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A

CAREFUL AND STRICT

# ENQUIRY

INTO THE

MODERN PREVAILING NOTIONS

OF THAT

*FREEDOM of WILL,*

WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO BE ESSENTIAL

TO

MORAL AGENCY, VIRTUE AND VICE, REWARD AND PUNISHMENT, PRAISE AND BLAME.

By JONATHAN EDWARDS, A. M.

Rom. ix. 16. *It is not of him that willeth—*

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THE

# PREFACE.

MANY find much fault with the calling profeſſing Chriſtians, that differ one from another in ſome matters of opinion, by diſtinct *names;* eſpecially calling them by the names of particular men, who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves as maintainers and promoters of thoſe opinions; as the calling ſome profeſſing Chriſtians *Arminians*, from Arminius; others *Arians*, from Arius; others *Socinians*, from Socinus, and the like. They think it unjuſt in itſelf; as it ſeems to ſuppoſe and ſuggeſt, that the perſons marked out by theſe names, received thoſe doctrines which they entertain, out of regard *to*, and reliance *on* thoſe men after whom they are named; as though they made them their rule; in the ſame manner, as the followers of CHRIST are called *Chriſtians;* after his name, whom they regard and depend upon, as their great Head and Rule. Whereas, this is an unjuſt and groundleſs imputation on thoſe that go under the fore-mentioned denominations. Thus (ſay they) there is not the leaſt ground

to ſuppoſe that the chief Divines, who embrace the ſcheme of doctrine which is, by many, called *Arminianiſm*, believe it the more, becauſe Arminius believed it: and that there is no reaſon to think any other, than that they ſincerely and impartially ſtudy the holy Scriptures, and enquire after the mind of Chriſt, with as much judgment and ſincerity, as any of thoſe that call them by theſe names; that they ſeek after truth, and are not careful whether they think exactly as Arminius did; yea, that, in ſome things, they actually differ from him. This practice is alſo eſteemed actually injurious on this account, that it is ſuppoſed naturally to lead the multitude to imagine the difference between perſons thus named and others, to be greater than it is; yea, as tho' it were ſo great, that they muſt be, as it were, another ſpecies of beings. And they object againſt it as ariſing from an uncharitable, narrow, contracted ſpirit; which, they ſay, commonly inclines perſons to confine all that is good to themſelves, and their own party, and to make a wide diſtinction between themſelves and others, and ſtigmatize thoſe that differ from them with odious names. They ſay, moreover, that the keeping up ſuch a diſtinction of names has a direct tendency to uphold diſtance and diſaffection, and keep alive mutual hatred among Chriſtians, who ought all to be united in friendſhip and charity, however they cannot, in all things, think alike.

I confeſs, theſe things are very plauſible. And I will not deny, that there are ſome unhappy conſequences of this diſtinction of names, and that men's infirmities and evil diſpoſitions often make an ill improvement of it. But yet, I humbly conceive, theſe objections are carried far beyond reaſon. The generality of mankind are diſpoſed enough, and a great deal too much, to uncharitableneſs, and to be cenſorious and bitter towards thoſe that differ from them in religious opinions: which evil temper of mind will take occaſion to exert itſelf from many things in themſelves innocent, uſeful and neceſſary. But yet there is no neceſſity to ſuppoſe, that the thus diſtinguiſhing perſons of different opinions by different names, ariſes mainly from an uncharitable ſpirit. It may ariſe from the diſpoſition there is in mankind (whom God has diſtinguiſhed with an ability and inclination for ſpeech) to improve the benefit of language, in the proper uſe and deſign of names, given to things which they have often occaſion to ſpeak of, or ſignify their minds about; which is to enable them to expreſs their ideas with eaſe and expedition, without being encumbered with an obſcure and difficult circumlocution. And the thus diſtinguiſhing perſons of different opinions in religious matters may not imply, nor infer, any more than that there is a difference, and that the difference is ſuch as we find we have often occaſion to take notice of, and make mention of. That which we

have frequent occaſion to ſpeak of (whatever it be, that gives the occaſion) this wants a name: and it is always a defect in language, in ſuch caſes, to be obliged to make uſe of a deſcription, inſtead of a name. Thus we have often occaſion to ſpeak of thoſe who are the deſcendants of the ancient inhabitants of France, who were ſubjects or heads of the government of that land, and ſpake the language peculiar to it; in diſtinction from the deſcendants of the inhabitants of Spain, who belonged to that community, and ſpake the language of that country. And therefore we find the great need of diſtinct names to ſignify theſe different ſorts of people, and the great convenience of thoſe diſtinguiſhing words, *French* and *Spaniards*; by which the ſignification of our minds is quick and eaſy, and our ſpeech is delivered from the burden of a continual reiteration of diffuſe deſcriptions, with which it muſt otherwiſe be embarraſſed.

That the difference of the opinions of thoſe, who in their general ſcheme of divinity agree with theſe two noted men, Calvin and Arminius, is a thing there is often occaſion to ſpeak of, is what the practice of the latter itſelf confeſſes; who are often, in their diſcourſes and writings, taking notice of the ſuppoſed abſurd and pernicious opinions of the former ſort. And therefore the making uſe of different names in this caſe cannot reaſonably be objected againſt, or condemned, as a thing which muſt come

from ſo bad a cauſe as they aſſign. It is eaſy to be accounted for, without ſuppoſing it to ariſe from any other ſource, than the exigence and natural tendency of the ſtate of things; conſidering the faculty and diſpoſition God has given to mankind, to expreſs things which they have frequent occaſion to mention, by certain diſtinguiſhing names. It is an effect that is ſimilar to what we ſee ariſe, in innumerable caſes which are parallel, where the cauſe is not at all blame-worthy.

Nevertheleſs, at firſt, I had thoughts of carefully avoiding the uſe of the appellation, *Arminian*, in this treatiſe. But I ſoon found I ſhould be put to great difficulty by it; and that my diſcourſe would be ſo encumbered with an often repeated circumlocution, inſtead of a name, which would expreſs the thing intended, as well and better, that I altered my purpoſe. And therefore I muſt aſk the excuſe of ſuch as are apt to be offended with things of this nature, that I have ſo freely uſed the term *Arminian* in the following diſcourſe. I profeſs it to be without any deſign, to ſtigmatize perſons of any ſort with a name of reproach, or at all to make them appear more odious. If, when I had occaſion to ſpeak of thoſe divines who are commonly called by this name, I had, inſtead of ſtyling them *Arminians*, called them *theſe men*, as Dr. Whitby does *Calviniſtic* Divines; it probably would not have been taken any better, or thought to ſhew a better temper, or more good manners. I have done as I

would be done by, in this matter. However the term *Calviniſtic* is, in theſe days, among moſt, a term of greater reproach than the term *Arminian;* yet I ſhould not take it at all amiſs, to be called a *Calviniſt*, for diſtinction's ſake: though I utterly diſclaim a dependence on Calvin, or believing the doctrines which I hold, becauſe he believed and taught them; and cannot juſtly be charged with believing in every thing juſt as he taught.

But, leſt I ſhould really be an occaſion of injury to ſome perſons, I would here give notice, that though I generally ſpeak of that doctrine, concerning Free-will and moral Agency, which I oppoſe, as an *Arminian* doctrine; yet I would not be underſtood, as aſſerting that every Divine or Author, whom I have occaſion to mention as maintaining that doctrine, was properly an *Arminian*, or one of that ſort which is commonly called by that name. Some of them went far beyond the *Arminians:* and I would by no means charge *Arminians* in general with all the corrupt doctrine, which theſe maintained. Thus, for inſtance, it would be very injurious, if I ſhould rank *Arminian* Divines, in general, with ſuch Authors as Mr. Chubb. I doubt not, many of them have ſome of his doctrines in abhorrence; though he agrees, for the moſt part, with *Arminians*, in his notion of the Freedom of the Will. And, on the other hand, though I ſuppoſe this notion to be a leading article in the *Arminian* ſcheme, that

which, if purſued in its conſequences, will truly infer, or naturally lead to all the reſt; yet I do not charge all that have held this doctrine, with being *Arminians*. For whatever may be the conſequences of the doctrine really, yet ſome that hold this doctrine, may not own nor ſee theſe conſequences; and it would be unjuſt, in many inſtances, to charge every Author with believing and maintaining all the real conſequences of his avowed doctrines. And I deſire it may be particularly noted, that though I have occaſion, in the following Diſcourſe, often to mention the Author of the book, entitled *An Eſſay on the Freedom of the Will, in God and the Creature*, as holding that notion of Freedom of Will, which I oppoſe; yet I do not mean to call him an *Arminian:* however, in that doctrine he agrees with *Arminians*, and departs from the current and general opinion of *Calviniſts*. If the Author of that Eſſay be the ſame as it is commonly aſcribed to, he, doubtleſs, was not one that ought to bear that name. But however good a Divine he was in many reſpects, yet that particular *Arminian* doctrine which he maintained, is never the better for being held by ſuch an one; nor is there leſs need of oppoſing it on that account; but rather is there the more need of it; as it will be likely to have the more pernicious influence, for being taught by a Divine of his name and character; ſuppoſing the doctrine to be wrong, and in itſelf to be of an ill tendency.

I have nothing further to ſay by way of preface; but only to beſpeak the Reader's candor, and calm attention to what I have written. The ſubject is of ſuch importance, as to *demand* attention, and the moſt thorough conſideration. Of all kinds of knowledge that we can ever obtain, the knowledge of God, and the knowledge of ourſelves, are the moſt important. As religion is the great buſineſs, for which we are created, and on which our happineſs depends; and as religion conſiſts in an intercourſe between ourſelves and our Maker; and ſo has its foundation in God's nature and ours, and in the relation that God and we ſtand in to each other; therefore a true knowledge of both muſt be needful, in order to true religion. But the knowledge of ourſelves conſiſts chiefly in right apprehenſions concerning thoſe two chief faculties of our nature, the *underſtanding* and *will*. Both are very important: yet the ſcience of the latter muſt be confeſſed to be of greateſt moment; inaſmuch as all virtue and religion have their ſeat more immediately in the will, conſiſting more eſpecially in right acts and habits of this faculty. And the grand queſtion about the Freedom of the Will, is the main point that belongs to the ſcience of the Will. Therefore, I ſay, the importance of this ſubject greatly *demands* the attention of Chriſtians, and eſpecially of Divines. But as to my manner of handling the ſubject, I will be far from preſum-

ing to ſay, that it is ſuch as *demands* the attention of the Reader to what I have written. I am ready to own, that in this matter I depend on the Reader's *courteſy*. But only thus far I may have ſome colour for putting in a *claim;* that if the Reader be diſpoſed to paſs his cenſure on what I have written, I may be fully and patiently heard, and well attended to, before I am condemned. However, this is what I would humbly *aſk* of my Readers; together with the prayers of all ſincere lovers of truth, that I may have much of that Spirit which Chriſt promiſed his diſciples, which guides into all truth; and that the bleſſed and powerful influences of this Spirit would make truth victorious in the world.

A

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# PART I.

Wherein are explained and ſtated various *Terms* and *Things* belonging to the Subject of the enſuing Diſcourſe.

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## SECTION I.

### *Concerning the Nature of the* WILL.

IT may poſſibly be thought, that there is no great need of going about to define or deſcribe the *Will;* this word being generally as well underſtood as any other words we can uſe to explain it: and ſo perhaps it would be, had not philoſophers, metaphyſicians and polemic divines brought the matter into obſcurity by the things they have ſaid of it. But ſince it is ſo, I think it may be of ſome uſe, and will tend to the greater clearneſs in the following diſcourſe, to ſay a few things concerning it.

