sound thy fame:
And while in loftier notes I laud that Name,
Which lately I invok'd with feeble cry,
Rocks, Hills, and Vales, shall to my Song reply.

III. Let
III.

Let me remember too, with what surprie
The sudden dimness vail’d mine eyes.
How sickly and how pale the light,
When Death’s impending shade,
Prefage of everlasting night,
Had round involv’d my head!
To Heav’n my languid looks I turn’d,
Nor long my state unpitied mourn’d
Celestial Effluence purg’d the gloom away,
And to my fainting eyes restor’d the day:
Therefore for Thee, my God, these orbs shall [roll,
And to thy radiant Seat I’ll dart, thro’ them,[my Soul.

IV.

Think, flutt’ring Heart, when on the [steep
Of that tremendous boundless deep
Eternity, in sad suspense I stood,
How all my trifling hopes and fears,
My senseless joys, and idle tears,
Vanish’d at prospect of the frightful flood!

V. Sure,
V.

Sure, Life is but a hudded dream,
And Time a swift, deceitful stream,
This vain world a shining bubble,
Only full of care and trouble:
Yet this, great God, this is the prize,
For which deluded mortals Heaven despise;
Blinded with passion after this they run,
And see not, 'till they see themselves undone!

VI.

Lord, when thy hand the sable curtain drew,
And future worlds disclos'd to view,
These were my thoughts; and such are
The lessons of the grave;
But as the purple channels fill,
We gayer fancies have;
The world its former charms puts on,
And we to doat again are won.
But, rather than this shamefull chase repeat,
And grosly suffer, having seen the cheat;
A stranger let me live to fatal ease,
That greatness may not tempt, wealth shine,

VII. Rais'd
VII.

Rais'd from my bed, I'll higher rise,
And, springing upward, make the skies,
Nor shall this load of flesh retard my flight:
So, when the Eagle's Youth returns,
With thirst of bold attempts he burns,
Essays his wings, and tow'ring mocks the flight.

VIII.

All my past follies be forgot,
Lost in one universal blot:
From this Æra Years begin
Happy, and unstain'd with sin;
And as if life did now commence,
And Nature's beauties, now first struck my

Transported let me sing from whom I came,
Admire his works, and praise the faultless

IX.

My Soul, thou Source of life, with health in-

And actuate it with thy fire;
Let all its pow'rs partake the heat
Imparted by thy love,
In all a heav'nly vigour beat
Its every spring to move.
If thus my body and my mind
Shall both thy quick'ning influence find,
With both thy glory I will strive to raise,
And to thy service consecrate my days;
And while this aims at Heav'n, that bends to [Earth,
Each part will honour Thee, and own its several Birth.

X.

Tho' now delay'd, yet Death will come,
By fates inevitable doom;
When once the destin'd period is mature,
No Prayers for respite will prevail,
That mightiest engine then will fail,
And the disease we slight despair of cure.

XI.

Sun, stand thou still, a mortal said,
The mortal's voice the Sun obey'd,
Sudden check'd his rapid wheel
On the brow of Heaven's steep hill.
To double length he stretch'd that day;
But then, impatient of his longer stay,
His fall he hasten'd and withdrew the light:
So stopp'd a while, my Sun will set in Night.
XII.

Wisely the blessing use thou must resign;
The blessing will not long be thine;
Prepare, my Soul, for thy remove
From this poor shed of clay,
To seats of fadeless bliss above,
And ever-during day.
Death shews not there his meagre face,
And guilt's a stranger to the place.
No annals to record, as here, the time,
The bless'd preserve; but ever in their prime,
Let countless ages glide away untold,
Which witness, as they pass, to joys that ne'er
[grow old.

A H Y M N.

I.

WHILE Seraphs round thy glorious
Throne
In holy raptures burn,
In lands of drought and shades of death,
Thy absence, Lord, I mourn.

II. The
II.
The subject of their songs they view,
This elevates them high;
O were my flight but blest as theirs,
With theirs my songs should vie.

III.
But ah, while oft to Heav'n I look,
And longing seek thee there,
My eyes with expectation fail,
And I almost despair.

IV.
Yet cease I not to praise my God,
Whose mercy cheers my days,
And thro' a vale of guilt and tears,
Untouch'd, my Soul conveys.

V.
While I with worlds of light above
Compare our changing spot,
Scarce can my restless heart forbear
Repining at its lot.

VI.
But 'tis enough that Heav'n's my Home,
And th' Earth while passing thro',
Tho' trackless spaces lie between,
My Home I have in view.
VII.

The shining portal first surveys,
Faith boldly enters in,
And takes possession for my Soul
Releas'd by Death from Sin.

A H Y M N.

I.

THEE, glorious God, whom none can see
Yet all mankind must own,
Our hearts acknowledge, and to Thee
We speak in ev'ry groan.

II.

Our Souls confin'd to darksome clay,
A sad and heavy load,
'Midst fogs of sense mistake their way
To Thee, their sov'reign good,

III.

We travel thro' this world of sin,
As o'er enchanted ground,
Following the fond delusive scene
'Till in perdition drown'd.

IV. Heav'n
IV.

Heav'n warns us of the dang'rous road,
And would our steps recal,
But we must tread where crowds have trod,
And where they fell we fall.

V.

Great God, dissolve the dreadful spell,
Which does our Reason blind,
That rescu'd from the gates of hell,
We thy abode may find.

An E P I T A P H

On a young Lady who died in her Twenty First Year.

GRIEV'D to behold in Youth's enchanting bloom,
Her lovely charge descend into the tomb,
"And is it thus, afflicted V I R T U E cries,
"That Heav'n distinguishes the early wife?"
"Thus crowns the tender Parents watchful care?"
Celestial P I E T Y, her Sister fair,

With
With accents mild, and looks serenely bright,
That scatter'd all the horrors of the Night,
Reply'd—" Cease thou their happy lot to mourn,
" Who never more from rest to toil return:
" Thy Pupils who to things unseen aspire,
" And endless joys, struck by my sacred fire,
" Their task fulfill'd, lay down this mortal load:
" They cannot die too young who live to God."

The End of the Fourth Volume.
# Table of the Several Texts of Scripture preached upon in the First Volume, and Part of the Second.

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