And therefore I obſerve, that the *Will* (without any metaphyſical refining) is plainly, *That by which the mind chuſes any thing.* The faculty of the *Will* is that faculty or power or principle of mind by which it is capable of *chuſing:* an act of the *Will* is the ſame as an act of *chuſing* or *choice.*

If any think it is a more perfect definition of the Will, to ſay, that it is that by which the ſoul either *chuſes* or *refuſes;* I am content with it: tho' I think that it is enough to ſay, it is that by which the ſoul chuſes: for in every act of Will whatſoever, the mind chuſes one thing rather than another; it chuſes ſomething rather than the contrary, or rather than the want or non-exiſtence of that thing. So in every act of refuſal, the mind chuſes the abſence of the thing refuſed; the poſitive and the negative are ſet before the mind for its choice, and it chuſes the negative; and the mind's making its choice in that caſe is properly the act of the Will: the Will's determining between the two is a voluntary determining; but that is the ſame thing as making a choice. So that whatever names we call the act of the Will by *chuſing*, *refuſing*, *approving*, *diſapproving*, *liking*, *diſliking*, *embracing*, *rejecting*, *determining*, *directing*, *commanding*, *forbidding*, *inclining* or being *averſe*, a *being pleaſed* or *diſpleaſed with;* all may be reduced to this of *chuſing.* For the ſoul to act *voluntarily*, is evermore to act *elective*ly.

Mr. Locke*, ſays, " The Will ſignifies nothing " but a power or ability to *prefer* or *chuſe*." And in the foregoing page ſays, " The word *prefer-* " *ring* ſeems beſt to expreſs the act of volition;"

* Human Underſtanding. Edit. 7. vol. i. p. 197.

But adds, that " it does it not precisely; For (says he) " tho' a man would prefer flying to walking, " yet who can say he ever wills it?" But the instance he mentions does not prove that there is any thing else in *willing*, but merely *preferring:* for it should be considered what is the next and immediate object of the Will, with respect to a man's walking, or any other external action; which is not being removed from one place to another; on the earth, or thro' the air; these are remoter objects of preference; but such or such an immediate exertion of himself. The thing nextly chosen or preferred when a man wills to walk, is not his being removed to such a place where he would be, but such an exertion and motion of his legs and feet, &c. in order to it. And his willing such an alteration in his body in the present moment, is nothing else but his chusing or preferring such an alteration in his body at such a moment, or his liking it better than the forbearance of it. And God has so made and established the human nature, the soul being united to a body in proper state, that the soul preferring or chusing such an immediate exertion or alteration of the body, such an alteration instantaneously follows. There is nothing else in the actions of my mind, that I am conscious of while I walk, but only my preferring or chusing, through successive moments, that there should be such alterations of my external sensations and motions; together with a concurring habitual expectation that it will be so; having ever found by experience, that on such an immediate preference, such sensations and motions do actually instantaneously, and constantly arise. But it is not so in the case of flying: tho' a man may be said remotely to chuse or prefer flying; yet he does not chuse or prefer, incline to or desire, under circumstances in view, any

immediate exertion of the members of his body in order to it; becauſe he has no expectation that he ſhould obtain the deſired end by any ſuch exertion; and he does not prefer or incline to any bodily exertion or effort under this apprehended circumſtance, of its being wholly in vain. So that if we carefully diſtinguiſh the proper objects of the ſeveral acts of the Will, it will not appear by this, and ſuch like inſtances, that there is any difference between *volition* and *preference;* or that a man's chuſing, liking beſt, or being beſt pleaſed with a thing, are not the ſame with his willing that thing; as they ſeem to be according to thoſe general and more natural motions of men, according to which language is formed. Thus an act of the Will is commonly expreſſed by *its pleaſing a man* to do thus or thus; and a man doing as he *wills*, and doing as he *pleaſes*, are the ſame thing in common ſpeech.

Mr. Locke* ſays, "The Will is perfectly di-
"ſtinguiſhed from Deſire; which in the very ſame
"action may have a quite contrary tendency
"from that which our Wills ſet us upon. A
"man (ſays he) whom I cannot deny, may oblige
"me to uſe perſuaſions to another, which, at the
"ſame time I am ſpeaking, I may wiſh may not
"prevail on him. In this caſe it is plain the Will
"and Deſire run counter." I do not ſuppoſe, that *Will* and *Deſire* are words of preciſely the ſame ſignification: *Will* ſeems to be a word of a more general ſignification, extending to things preſent and abſent. *Deſire* reſpects ſomething abſent. I may prefer my preſent ſituation and poſture, ſuppoſe ſitting ſtill, or having my eyes open, and ſo may will it. But yet I cannot think they

* Hum. Und. vol. i. p. 203, 204.

are ſo entirely diſtinct, that they can ever be properly ſaid to run counter. A man never, in any inſtance, wills any thing contrary to his Deſires, or deſires any thing contrary to his Will. The forementioned inſtance, which Mr. Locke produces, does not prove that he ever does. He may, on ſome conſideration or other, will to utter ſpeeches which have a tendency to perſuade another, and ſtill may deſire that they may not perſuade him: but yet his Will and Deſire does not run counter at all: the thing which he wills, the very ſame he deſires; and he does not will a thing, and deſire the contrary in any particular. In this inſtance, it is not careſully obſerved, what is the thing willed, and what is the thing deſired: if it were, it would be found that Will and Deſire does not claſh in the leaſt. The thing willed on ſome conſideration, is to utter ſuch words; and certainly, the ſame conſideration ſo influences him, that he does not deſire the contrary; all things conſidered, he chuſes to utter ſuch words, and does not deſire not to utter them. And ſo as to the thing which Mr. Locke ſpeaks of as deſired, *viz.* That the words, tho' they tend to perſuade, ſhould not be effectual to that end, his Will is not contrary to this; he does not will that they ſhould be effectual, but rather wills that they ſhould not, as he deſires. In order to prove that the Will and Deſire may run counter, it ſhould be ſhown that they may be contrary one to the other in the ſame thing, or with reſpect to the very ſame object of Will or Deſire: but here the objects are two; and in each, taken by themſelves, the Will and Deſire agree. And it is no wonder that they ſhould not agree in different things, however little diſtinguiſhed they are in their nature. The Will may not agree with the Will, nor Deſire agree with Deſire, in different things. As in this very inſtance which Mr. Locke

mentions, a perſon may, on ſome conſideration, deſire to uſe perſuaſions, and at the ſame time may deſire they may not prevail; but yet nobody will ſay, that *Deſire* runs counter to *Deſire;* or that this proves that *Deſire* is perfectly a diſtinct thing from *Deſire*—The like might be obſerved of the other inſtance Mr. Locke produces, of a man's deſiring to be eaſed of pain, &c.

But not to dwell any longer on this, whether *Deſire* and *Will*, and whether *Preference* and *Volition* be preciſely the ſame things or no; yet, I truſt it will be allowed by all, that in every act of Will there is an act of choice; that in every volition there is a preference, or a prevailing inclination of the ſoul, whereby the ſoul, at that inſtant, is out of a ſtate of perfect indifference, with reſpect to the direct object of the volition. So that in every act, or going forth of the Will, there is ſome preponderation of the mind or inclination, one way rather than another; and the ſoul had rather *have* or *do* one thing than another, or than not to have or do that thing; and that there, where there is abſolutely no preferring or chuſing, but a perfect continuing equilibrium, there is no volition.

## SECTION II.

### *Concerning the* Determination *of the Will.*

BY *determining the Will*, if the phraſe be uſed with any meaning, muſt be intended, *cauſing that the act of the Will or Choice ſhould be thus, and not otherwiſe:* and the Will is ſaid to be determined, when, in conſequence of ſome action, or influence, its choice is directed to, and fixed upon a particular object. As when we ſpeak of the

Determination of motion, we mean caufing the motion of the body to be fuch a way, or in fuch a direction, rather than an other.

To talk of the Determination of the Will, fuppofes an effect, which muft have a caufe. If the Will be determined, there is a Determiner. This muft be fuppofed to be intended even by them that fay, the Will determines itfelf. If it be fo, the Will is both Determiner and determined; it is a caufe that acts and produces effects upon itfelf, and is the object of its own influence and action.

With refpect to that grand enquiry, *What determines the Will*, it would be very tedious and unneceffary at prefent to enumerate and examine all the various opinions, which have been advanced concerning this matter; nor is it needful that I fhould enter into a particular difquifition of all points debated in difputes on that queftion, *Whether the Will always follows the laft dictate of the underftanding*. It is fufficient to my prefent purpofe to fay,—*It is that motive, which, as it ftands in the view of the mind, is the ftrongeft that determines the Will*—But it may be be neceffary that I fhould a little explain my meaning in this.

By *motive*, I mean the whole of that which moves, excites or invites the mind to volition, whether that be one thing fingly, or many things conjunctly. Many particular things may concur and unite their ftrength to induce the mind; and when it is fo, all together are as it were one complex motive. And when I fpeak of the *ftrongeft motive*, I have refpect to the ftrength of the whole that operates to induce to a particular act of volition, whether that be the ftrength of one thing alone, or of many together.

Whatever is a motive, in this ſenſe, muſt be ſomething that is *extant in the view or apprehenſion of the underſtanding*, or perceiving faculty. Nothing can induce or invite the mind to will or act any thing, any further than it is perceived, or is ſome way or other in the mind's view; for what is wholly unperceived, and perfectly out of the mind's view, cannot affect the mind at all. It is moſt evident, that nothing is in the mind, or reaches it, or takes any hold of it, any otherwiſe than as it is perceived or thought of.

And I think it muſt alſo be allowed by all, that every thing that is properly called a motive, excitement or inducement to a perceiving willing agent, has ſome ſort and degree of *tendency*, or *advantage* to move or excite the Will, previous to the effect, or to the act of the Will excited. This previous tendency of the motive is what I call *the ſtrength of the motive.* That motive which has a leſs degree of previous advantage or tendency to move the Will, or that appears leſs inviting, as it ſtands in the view of the mind, is what I call a *weaker motive.* On the contrary, that which appears moſt inviting, and has, by what appears concerning it to the underſtanding or apprehenſion, the greateſt degree of previous tendency to excite and induce the choice, is what I call the *ſtrongeſt motive.* And in this ſenſe, I ſuppoſe the Will is always determined by the ſtrongeſt motive.

Things that exiſt in the view of the mind have their ſtrength, tendency or advantage to move or excite its Will, from many things appertaining to the nature and circumſtances of the *thing viewed*, the nature and circumſtances of the *mind that views*, and the degree and manner of its *view;*

which it would perhaps be hard to make a perfect enumeration of. But so much I think may be determined in general, without room for controversy, that whatever is perceived or apprehended by an intelligent and voluntary agent, which has the nature and influence of a motive to volition or choice, is considered or viewed *as good;* nor has it any tendency to invite or engage the election of the soul in any further degree than it appears such. For to say otherwise, would be to say, that things that appear have a tendency by the appearance they make, to engage the mind to elect them, some other way than by their appearing eligible to it; which is absurd. And therefore it must be true, in some sense, that *the Will always is as the greatest apparent good is.* But only, for the right understanding of this, two things must be well and distinctly observed.

1. It must be observed in what sense I use the term *good;* namely as of the same import with *agreeable.* To appear *good* to the mind, as I use the phrase, is the same as to *appear agreeable*, or *seem pleasing* to the mind. Certainly, nothing appears inviting and eligible to the mind, or tending to engage its inclination and choice, considered as *evil* or *disagreeable;* nor indeed, as *indifferent*, and neither agreeable nor disagreeable. But if it tends to draw the inclination, and move the Will, it must be under the notion of that which *suits* the mind. And therefore that must have the greatest tendency to attract and engage it, which, as it stands in the mind's view, suits it best, and pleases it most; and in that sense, is the greatest apparent good: to say otherwise, is little, if any thing, short of a direct and plain contradiction.

The word *good*, in this sense, includes in its signification, the removal or avoiding of evil, or

of that which is disagreeable and uneasy. It is agreeable and pleasing, to avoid what is disagreeable and displeasing, and to have uneasiness removed. So that here is included what Mr. Locke supposes determines the Will. For when he speaks of uneasiness as determining the Will, he must be understood as supposing that the end or aim which governs in the volition or act of preference, is the avoiding or removal of that uneasiness; and that is the same thing as chusing and seeking what is more easy and agreeable.

2. When I say, the Will is as the greatest apparent good is, or (as I have explained it) that volition has always for its object the thing which appears most agreeable; it must be carefully observed, to avoid confusion and needless objection, that I speak of the *direct* and *immediate* object of the act of volition; and not some object that the act of Will has not an immediate, but only an indirect and remote respect to. Many acts of volition have some remote relation to an object, that is different from the thing most immediately willed and chosen. Thus, when a drunkard has his liquor before him, and he has to chuse whether to drink it, or no; the proper and immediate objects; about which his present volition is conversant, and between which his choice now decides, are his own acts, in drinking the liquor, or letting it alone; and this will certainly be done according to what, in the present view of his mind, taken in the whole of it, is most agreeable to him. If he chuses or wills to drink it, and not to let it alone; then this action, as it stands in the view of his mind, with all that belongs to its appearance there, is more agreeable and pleasing than letting it alone.

But the objects to which this act of volition may relate more remotely, and between which his choice may determine more indirectly, are the present pleasure the man expects by drinking, and the future misery which he judges will be the consequence of it: he may judge that this future misery, when it comes, will be more disagreeable and unpleasant, than refraining from drinking now would be. But these two things are not the proper objects that the act of volition spoken of is nextly conversant about. For the act of Will spoken of is concerning present drinking or forbearing to drink. If he wills to drink, then drinking is the proper object of the act of his Will; and drinking, on some account or other, now appears most agreeable to him, and suits him best. If he chuses to refrain, then refraining is the immediate object of his Will, and is most pleasing to him. If in the choice he makes in the case, he prefers a present pleasure to a future advantage, which he judges will be greater when it comes; then a lesser present pleasure appears more agreeable to him than a greater advantage at a distance. If on the contrary a future advantage is preferred, then that appears most agreeable, and suits him best. And so still the present volition is as the greatest apparent good at present is.

I have rather chosen to express myself thus, *that the Will always is as the greatest apparent good*, or *as what appears most agreeable, is*, than to say that the Will *is determined by* the greatest apparent good, or by what seems most agreeable; because an appearing most agreeable or pleasing to the mind, and the mind's preferring and chusing, seem hardly to be properly and perfectly distinct. If strict propriety of speech be insisted on, it may more pro-

perly be ſaid, that the *voluntary action* which is the immediate conſequence and fruit of the mind's volition or choice, is *determined* by that which appears moſt agreeable, than the preference or choice itſelf; but that the act of volition itſelf is always determined by that in or about the mind's view of the object, which *cauſes it to appear* moſt agreeable. I ſay, *in or about the mind's view* of the object, becauſe what has influence to render an object in view agreeable, is not only what appears *in* the object viewed, but alſo *the manner* of the view, and *the ſtate and circumſtances* of the mind that views.—Particularly to enumerate all things pertaining to the mind's view of the objects of volition, which have influence in their appearing agreeable to the mind, would be a matter of no ſmall difficulty, and might require a treatiſe by itſelf, and is not neceſſary to my preſent purpoſe. I ſhall therefore only mention ſome things in general.

I. One thing that makes an object propoſed to choice agreeable, is the *apparent nature* and *circumſtances of the object.* And there are various things of this ſort, that have an hand in rendering the object more or leſs agreeable; as,

1. That which appears in the object, which renders it *beautiful* and pleaſant, or *deformed* and irkſome to the mind; viewing it as it is *in itſelf.*

2. The apparent degree of pleaſure or trouble *attending* the object, or the *conſequence* of it. Such concomitants and conſequents being viewed as circumſtances of the objects, are to be conſidered as belonging to it, and as it were parts of it; as it ſtands in the mind's view, as a propoſed object of choice.

3. The *apparent ſtate* of the pleaſure or trouble that appears, with reſpect to *diſtance of time;*

being either nearer or farther off. It is a thing in itself agreeable to the mind, to have pleasure speedily; and disagreeable, to have it delayed; so that if there be two equal degrees of pleasure set in the mind's view, and all other things are equal, but only one is beheld as near, and the other far off; the nearer will appear most agreeable, and so will be chosen. Because tho' the agreeableness of the objects be exactly equal, as viewed in themselves, yet not as viewed in their circumstances; one of them having the additional agreeableness of the circumstance of nearness.

II. Another thing that contributes to the agreeableness of an object of choice, as it stands in the mind's view, is the *manner of the view.* If the object be something which appears connected with future pleasure, not only will the degree of apparent pleasure have influence, but also the manner of the view, especially in two respects.

1. With respect to the degree of *judgment*, or firmness of *assent*, with which the mind judges the pleasure to be future. Because it is more agreeable to have a *certain* happiness, than an *uncertain* one; and a pleasure viewed as more probable, all other things being equal, is more agreeable to the mind, than that which is viewed as less probable.

2. With respect to the degree of the *idea* of the future pleasure. With regard to things which are the subject of our thoughts, either past, present or future, we have much more of an idea or apprehension of some things than others; that is, our idea is much more clear, lively and strong. Thus the ideas we have of sensible things by immediate sensation, are usually much more lively than those we have by mere imagination, or by contemplation of them when absent. My idea of the

ſun, when I look upon it, is more vivid, than when I only think of it. Our idea of the ſweet reliſh of a delicious fruit is uſually ſtronger when we taſte it, than when we only imagine it. And ſometimes, the idea we have of things by contemplation, are much ſtronger and clearer, than at other times. Thus, a man at one time has a much ſtronger idea of the pleaſure which is to be enjoyed in eating ſome ſort of food that he loves, than at another. Now the degree, or ſtrength of the idea or ſenſe that men have of future good or evil, is one thing that has great influence on their minds to excite choice or volition. When of two kinds of future pleaſure, which the mind conſiders of, and are preſented for choice, both are ſuppoſed exactly equal by the judgment, and both equally certain, and all other things are equal but only one of them is what the mind has a far more lively ſenſe of, than of the other; this has the greateſt advantage by far to affect and attract the mind, and move the Will. It is now more agreeable to the mind, to take the pleaſure it has a ſtrong and lively ſenſe of, than that which it has only a faint idea of. The view of the former is attended with the ſtrongeſt appetite, and the greateſt uneaſineſs attends the want of it; and it is agreeable to the mind to have uneaſineſs removed, and its appetite gratified. And if ſeveral future enjoyments are preſented together, as competitors for the choice of the mind, ſome of them judged to be greater, and others leſs; the mind alſo having a greater ſenſe and more lively idea of the good of ſome of them, and of others a leſs; and ſome are viewed as of greater certainty or probability than others; and thoſe enjoyments that appear moſt agreeable in one of theſe reſpects, appear leaſt ſo in others: in this caſe, all other things being equal, the agreeableneſs of a propoſed object of

choice will be in a degree ſome way compounded of the degree of good ſuppoſed by the judgment, the degree of apparent probability or certainty of that good, and the degree of the view or ſenſe, or livelineſs of the idea the mind has, of that good; becauſe all together concur to conſtitute the degree in which the object appears at preſent agreeable; and accordingly volition will be determined.

I might further obſerve, the ſtate of the mind that views a propoſed object of choice, is another thing that contributes to the agreeableneſs or diſagreeableneſs of that object; the particular temper which the mind has by nature, or that has been introduced and eſtabliſhed by education, example, cuſtom, or ſome other means; or the frame or ſtate that the mind is in on a particular occaſion. That object which appears agreeable to one, does not ſo to another. And the ſame object does not always appear alike agreeable to the ſame perſon, at different times. It is moſt agreeable to ſome men, to follow their reaſon; and to others, to follow their appetites: to ſome men, it is more agreeable to deny a vicious inclination, than to gratify it: others it ſuits beſt to gratify the vileſt appetites. It is more diſagreeable to ſome men than others, to counter-act a former reſolution. In theſe reſpects, and many others which might be mentioned, different things will be moſt agreeable to different perſons; and not only ſo, but to the ſame perſons at different times.

But poſſibly it is needleſs and improper, to mention the frame and ſtate of the mind, as a diſtinct ground of the agreeableneſs of objects from the other two mentioned before; *viz.* The apparent nature and circumſtances of the objects viewed,

and the manner of the view: perhaps if we ſtrictly conſider the matter, the different temper and ſtate of the mind makes no alteration as to the agreeableneſs of objects, any other way, than as it makes the objects themſelves appear differently beautiful or deformed, having apparent pleaſure or pain attending them: and as it occaſions the manner of the view to be different, cauſes the idea of beauty or deformity, pleaſure or uneaſineſs to be more or leſs lively.

However, I think ſo much is certain, that volition, in no one inſtance that can be mentioned, is otherwiſe than the greateſt apparent good is, in the manner which has been explained. The choice of the mind never departs from that which, at that time, and with reſpect to the direct and immediate objects of that deciſion of the mind, appears moſt agreeable and pleaſing, all things conſidered. If the immediate objects of the will are a man's own actions, then thoſe actions which appear moſt agreeable to him he wills. If it be now moſt agreeable to him, all things conſidered, to walk, then he now wills to walk. If it be now, upon the whole of what at preſent appears to him, moſt agreeable to ſpeak, then he chuſes to ſpeak: if it ſuits him beſt to keep ſilence, then he chuſes to keep ſilence. There is ſcarcely a plainer and more univerſal dictate of the ſenſe and experience of mankind, than that, when men act voluntarily, and do what they pleaſe, then they do what ſuits them beſt, or what is moſt *agreeable to them.* To ſay, that they do what they pleaſe, or what pleaſes them, but yet do not do what is *agreeable* to them, is the ſame thing as to ſay, they do what they pleaſe, but do not act their pleaſure; and that is to ſay, that they do what they pleaſe, and yet do not do what they pleaſe.

It appears from these things, that in some sense, *the Will always follows the last dictate of the understanding.* But then the *understanding* must be taken in a large sense, as including the whole faculty of perception or apprehension, and not merely what is called *reason* or *judgment.* If by the dictate of the understanding is meant what reason declares to be best or most for the person's happiness, taking in the whole of its duration, it is not true, that the Will always follows the last dictate of the understanding. Such a dictate of reason is quite a different matter from things appearing now most *agreeable;* all things being put together which pertain to the mind's present perceptions, apprehensions or ideas, in any respect. Altho' that dictate of reason, when it takes place, is one thing that is put into the scales, and is to be considered as a thing that has concern in the compound influence which moves and induces the Will; and is one thing that is to be considered in estimating the degree of that appearance of good which the Will always follows; either as having its influence added to other things, or subducted from them. When it concurs with other things, then its weight is added to them, as put into the same scale; but when it is against them, it is as a weight in the opposite scale, where it resists the influence of other things: yet its resistance is often overcome by their greater weight, and so the act of the Will is determined in opposition to it.

The things which I have said, may, I hope, serve, in some measure to illustrate and confirm the position I laid down in the beginning of this section, *viz.* That *the Will is always determined by the strongest motive*, or by that view of the mind which has the greatest degree of *previous* tendency to excite volition. But whether I have been so

happy as rightly to explain the thing wherein conſiſts the ſtrength of motives, or not, yet my failing in this will not overthrow the poſition itſelf; which carries much of its own evidence with it, and is the thing of chief importance to the purpoſe of the enſuing diſcourſe: And the truth of it, I hope, will appear with great clearneſs, before I have finiſhed what I have to ſay on the ſubject of human liberty.

## SECTION III.

### *Concerning the Meaning of the Terms* Neceſſity, Impoſſibility, Inability, &c. *and of* Contingence.

THE words *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, &c. are abundantly uſed in controverſies about Free-Will and moral agency; and therefore the ſenſe in which they are uſed, ſhould be clearly underſtood.

Here I might ſay, that a thing is then ſaid to be *neceſſary*, when it muſt be, and cannot be otherwiſe. But this would not properly be a definition of Neceſſity, or an explanation of the word, any more than if I explained the word *muſt*, by there being a Neceſſity. The words *muſt*, *can*, and *cannot*, need explication as much as the words *neceſſary*, and *impoſſible;* excepting that the former are words that children commonly uſe, and know ſomething of the meaning of earlier than the latter.

The word *neceſſary*, as uſed in common ſpeech, is a relative term; and relates to ſome ſuppoſed oppoſition made to the exiſtence of the thing ſpoken of, which is overcome, or proves in vain to hinder or alter it. That is neceſſary, in the original and proper ſenſe of the word, which is, or will be, notwithſtanding all ſuppoſable oppo-

ſition. To ſay, that a thing is neceſſary, is the ſame thing as to ſay, that it is impoſſible, it ſhould not be: But the word *impoſſible* is manifeſtly a relative term, and has reference to ſuppoſed power exerted to bring a thing to paſs, which is inſufficient for the effect; as the word *unable* is relative, and has relation to ability or endeavour which is inſufficient; and as the word *irreſiſtible* is relative, and has always reference to reſiſtance which is made, or may be made to ſome force or power tending to an effect, and is inſufficient to withſtand the power, or hinder the effect. The common notion of Neceſſity and Impoſſibility implies ſomething that fruſtrates endeavour or deſire.

Here ſeveral things are to be noted.

1. Things are ſaid to be neceſſary in *general*, which are or will be notwithſtanding any ſuppoſable oppoſition *from us or others*, or from whatever quarter. But things are ſaid to be neceſſary *to us*, which are or will be notwithſtanding all oppoſition ſuppoſable in the caſe *from us*. The ſame may be obſerved of the word *impoſſible*, and other ſuch like terms.

2. Theſe terms *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *irreſiſtible*, &c. do eſpecially belong to controverſy about liberty and moral agency, as uſed in the latter of the two ſenſes now mentioned, *viz.* as neceſſary or impoſſible *to us*, and with relation to any ſuppoſable oppoſition or endeavour *of ours*.

3. As the word *Neceſſity*, in its vulgar and common uſe, is relative, and has always reference to ſome ſuppoſable inſufficient oppoſition; ſo when we ſpeak of any thing as neceſſary *to us*, it is with relation to ſome ſuppoſable oppoſition of *our Wills*,

or ſome voluntary exertion or effort of ours to the contrary. For we do not properly make oppoſition to an event, any otherwiſe than as we *voluntarily* oppoſe it. Things are ſaid to be what muſt be, or *neceſſarily* are, *as to us*, when they are, or will be, though we deſire or endeavour the contrary, or try to prevent or remove their exiſtence: but ſuch oppoſition of ours always either conſiſts in, or implies oppoſition of our wills.

It is manifeſt that all ſuch like words and phraſes, as vulgarly uſed, are uſed and accepted in this manner. A thing is ſaid to be *neceſſary*, when we cannot help it, let us do what we will. So any thing is ſaid to be *impoſſible* to us, when we would do it, or would have it brought to paſs, and endeavour it; or at leaſt may be ſuppoſed to deſire and ſeek it; but all our deſires and endeavours are, or would be vain. And that is ſaid to be *irreſiſtible*, which overcomes all our oppoſition, reſiſtance, and endeavour to the contrary. And we are to be ſaid *unable* to do a thing, when our ſuppoſable deſires and endeavours to do it are inſufficient.

We are accuſtomed, in the common uſe of language, to apply and underſtand theſe phraſes in this ſenſe: we grow up with ſuch a habit; which by the daily uſe of theſe terms, in ſuch a ſenſe, from our childhood, becomes fixed and ſettled; ſo that the idea of a relation to a ſuppoſed will, deſire and endeavour of ours, is ſtrongly connected with theſe terms, and naturally excited in our minds, whenever we hear the words uſed. Such ideas, and theſe words, are ſo united and aſſociated, that they unavoidably go together; one ſuggeſts the other, and carries the other with it, and never can be ſeparated as long as we

live. And if we uſe the words, as terms of art, in another ſenſe, yet, unleſs we are exceeding circumſpect and wary, we ſhall inſenſibly ſlide into the vulgar uſe of them, and ſo apply the words in a very inconſiſtent manner: this habitual connection of ideas will deceive and confound us in our reaſonings and diſcourſes, wherein we pretend to uſe theſe terms in that manner, as terms of art.

4. It follows from what has been obſerved, that when theſe terms *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *irreſiſtible*, *unable*, &c. are uſed in caſes wherein no oppoſition, or inſufficient will or endeavour, is ſuppoſed, or can be ſuppoſed, but the very nature of the ſuppoſed caſe itſelf excludes, and denies any ſuch oppoſition, will or endeavour, theſe terms are then not uſed in their proper ſignification, but quite beſide their uſe in common ſpeech. The reaſon is manifeſt; namely, that in ſuch caſes we cannot uſe the words with reference to a ſuppoſable oppoſition, will or endeavour. And therefore if any man uſes theſe terms in ſuch caſes, he either uſes them nonſenſically, or in ſome new ſenſe, diverſe from their original and proper meaning. As for inſtance; if a man ſhould affirm after this manner, That it is neceſſary for a man, and what muſt be, that a man ſhould chuſe virtue rather than vice, during the time that he prefers virtue to vice; and that it is a thing impoſſible and irreſiſtible, that it ſhould be otherwiſe than that he ſhould have this choice, ſo long as this choice continues; ſuch a man would uſe the terms *muſt*, *irreſiſtible*, &c. with perfect inſignificance and nonſenſe; or in ſome new ſenſe, diverſe from their common uſe; which is with reference, as has been obſerved, to ſuppoſable oppoſition, unwillingneſs and reſiſtance; whereas, here, the very ſuppoſition excludes and denies any

ſuch thing: for the caſe ſuppoſed is that of being willing, and chuſing.

5. It appears from what has been ſaid, that theſe terms *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, &c. are often uſed by philoſophers and metaphyſicians in a ſenſe quite diverſe from their common uſe and original ſignification: For they apply them to many caſes in which no oppoſition is ſuppoſed or ſuppoſable. Thus they uſe them with reſpect to God's exiſtence before the creation of the world, when there was no other being but He: ſo with regard to many of the diſpoſitions and acts of the divine Being, ſuch as his loving himſelf, his loving righteouſneſs, hating ſin, &c. So they apply theſe terms to many caſes of the inclinations and actions of created intelligent beings, angels and men; wherein all oppoſition of the Will is ſhut out and denied, in the very ſuppoſition of the caſe.

*Metaphyſical* or *Philoſophical* Neceſſity is nothing different from their certainty. I ſpeak not now of the certainty of knowledge, but the certainty that is in things themſelves, which is the foundation of the certainty of the knowledge of them; or that wherein lies the ground of the infallibility of the propoſition which affirms them.

What is ſometimes given as the definition of philoſophical Neceſſity, namely, *That by which a thing cannot but be*, or *whereby it cannot be otherwiſe*, fails of being a proper explanation of it, on two accounts: *Firſt*, the words *can*, or *cannot*, need explanation as much as the word *Neceſſity;* and the former may as well be explained by the latter, as the latter by the former. Thus, if any one aſked us what we mean, when we ſay, a thing *cannot but be*, we might explain ourſelves by ſay-

ing, we mean, it muſt neceſſarily be ſo; as well as explain Neceſſity, by ſaying, it is that by which a thing cannot but be. And *Secondly*, this definition is liable to the fore-mentioned great inconvenience: the words *cannot*, or *unable*, are properly relative, and have relation to power exerted, or that may be exerted, in order to the thing ſpoken of; to which, as I have now obſerved, the word *Neceſſity*, as uſed by philoſophers has no reference.

Philoſophical Neceſſity is really nothing elſe than the full and fixed connection between the things ſignified by the ſubject and predicate of a propoſition, which affirms ſomething to be true. When there is ſuch a connection, then the thing affirmed in the propoſition is neceſſary, in a philoſophical ſenſe; whether any oppoſition, or contrary effort be ſuppoſed, or ſuppoſable in the caſe, or no. When the ſubject and predicate of the propoſition, which affirms the exiſtence of any thing, either ſubſtance, quality, act or circumſtance, have a full and certain connection, then the exiſtence or being of that thing is ſaid to be neceſſary in a metaphyſical ſenſe. And in this ſenſe I uſe the word *Neceſſity*, in the following diſcourſe, when I endeavour to prove *that Neceſſity is not inconſiſtent with liberty*.

The ſubject and predicate of a propoſition, which affirms exiſtence of ſomething, may have a full, fixed, and certain connection ſeveral ways.

(1.) They may have a full and perfect connection *in and of themſelves;* becauſe it may imply a contradiction, or groſs abſurdity, to ſuppoſe them not connected. Thus many things are neceſſary in their own nature. So the external exiſtence of

being generally conſidered, is neceſſary *in itſelf:* becauſe it would be in itſelf the greateſt abſurdity, to deny the exiſtence of being in general, or to ſay there was abſolute and univerſal nothing; and is as it were the ſum of all contradictions; as might be ſhewn, if this were a proper place for it. So God's infinity, and other attributes are neceſſary. So it is neceſſary *in its own nature*, that two and two ſhould be four; and it is neceſſary, that all right lines drawn from the center of a circle to the circumference ſhould be equal. It is neceſſary, fit and ſuitable, that men ſhould do to others, as they would that they ſhould do to them. So innumerable metaphyſical and mathematical truths are neceſſary *in themſelves:* the ſubject and predicate of the propoſition which affirms them, are perfectly connected *of themſelves.*

(2.) The connection of the ſubject and predicate of a propoſition, which affirms the exiſtence of ſomething, may be fixed and made certain, becauſe the exiſtence of that thing is already come to paſs; and either now is, or has been; and ſo has as it were made ſure of exiſtence. And therefore, the propoſition which affirms preſent and paſt exiſtence of it, may by this means be made certain, and neceſſarily and unalterably true; the paſt event has fixed and decided the matter, as to its exiſtence; and has made it impoſſible but that exiſtence ſhould be truly predicated of it. Thus the exiſtence of whatever is already come to paſs, is now become neceſſary; it is become impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe than true, that ſuch a thing has been.

(3.) The ſubject and predicate of a propoſition which affirms ſomething to be, may have a real and certain connection *conſequentially;* and

ſo the exiſtence of the thing may be conſequentially neceſſary; as it may be ſurely and firmly connected with ſomething elſe, that is neceſſary in one of the former reſpects. As it is either fully and thoroughly connected with that which is abſolutely neceſſary in its own nature, or with ſomething which has already received and made ſure of exiſtence. This Neceſſity lies *in*, or may be explained *by* the connection of two or more propoſitions one with another. Things which are perfectly connected with other things that are neceſſary, are neceſſary themſelves, by a Neceſſity of conſequence.

And here it may be obſerved, that all things which are future, or which will hereafter begin to be, which can be ſaid to be neceſſary, are neceſſary only in this laſt way. Their exiſtence is not neceſſary in itſelf; for if ſo, they always would have exiſted. Nor is their exiſtence become neceſſary by being made ſure, by being already come to paſs. Therefore, the only way that any thing that is to come to paſs hereafter, is or can be neceſſary, is by a connection with ſomething that is neceſſary in its own nature, or ſomething that already is, or has been; ſo that the one being ſuppoſed, the other certainly follows. And this alſo is the only way that all things paſt, excepting thoſe which were from eternity, could be neceſſary *before they came to paſs*, or could come to paſs neceſſarily; and therefore the only way in which any effect or event, or any thing whatſoever that ever has had, or will have a beginning, has come into being neceſſarily, or will hereafter neceſſarily exiſt. And therefore *this* is the Neceſſity which eſpecially belongs to controverſies about the acts of the will.

It may be of ſome uſe in theſe controverſies, further to obſerve concerning *metaphyſical* Neceſſity,

being generally conſidered, is neceſſary *in itſelf:* becauſe it would be in itſelf the greateſt abſurdity, to deny the exiſtence of being in general, or to ſay there was abſolute and univerſal nothing; and is as it were the ſum of all contradictions; as might be ſhewn, if this were a proper place for it. So God's infinity, and other attributes are neceſſary. So it is neceſſary *in its own nature*, that two and two ſhould be four; and it is neceſſary, that all right lines drawn from the center of a circle to the circumference ſhould be equal. It is neceſſary, fit and ſuitable, that men ſhould do to others, as they would that they ſhould do to them. So innumerable metaphyſical and mathematical truths are neceſſary *in themſelves:* the ſubject and predicate of the propoſition which affirms them, are perfectly connected *of themſelves.*

(2.) The connection of the ſubject and predicate of a propoſition, which affirms the exiſtence of ſomething, may be fixed and made certain, becauſe the exiſtence of that thing is already come to paſs; and either now is, or has been; and ſo has as it were made ſure of exiſtence. And therefore, the propoſition which affirms preſent and paſt exiſtence of it, may by this means be made certain, and neceſſarily and unalterably true; the paſt event has fixed and decided the matter, as to its exiſtence; and has made it impoſſible but that exiſtence ſhould be truly predicated of it. Thus the exiſtence of whatever is already come to paſs, is now become neceſſary; it is become impoſſible it ſhould be otherwiſe than true, that ſuch a thing has been.

(3.) The ſubject and predicate of a propoſition which affirms ſomething to be, may have a real and certain connection *conſequentially;* and

ſo the exiſtence of the thing may be conſequentially neceſſary; as it may be ſurely and firmly connected with ſomething elſe, that is neceſſary in one of the former reſpects. As it is either fully and thoroughly connected with that which is abſolutely neceſſary in its own nature, or with ſomething which has already received and made ſure of exiſtence. This Neceſſity lies *in*, or may be explained *by* the connection of two or more propoſitions one with another. Things which are perfectly connected with other things that are neceſſary, are neceſſary themſelves, by a Neceſſity of conſequence.

And here it may be obſerved, that all things which are future, or which will hereafter begin to be, which can be ſaid to be neceſſary, are neceſſary only in this laſt way. Their exiſtence is not neceſſary in itſelf; for if ſo, they always would have exiſted. Nor is their exiſtence become neceſſary by being made ſure, by being already come to paſs. Therefore, the only way that any thing that is to come to paſs hereafter, is or can be neceſſary, is by a connection with ſomething that is neceſſary in its own nature, or ſomething that already is, or has been; ſo that the one being ſuppoſed, the other certainly follows. And this alſo is the only way that all things paſt, excepting thoſe which were from eternity, could be neceſſary *before they came to paſs*, or could come to paſs neceſſarily; and therefore the only way in which any effect or event, or any thing whatſoever that ever has had, or will have a beginning, has come into being neceſſarily, or will hereafter neceſſarily exiſt. And therefore *this* is the Neceſſity which eſpecially belongs to controverſies about the acts of the will.

It may be of ſome uſe in theſe controverſies, further to obſerve concerning *metaphyſical* Neceſſity,

that (agreeable to the diſtinction before obſerved of Neceſſity, as *vulgarly* underſtood) things that exiſt may be ſaid to be neceſſary, either with a *general* or *particular* Neceſſity. The exiſtence of a thing may be ſaid to be neceſſary with a *general* Neceſſity, when all things whatſoever being conſidered, there is a foundation for certainty of their exiſtence; or when in the moſt general and univerſal view of things, the ſubject and predicate of the propoſition, which affirms its exiſtence, would appear with an infallible connection.

An event, or the exiſtence of a thing, may be ſaid to be neceſſary with a *particular* Neceſſity, or with regard to a particular perſon, thing or time, when nothing that can be taken into conſideration, in or about that perſon, thing or time, alters the caſe at all, as to the certainty of that event, or the exiſtence of that thing; or can be of any account at all, in determining the infallibility of the connection of the ſubject and predicate in the propoſition which affirms the exiſtence of the thing; ſo that it is all one, as to that perſon, or thing, at leaſt, at that time, as if the exiſtence were neceſſary with a Neceſſity that is moſt *univerſal* and *abſolute*. Thus there are many things that happen to particular perſons, which they have no hand in, and in the exiſtence of which no will of theirs has any concern, at leaſt, at that time; which, whether they are neceſſary or not, with regard to things in general, yet are neceſſary to them, and with regard to any volition of theirs at that time; as they prevent all acts of the will about the affair.—I ſhall have occaſion to apply this obſervation to particular inſtances in the following diſcourſe.—Whether the ſame things that are neceſſary with a *particular* Neceſſity, be not alſo neceſſary with a *general* Neceſſity, may be a matter

of future consideration. Let that be as it will, it alters not the case, as to the use of this distinction of the kinds of Necessity.

These things may be sufficient for the explaining of the terms *necessary* and *Necessity*, as terms of art, and as often used by metaphysicians, and controversial writers in divinity, in a sense diverse from, and more extensive than their original meaning, in common language, which was before explained.

What has been said to shew the meaning of the terms *necessary* and *Necessity*, may be sufficient for the explaining of the opposite terms, *impossible* and *impossibility*. For there is no difference, but only the latter are negative, and the former possitive. *Impossibility* is the same as *negative Necessity*, or a Necessity that a thing should not be. And it is used as a term of art in a like diversity from the original and vulgar meaning, with Necessity.

The same may be observed concerning the words *unable* and *Inability*. It has been observed, that these terms, in their original and common use, have relation to will and endeavour, as supposable in the case, and as insufficient for the bringing to pass the thing willed and endeavoured. But as these terms are often used by philosophers and divines, especially writers on controversies about Free-Will, they are used in a quite different, and far more extensive sense, and are applied to many cases wherein no will or endeavour for the bringing of the thing to pass, is or can be supposed, but is actually denied and excluded in the nature of the case.

As the words *necessary*, *impossible*, *unable*, &c, are used by polemic writers, in a sense diverse

from their common ſignification, the like has happened to the term *contingent*. Any thing is ſaid to be contingent, or to come to paſs by chance or accident, in the original meaning of ſuch words, when its connection with its cauſes or antecedents, according to the eſtabliſhed courſe of things, is not diſcerned; and ſo is what we have no means of the foreſight of. And eſpecially is any thing ſaid to be contingent or accidental with regard to us, when any thing comes to paſs that we are concerned in, as occaſions or ſubjects, without our foreknowledge, and beſide our deſign and ſcope.

But the word *contingent* is abundantly uſed in a very different ſenſe; not for that whoſe connection with the ſeries of things we cannot diſcern, ſo as to foreſee the event, but for ſomething which has abſolutely no previous ground or reaſon, with which its exiſtence has any fixed and certain connection.

## SECTION IV.

### *Of the Diſtinction of* natural *and* moral Neceſſity, *and* Inability.

THAT Neceſſity which has been explained, conſiſting in an infallible connection of the things ſignified by the ſubject and predicate of a propoſition, as intelligent beings are the ſubjects of it, is diſtinguiſhed into *moral* and *natural* Neceſſity.

I ſhall not now ſtand to enquire whether this diſtinction be a proper and perfect diſtinction; but ſhall only explain how theſe two ſorts of Neceſſity are underſtood, as the terms are ſometimes

uſed, and as they are uſed in the following diſcourſe.

The phraſe, *moral Neceſſity*, is uſed variouſly: ſometimes it is uſed for a Neceſſity of moral obligation. So we ſay, a man is under Neceſſity, when he is under bonds of duty and conſcience, which he cannot be diſcharged from. So the word *Neceſſity* is often uſed for great obligation in point of intereſt. Sometimes by moral Neceſſity is meant that apparent connection of things, which is the ground of *moral evidence;* and ſo is diſtinguiſhed from *abſolute Neceſſity*, or that ſure connection of things, that is a foundation for *infallible certainty*. In this ſenſe, moral Neceſſity ſignifies much the ſame as that high degree of probability, which is ordinarily ſufficient to ſatisfy, and be relied upon by mankind, in their conduct and behaviour in the world, as they would conſult their own ſafety and intereſt, and treat others properly as members of ſociety. And ſometimes by moral Neceſſity is meant that Neceſſity of connection and conſequence, which ariſes from ſuch *moral cauſes*, as the ſtrength of inclination, or motives, and the connection which there is in many caſes between theſe, and ſuch certain volitions and actions. And it is in this ſenſe, that I uſe the phraſe, *moral Neceſſity*, in the following diſcourſe.

By *natural Neceſſity*, as applied to men, I mean ſuch Neceſſity as men are under through the force of natural cauſes; as diſtinguiſhed from what are called moral cauſes, ſuch as habits and diſpoſitions of the heart, and moral motives and inducements. Thus men placed in certain circumſtances, are the ſubjects of particular ſenſations by Neceſſity: they feel pain when their bodies are wounded; they ſee the objects preſented before

them in a clear light, when their eyes are opened: ſo they aſſent to the truth of certain propoſitions, as ſoon as the terms are underſtood; as that two and two make four, that black is not white, that two parallel lines can never croſs one another; ſo by a natural Neceſſity mens bodies move downwards, when there is nothing to ſupport them.

But here ſeveral things may be noted concerning theſe two kinds of Neceſſity.

1. Moral Neceſſity may be as abſolute, as natural Neceſſity. That is, the effect may be as perfectly connected with its moral cauſe, as a natural neceſſary effect is with its natural cauſe. Whether the Will in every caſe is neceſſarily determined by the ſtrongeſt motive, or whether the Will ever makes any reſiſtance to ſuch a motive, or can ever oppoſe the ſtrongeſt preſent inclination, or not; if that matter ſhould be controverted, yet I ſuppoſe none will deny, but that, in ſome caſes, a previous bias and inclination, or the motive preſented, may be ſo powerful, that the act of the Will may be certainly and indiſſolubly connected therewith. When motives or previous bias are very ſtrong, all will allow that there is ſome *difficulty* in going againſt them. And if they were yet ſtronger, the difficulty would be ſtill greater. And therefore, if more were ſtill added to their ſtrength, to a certain degree, it would make the difficulty ſo great, that it would be wholly *impoſſible* to ſurmount it; for this plain reaſon, becauſe whatever power men may be ſuppoſed to have to ſurmount difficulties, yet that power is not infinite; and ſo goes not beyond certain limits. If a man can ſurmount ten degrees of difficulty of this kind with twenty degrees of ſtrength, becauſe the degrees of ſtrength are beyond the degrees of difficulty; yet if the difficulty be increaſed to thirty, or an hundred,

or a thousand degrees, and his strength not also increased, his strength will be wholly insufficient to surmount the difficulty. As therefore it must be allowed, that there may be such a thing as a *sure* and *perfect* connection between moral causes and effects; so this only is what I call by the name of *moral Necessity*.

2. When I use this distinction of *moral* and *natural Necessity*, I would not be understood to suppose, that if any thing comes to pass by the former kind of Necessity, the *nature* of things is not concerned in it, as well as in the latter. I do not mean to determine, that when a *moral* habit or motive is so strong, that the act of the Will infallibly follows, this is not owing to the *nature of things*. But these are the names that these two kinds of Necessity have usually been called by; and they must be distinguished by some names or other; for there is a distinction or difference between them, that is very important in its consequences. Which difference does not lie so much in the nature of the *connection*, as in the two terms *connected*. The cause with which the effect is connected, is of a particular kind; *viz.* that which is of moral nature; either some previous habitual disposition, or some motive exhibited to the understanding. And the effect is also of a particular kind; being likewise of a moral nature; consisting in some inclination or volition of the soul or voluntary action.

I suppose, that Necessity which is called *natural* in distinction from *moral* necessity, is so called, because *mere nature*, as the word is vulgarly used, is concerned, without any thing of *choice*. The word *nature* is often used in opposition to *choice*; not because nature has indeed never any hand in

our choice; but this probably comes to paſs by means that we firſt get our notion of nature from that diſcernible and obvious courſe of events, which we obſerve in many things that our choice has no concern in; and eſpecially in the material world; which, in very many parts of it, we eaſily perceive to be in a ſettled courſe; the ſtated order and manner of ſucceſſion being very apparent. But where we do not readily diſcern the rule and connection, (though there be a connection, according to an eſtabliſhed law, truly taking place) we ſignify the manner of event by ſome other name. Even in many things which are ſeen in the material and inanimate world, which do not diſcernibly and obviouſly come to paſs according to any ſettled courſe, men do not call the manner of the event by the name of *nature*, but by ſuch names as *accident*, *chance*, *contingent*, &c. So men make a diſtinction between nature and choice; as tho' they were compleatly and univerſally diſtinct. Whereas, I ſuppoſe none will deny but that choice, *in many caſes*, ariſes from nature, as truly as other events. But the dependence and connection between acts of volition or choice, and their cauſes, according to eſtabliſhed laws, is not ſo ſenſible and obvious. And we obſerve that choice is as it were a new principle of motion and action, different from that eſtabliſhed law and order of things which is moſt obvious, that is ſeen eſpecially in corporeal and ſenſible things; and alſo the choice often interpoſes, interrupts and alters the chain of events in theſe external objects, and cauſes them to proceed otherwiſe than they would do, if let alone, and left to go on according to the laws of motion among themſelves. Hence it is ſpoken of as if it were a principle of motion entirely diſtinct from nature, and properly ſet in oppoſition to it. Names being commonly given to

things, according to what is moſt obvious, and is ſuggeſted by what appears to the ſenſes without reflection and reſearch.

3. It muſt be obſerved, that in what has been explained, as ſignified by the name of *moral Neceſſity*, the word *Neceſſity* is not uſed according to the original deſign and meaning of the word: for, as was obſerved before, ſuch terms, *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *irreſiſtible*, &c. in common ſpeech, and their moſt proper ſenſe, are always relative; having reference to ſome ſuppoſable voluntary oppoſition or endeavour, that is inſufficient. But no ſuch oppoſition, or contrary will and endeavour, is ſuppoſable in the caſe of moral Neceſſity; which is a certainty of the inclination and will itſelf; which does not admit of the ſuppoſition of a will to oppoſe and reſiſt it. For it is abſurd, to ſuppoſe the ſame individual will to oppoſe itſelf, in its preſent act; or the preſent choice to be oppoſite to, and reſiſting preſent choice: as abſurd as it is to talk of two contrary motions, in the ſame moving body, at the ſame time. And therefore the very caſe ſuppoſed never admits of any trial, whether an oppoſing or reſiſting will can overcome this Neceſſity.

What has been ſaid of natural and moral Neceſſity, may ſerve to explain what is intended by natural and moral *Inability*. We are ſaid to be *naturally* unable to do a thing, when we cannot do it if we will, becauſe what is moſt commonly called *nature* does not allow of it, or becauſe of ſome impeding defect or obſtacle that is extrinſic to the will; either in the faculty of underſtanding, conſtitution of body, or external objects. *Moral* Inability conſiſts not in any of theſe things; but either in the want of inclination; or the ſtrength

of a contrary inclination; or the want of ſufficient motives in view, to induce and excite the act of the will, or the ſtrength of apparent motives to the contrary. Or both theſe may be reſolved into one; and it may be ſaid in one word, that moral Inability conſiſts in the oppoſition or want of inclination. For when a perſon is unable to will or chuſe ſuch a thing, through a defect of motives, or prevalence of contrary motives, it is the ſame thing as his being unable through the want of an inclination, or the prevalence of a contrary inclination, in ſuch circumſtances, and under the influence of ſuch views.

To give ſome inſtances of this *moral Inability*.— A woman of great honour and chaſtity may have a moral Inability to proſtitute herſelf to her ſlave. A child of great love and duty to his parents, may be unable to be willing to kill his father. A very laſcivious man, in caſe of certain opportunities and temptations, and in the abſence of ſuch and ſuch reſtraints, may be unable to forbear gratifying his luſt. A drunkard, under ſuch and ſuch circumſtances, may be unable to forbear taking of ſtrong drink. A very malicious man may be unable to exert benevolent acts to an enemy, or to deſire his proſperity; yea, ſome may be ſo under the power of a vile diſpoſition, that they may be unable to love thoſe who are moſt worthy of their eſteem and affection. A ſtrong habit of virtue, and great degree of holineſs may cauſe a moral Inability to love wickedneſs in general, may render a man unable to take complacence in wicked perſons or things; or to chuſe a wicked life, and prefer it to a virtuous life. And on the other hand, a great degree of habitual wickedneſs may lay a man under an Inability to love and chuſe holineſs; and render him utterly unable to love an infinitely holy Being, or to chuſe and cleave to him as his chief good.

Here it may be of use to observe this distinction of moral Inability, *viz.* of that which is *general and habitual*, and that which is *particular and occasional.* By a *general and habitual* moral Inability, I mean an Inability in the heart to all exercises or acts of will of that nature or kind, through a fixed and habitual inclination, or an habitual and stated defect, or want of a certain kind of inclination. Thus a very ill-natured man may be unable to exert such acts of benevolence, as another, who is full of good nature, commonly exerts; and a man, whose heart is habitually void of gratitude, may be unable to exert such and such grateful acts, through that stated defect of a grateful inclination. By *particular and occasional* moral Inability, I mean an Inability of the will or heart to a particular act, through the strength or defect of present motives, or of inducements presented to the view of the understanding, *on this occasion*——If it be so, that the will is always determined by the strongest motive, then it must always have an Inability, in this latter sense, to act otherwise than it does; it not being possible, in any case, that the will should, at present, go against the motive which has now, all things considered, the greatest strength and advantage to excite and induce it.——The former of these kinds of moral Inability, consisting in that which is stated, habitual and general, is most commonly called by the name of Inability; because the word *Inability*, in its most proper and original signification, has respect to some *stated defect.* And this especially obtains the name of *Inability* also upon another account:—I before observed, that the word Inability in its original and most common use, is a relative term; and has respect to will and endeavour, as supposable in the case, and as insufficient to

bring to paſs the thing deſired and endeavoured. Now there may be more of an appearance and ſhadow of this, with reſpect to the acts which ariſe from a fixed and ſtrong habit, than others that ariſe only from tranſient occaſions and cauſes. Indeed will and endeavour againſt, or diverſe from *preſent* acts of the will, are in no caſe ſuppoſable, whether thoſe acts be occaſional or habitual; for that would be to ſuppoſe the will, at preſent, to be otherwiſe than, at preſent, it is. But yet there may be will and endeavour againſt *future* acts of the will, or volitions that are likely to take place, as viewed at a diſtance. It is no contradiction, to ſuppoſe that the acts of the will at one time, may be againſt the acts of the will at another time; and there may be deſires and endeavours to prevent or excite future acts of the will; but ſuch deſires and endeavours are, in many caſes, rendered inſufficient and vain, through fixedneſs of habit: when the occaſion returns, the ſtrength of habit overcomes, and baffles all ſuch oppoſition. In this reſpect, a man may be in miſerable ſlavery and bondage to a ſtrong habit. But it may be comparatively eaſy to make an alteration with reſpect to ſuch future acts, as are only occaſional and tranſient; becauſe the occaſion or tranſient cauſe, if foreſeen, may often eaſily be prevented or avoided. On this account, the moral Inability that attends fixed habits, eſpecially obtains the name of *Inability*. And then, as the will may remotely and indirectly reſiſt itſelf, and do it in vain, in the caſe of ſtrong habits; ſo reaſon may reſiſt preſent acts of the will, and its reſiſtance be inſufficient; and this is more commonly the caſe alſo, when the acts ariſe from ſtrong habit.

But it muſt be obſerved concerning moral Inability, in each kind of it, that the word *Inability* is uſed in a ſenſe very diverſe from its original import. The word ſignifies only a natural Inability, in the proper uſe of it; and is applied to ſuch caſes only wherein a preſent will or inclination to the thing, with reſpect to which a perſon is ſaid to be unable, is ſuppoſable. It cannot be truly ſaid, according to the ordinary uſe of language, that a malicious man, let him be never ſo malicious, cannot hold his hand from ſtriking, or that he is not able to ſhew his neighbour kindneſs; or that a drunkard, let his appetite be never ſo ſtrong, cannot keep the cup from his mouth. In the ſtricteſt propriety of ſpeech, a man has a thing in his power, if he has it in his choice, or at his election: and a man cannot be truly ſaid to be unable to do a thing, when he can do it if he will. It is improperly ſaid, that a perſon cannot perform thoſe external actions, which are dependent on the act of the will, and which would be eaſily performed, if the act of the will were preſent. And if it be improperly ſaid, that he cannot perform thoſe external voluntary actions, which depend on the will, it is in ſome reſpect more improperly ſaid, that he is unable to exert the acts of the will themſelves; becauſe it is more evidently falſe, with reſpect to theſe, that he cannot if he will: for to ſay ſo, is a down-right contradiction: it is to ſay, he *cannot* will, if he *does* will. And in this caſe, not only is it true, that it is eaſy for a man to do the thing if he will, but the very willing is the doing; when once he has willed, the thing is performed; and nothing elſe remains to be done. Therefore, in theſe things to aſcribe a non-performance to the want of power or ability, is not juſt; becauſe the thing wanting is not a being *able* but a being

*willing*. There are faculties of mind, and capacity of nature, and every thing elſe, ſufficient, but a diſpoſition: nothing is wanting but a will.

## SECTION V.

### *Concerning the Notion of* Liberty, *and of* moral Agency.

THE plain and obvious meaning of the words *Freedom* and *Liberty*, in common ſpeech, is *power, opportunity or advantage, that any one has, to do as he pleaſes*. Or in other words, his being free from hinderance or impediment in the way of doing, or conducting in any reſpect, as he wills. * And the contrary to Liberty, whatever name we call that by, is a perſon's being hindered or unable to conduct as he will, or being neceſſitated to do otherwiſe.

If this which I have mentioned be the meaning of the word Liberty, in the ordinary uſe of language; as I truſt that none that has ever learned to talk, and is unprejudiced, will deny; then it will follow, that in propriety of ſpeech, neither Liberty, nor its contrary, can properly be aſcribed to any being or thing, but that which has ſuch a faculty, power or property, as is called will. For that which is poſſeſſed of no ſuch thing as *will*, cannot have any *power* or *opportunity* of doing *according to its will*, nor be neceſſitated to act *contrary to its will*, nor be reſtrained from acting agreeably to it. And therefore to talk

* I ſay not only *doing*, but *conducting;* becauſe a voluntary forbearing to do, ſitting ſtill, keeping ſilence, &c. are inſtances of perſons *conduct*, about which Liberty is exerciſed; though they are not ſo properly called *doing*.

of Liberty, or the contrary, as belonging to the *very will itself*, is not to ſpeak good ſenſe; if we judge of ſenſe, and nonſenſe, by the original and proper ſignification of words. For the *will itſelf* is not an Agent that *has a will:* the power of chuſing, itſelf, has not a power of chuſing. That which has the power of volition or choice is the man or the ſoul, and not the power of volition itſelf. And he that has the Liberty of doing according to his will, is the Agent or doer who is poſſeſſed of the will; and not the will which he is poſſeſſed of. We ſay with propriety, that a bird let looſe has power and Liberty to fly; but not that the bird's power of flying has a power and Liberty of flying. To be free is the property of an Agent, who is poſſeſſed of powers and faculties, as much as to be cunning, valiant, bountiful, or zealous. But theſe qualities are the properties of men or perſons; and not the properties of properties.

There are two things that are contrary to this which is called Liberty in common ſpeech. One is *conſtraint;* the ſame is otherwiſe called *force*, *compulſion*, and *coaction;* which is a perſon's being neceſſitated to do a thing *contrary* to his will. The other is *reſtraint;* which is his being hindered, and not having power to do *according* to his will. But that which has no will, cannot be the ſubject of theſe things.—I need ſay the leſs on this head, Mr. Locke having ſet the ſame thing forth, with ſo great clearneſs, in his *Eſſay on the Human Underſtanding*.

But one thing more I would obſerve concerning what is vulgarly called *Liberty;* namely, that power and opportunity for one to do and conduct as he will, or according to his choice, is all that is meant by it; without taking into the meaning

of the word, any thing of the cauſe or original of that choice; or at all conſidering how the perſon came to have ſuch a volition; whether it was cauſed by ſome external motive, or internal habitual bias; whether it was determined by ſome internal antecedent volition, or whether it happened without a cauſe; whether it was neceſſarily connected with ſomething foregoing, or not connected. Let the perſon come by his volition or choice how he will, yet, if he is able, and there is nothing in the way to hinder his purſuing and executing his will, the man is fully and perfectly free, according to the primary and common notion of freedom.

What has been ſaid may be ſufficient to ſhew what is meant by *Liberty*, according to the common notions of mankind, and in the uſual and primary acceptation of the word: but the word, as uſed by *Arminians*, *Pelagians* and others, who oppoſe the *Calviniſts*, has an entirely different ſignification.—Theſe ſeveral things belong to their notion of Liberty. 1. That it conſiſts in a *ſelf-determining power* in the will, or a certain ſovereignty the will has over itſelf, and its own acts, whereby it determines its own volitions; ſo as not to be dependent in its determinations, on any cauſe without itſelf, nor determined by any thing prior to its own acts. 2. *Indifference* belongs to Liberty in their notion of it, or that the mind, previous to the act of volition be, *in equilibrio*. 3. *Contingence* is another thing that belongs and is eſſential to it; not in the common acceptation of the word, as that has been already explained, but as oppoſed to all *neceſſity*, or any fixed and certain connection with ſome previous ground or reaſon of its exiſtence. They ſuppoſe the eſſence of Liberty ſo much to conſiſt in theſe things, that unleſs the will of man be

free in this ſenſe, he has no real freedom, how much ſoever he may be at Liberty to act according to his will.

A *moral Agent* is a being that is capable of thoſe actions that have a moral quality, and which can properly be denominated good or evil in a moral ſenſe, virtuous or vicious, commendable or faulty. To moral Agency belongs a *moral faculty*, or ſenſe of moral good and evil, or of ſuch a thing as deſert or worthineſs, of praiſe or blame, reward or puniſhment; and a capacity which an Agent has of being influenced in his actions by moral inducements or motives, exhibited to the view of underſtanding and reaſon, to engage to a conduct agreeable to the moral faculty.

The ſun is very excellent and beneficial in its action and influence on the earth, in warming it, and cauſing it to bring forth its fruits; but it is not a moral Agent: its action, though good, is not virtuous or meritorious. Fire that breaks out in a city, and conſumes great part of it, is very miſchievous in its operation; but is not a moral Agent: what it does is not faulty or ſinful, or deſerving of any puniſhment. The brute creatures are not moral Agents: the actions of ſome of them are very profitable and pleaſant; others are very hurtful: yet, ſeeing they have no moral faculty, or ſenſe of deſert, and do not act from choice guided by underſtanding, or with a capacity of reaſoning and reflecting, but only from inſtinct, and are not capable of being influenced by moral inducements, their actions are not properly ſinful or virtuous; nor are they properly the ſubjects of any ſuch moral treatment for what they do, as moral Agents are for their faults or good deeds.

Here it may be noted, that there is a circumſtantial difference between the moral Agency of a *ruler* and a *ſubject*. I call it *circumſtantial*, becauſe it lies only in the difference of moral inducements they are capable of being influenced by, ariſing from the difference of *circumſtances*. A *ruler* acting in that capacity only, is not capable of being influenced by a moral law, and its ſanctions of threatnings and promiſes, rewards and puniſhments, as the *ſubject* is; though both may be influenced by a knowledge of moral good and evil. And therefore the moral agency of the Supreme Being, who acts only in the capacity of a *ruler* towards his creatures, and never as a *ſubject*, differs in that reſpect from the moral Agency of created intelligent beings. God's actions, and particularly thoſe which he exerts as a moral governor, have moral qualifications, are morally good in the higheſt degree. They are moſt perfectly holy and righteous; and we muſt conceive of Him as influenced in the higheſt degree, by that which, above all others, is properly a moral inducement; *viz.* the moral good which He ſees in ſuch and ſuch things: and therefore He is, in the moſt proper ſenſe, a moral Agent, the ſource of all moral ability and Agency, the fountain and rule of all virtue and moral good; though by reaſon of his being ſupreme over all, it is not poſſible He ſhould be under the influence of law or command, promiſes or threatnings, rewards or puniſhments, counſels or warnings. The eſſential qualities of a moral Agent are in God, in the greateſt poſſible perfection; ſuch as underſtanding, to perceive the difference between moral good and evil; a capacity of diſcerning that moral worthineſs and demerit, by which ſome things are praiſe-worthy, others deſerving of blame and puniſhment; and alſo a capacity of choice, and choice guided by underſtand-

ing, and a power of acting according to his choice or pleasure, and being capable of doing those things which are in the highest sense praise-worthy. And herein does very much consist that image of God wherein he made man, (which we read of *Gen.* I. 26, 27. and *Chap.* IX. 6.) by which God distinguished man from the beasts, *viz.* in those faculties and principles of nature, whereby He is capable of moral Agency. Herein very much consists the *natural* image of God; as his *spiritual* and *moral* image, wherein man was made at first, consisted in that moral excellency, that he was endowed with.

# PART II.

Wherein it is conſidered whether there is or can be any ſuch Sort of FREEDOM OF WILL, as that wherein *Arminians* place the Eſſence of the Liberty of all moral Agents; and whether any ſuch Thing ever *was* or *can be* conceived of.

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## SECTION I.

*Shewing the manifeſt Inconſiſtence of the* Arminian *Notion of* Liberty of Will, *conſiſting in the Will's* ſelf-determining Power.

HAVING taken notice of thoſe things which may be neceſſary to be obſerved, concerning the meaning of the principal terms and phraſes made uſe of in controverſies concerning human Liberty, and particularly obſerved what *Liberty* is according to the common language and general apprehenſion of mankind, and what it is as underſtood and maintained by *Arminians;* I proceed to conſider the *Arminian* notion of the *Freedom of the Will*, and the ſuppoſed neceſſity of it in order to moral agency, or in order to any

one's being capable of virtue or vice, and properly the subject of command or counsel, praise or blame, promises or threatnings, rewards or punishments; or whether that which has been described, as the thing meant by Liberty in common speech, be not sufficient, and the only Liberty, which makes, or can make any one a moral agent, and so properly the subject of these things. In *this Part*, I shall consider whether any such thing be possible or conceivable, as that Freedom of Will which *Arminians* insist on; and shall enquire, whether any such sort of Liberty be necessary to moral agency, [illegible] *next* Part.

And first of all, I shall consider the notion of *a self-determining Power* in the will: wherein, according to the *Arminians*, does most essentially consist the Will's Freedom; and shall particularly enquire, whether it be not plainly absurd, and a manifest inconsistence, to suppose that *the will itself determines all the free acts of the Will.*

Here I shall not insist on the great impropriety of such phrases, and ways of speaking, as *the Will's determining itself;* because actions are to be ascribed to agents, and not properly to the powers of agents; which improper way of speaking leads to many mistakes, and much confusion, as Mr. Locke observes. But I shall suppose that the *Arminians*, when they speak of the Will's determining itself, do by the *Will* mean the *soul willing*. I shall take it for granted, that when they speak of the Will, as the determiner, they mean *the soul in the exercise of a power of willing*, or acting voluntarily. I shall suppose this to be their meaning, because nothing else can be meant, without the grossest and plainest absurdity. In all cases when we speak of the powers or principles

of acting, as doing ſuch things, we mean that the agents which have theſe Powers of acting, do them, in the exerciſe of thoſe Powers. So when we ſay, valour fights courageouſly, we mean, the man who is under the influence of valour fights courageouſly. When we ſay, love ſeeks the object loved, we mean, the perſon loving ſeeks that object. When we ſay, the underſtanding diſcerns, we mean the ſoul in the exerciſe of that faculty. So when it is ſaid, the will decides or determines, the meaning muſt be, that the perſon in the exerciſe of a Power of willing and chuſing, or the ſoul acting voluntarily, determine

Therefore, if the Will determines all its own free acts, the ſoul determines all the free acts of the will in the exerciſe of a Power of willing and chuſing; or, which is the ſame thing, it determines them of choice; it determines its own acts by chuſing its own acts. If the will determines the Will, then choice orders and determines the choice: and acts of choice are ſubject to the deciſion, and follow the conduct of other acts of choice. And therefore if the Will determines all its own free acts, then every free act of choice is determined by a preceding act of choice, chuſing that act. And if that preceding act of the Will or choice be alſo a free act, then by theſe principles, in this act too, the Will is ſelf-determined: that is, this, in like manner, is an act that the ſoul voluntarily chuſes; or, which is the ſame thing, it is an act determined ſtill by a preceding act of the Will, chuſing that. And the like may again be obſerved of the laſt mentioned act. Which brings us directly to a contradiction: for it ſuppoſes an act of the Will preceding the firſt act in the whole train, directing and determining the reſt; or a

free act of the Will, before the first free act of the Will. Or else we must come at last to an act of the Will, determining the consequent acts, wherein the Will is not self-determined, and so is not a free act, in this notion of freedom: but if the first act in the train, determining and fixing the rest, be not free, none of them all can be free; as is manifest at first view, but shall be demonstrated presently.

If the Will, which we find governs the members of the body and determines and commands their motions and actions, does also govern itself, and determine its own motions and actions, it doubtless determines them the same way, even by antecedent volitions. The Will determines which way the hands and feet shall move, by an act of volition or choice: and there is no other way of the Will's determining, directing or commanding any thing at all. Whatsoever the Will commands, it commands by an act of the Will. And if it has itself under its command, and determines itself in its own actions, it doubtless does it the same way that it determines other things which are under its command. So that if the freedom of the Will consists in this, that it has itself and its own actions under its command and direction, and its own volitions are determined by itself, it will follow, that every free volition arises from another antecedent volition, directing and commanding that: and if that *directing* volition be also free, in that also the Will is determined: that is to say, that directing volition is determined by another going before that; and so on, until we come to the first volition in the whole series: and if that first volition be free, and the Will self-determined in it, then that is determined by another volition preceding that. Which is a

contradiction; becauſe by the ſuppoſition, it can have none before it, to direct or determine it, being the firſt in the train. But if that firſt volition is not determined by any preceding act of the Will, then that act is not determined by the Will, and ſo is not free in the *Arminian* notion of freedom, which conſiſts in the Will's ſelf-determination. And if that firſt act of the Will, which determines and fixes the ſubſequent acts, be not free, none of the following acts, which are determined by it, can be free.—If we ſuppoſe there are five acts in the train, the fifth and laſt determined by the fourth, and the fourth by the third, the third by the ſecond, and the ſecond by the firſt; if the firſt is not determined by the Will, and ſo not free, then none of them are truly determined by the Will: that is, that each of them are as they are, and not otherwiſe, is not firſt owing to the Will, but to the determination of the firſt in the ſeries, which is not dependent on the Will, and is that which the Will has no hand in the determination of. And this being that which decides what the reſt ſhall be, and determines their exiſtence; therefore the firſt determination of their exiſtence is not from the Will. The caſe is juſt the ſame, if inſtead of a chain of five acts of the Will, we ſhould ſuppoſe a ſucceſſion of ten, or an hundred, or ten thouſand. If the firſt act be not free, being determined by ſomething out of the Will, and this determines the next to be agreeable to itſelf, and that the next, and ſo on; they are none of them free, but all originally depend on, and are determined by ſome cauſe out of the Will: and ſo all freedom in the caſe is excluded, and no act of the Will can be free, according to this notion of freedom. If we ſhould ſuppoſe a long chain of ten thouſand links, ſo connected, that if the firſt link

moves, it will move the next, and that the next; and ſo the whole chain muſt be determined to motion, and in the direction of its motion, by the motion of the firſt link; and that is moved by ſomething elſe: in this caſe, though all the links, but one, are moved by other parts of the ſame chain; yet it appears that the motion of no one, nor the direction of its motion, is from any ſelf-moving or ſelf-determining Power in the chain, any more than if every link were immediately moved by ſomething that did not belong to the chain.—If the will be not free in the firſt act, which cauſes the next, then neither is it free in the next, which is cauſed by that firſt act: for though indeed the will cauſed it, yet it did not cauſe it freely; becauſe the preceding act, by which it was cauſed, was not free. And again, if the will be not free in the ſecond act, ſo neither can it be in the third, which is cauſed by that; becauſe in like manner, that third was determined by an act of the will that was not free. And ſo we may go on to the next act, and from that to the next; and how long ſoever the ſucceſſion of acts is, it is all one; if the firſt on which the whole chain depends, and which determines all the reſt, be not a free act, the will is not free in cauſing or determining any one of thoſe acts; becauſe the act by which it determines them all, is not a free act; and therefore the will is no more free in determining them, than if it did not cauſe them at all.—Thus, this *Arminian* notion of Liberty of the Will, conſiſting in the Will's *Self-determination*, is repugnant to itſelf, and ſhuts itſelf wholly out of the world.

## SECTION II.

### *Several ſuppoſed Ways of* evading *the foregoing Reaſoning conſidered.*

IF to evade the force of what has been obſerved, it ſhould be ſaid, that when the *Arminians* ſpeak of the will's determining its own acts, they do not mean that the will determines its acts by any preceding act, or that one act of the will determines another; but only that the faculty or power of will, or the ſoul in the uſe of that power, determines its own volitions; and that it does it without any act going before the act determined; ſuch an evaſion would be full of the moſt groſs abſurdity.——I confeſs, it is an Evaſion of my own inventing; and I do not know but I ſhould wrong the *Arminians*, in ſuppoſing that any of them would make uſe of it. But it being as good a one as I can invent, I would obſerve upon it a few things.

*Firſt*, If the faculty or power of the will determines an act of volition, or the ſoul in the *uſe* or *exerciſe of that power*, determines it, that is the ſame thing as for the ſoul to determine volition *by an act of will.* For an *exerciſe* of the power of will, and an *act* of that power, are the ſame thing. Therefore to ſay, that the power of will, or the ſoul in the *uſe* or *exerciſe* of that power, determines volition, without an *act* of will preceding the volition determined, is a contradiction.

*Secondly*, If a power of will determines the act of the will, then a power of chuſing determines

it. For, as was before observed, in every act of will, there is choice, and a power of willing is a power of chusing. But if a power of chusing determines the act of volition, it determines it by chusing it. For it is most absurd to say, that a power of chusing determines one thing rather than another, without chusing any thing. But if a power of chusing determines volition by chusing it, then here is the act of volition determined by an antecedent choice, chusing that volition.

*Thirdly*, To say, the faculty, or the soul, determines its own volition, but not by any act, is a contradiction. Because for the soul to *direct*, *decide*, or *determine* any thing, is to act; and this is supposed; for the soul is here spoken of as being a cause in this affair, bringing something to pass, or doing something; or, which is the same thing, exerting itself in order to an effect, which effect is the determination of volition, or the particular kind and manner of an act of will. But certainly, this exertion or action is not the same with the effect, in order to the production of which it is exerted; but must be something prior to it.

*Again*, The advocates for this notion of the freedom of the will, speak of a certain *sovereignty* in the will, whereby it has power to determine its own volitions. And therefore the determination of volition must itself be an act of the will; for otherwise it can be no exercise of that supposed power and sovereignty.

*Again*, If the will determines itself, then either the will is *active* in determining its volitions, or it is not. If it be active in it, then the determi-

nation is an *act* of the will; and so there is one act of the will determining another. But if the will is not *active* in the determination, then how does it *exercise* any liberty in it? These gentlemen suppose that the thing wherein the will *exercises* liberty, is in its determining its own acts. But how can this be, if it be not *active* in determining? Certainly the will, or the soul, cannot *exercise any liberty* in that wherein it doth not *act*, or wherein it doth not *exercise itself*. So that if either part of this dilemma be taken, this scheme of liberty, consisting in self-determining power, is overthrown. If there be an act of the will in determining all its own free acts, then one free act of the will is determined by another; and so we have the absurdity of every free act, even the very first, determined by a foregoing free act. But if there be no act or exercise of the will in determining its own acts, then no liberty is exercised in determining them. From whence it follows, that no liberty consists in the will's power to determine its own acts: or, which is the same thing, that there is no such thing as liberty consisting in a self-determining power of the will.

If it should be said, That although it be true, if the soul determines its own volitions, it must be active in so doing, and the determination itself must be an act; yet there is no need of supposing this act to be prior to the volition determined; but the will or soul determines the act of the will *in willing;* it determines its own volition, *in* the very act of volition; it directs and limits the act of the will, causing it to be so and not otherwise, *in* exerting the act, without any preceding act to exert that. If any should say after this manner, they must mean one of these three things:

Either, (1.) That the determining act, though it be before the act determined in the order of nature, yet is not before it in order of time. Or, (2.) That the determining act is not before the act determined, either in the order of time or nature, nor is truly distinct from it; but that the soul's determining the act of volition is the same thing with its exerting the act of volition: the mind's exerting such a particular act, is its causing and determining the act. Or, (3.) That volition has no cause and is no effect; but comes into existence, with such a particular determination, without any ground or reason of its existence and determination.—I shall consider these distinctly.

(1.) If all that is meant, be, that the determining act is not before the act determined in order of *time*, it will not help the case at all, though it should be allowed. If it be before the determined act in the order of nature, being the cause or ground of its existence, this as much proves it to be distinct from it, and independent on it, as if it were before in the order of time. As the cause of the particular motion of a natural body in a certain direction, may have no distance as to time, yet cannot be the same with the motion effected by it, but must be as distinct from it, as any other cause, that is before its effect in the order of time: as the architect is distinct from the house which he builds, or the father distinct from the son which he begets. And if the act of the will determining be distinct from the act determined, and before it in the order of nature, then we can go back from one to another, 'till we come to the first in the series, which has no act of the will before it in the order of na-

ture, determining it; and conſequently is an act not determined by the will, and ſo not a free act, in this notion of freedom. And this being the act which determines all the reſt, none of them are free acts. As when there is a chain of many links, the firſt of which only is taken hold of and drawn by hand; all the reſt may follow and be moved at the ſame inſtant, without any diſtance of time; but yet the motion of one link is before that of another in the order of nature; the laſt is moved by the next, and that by the next, and ſo till we come to the firſt; which not being moved by any other, but by ſomething diſtinct from the whole chain, this as much proves that no part is moved by any ſelf-moving power in the chain, as if the motion of one link followed that of another in the order of time.

(2.) If any ſhould ſay, that the determining act is not before the determined act, either in the order of time, or of nature, nor is diſtinct from it; but that the *exertion* of the act is the *determination* of the act; that for the ſoul to exert a particular volition, is for it to cauſe and determine that act of volition: I would on this obſerve, that the thing in queſtion ſeems to be forgotten, or kept out of ſight, in a darkneſs and unintelligibleneſs of ſpeech; unleſs ſuch an objector would mean to contradict himſelf.— The very act of volition itſelf is doubtleſs a determination of mind; *i. e.* it is the mind's drawing up a concluſion, or coming to a choice between two things, or more, propoſed to it. But determining among external *objects* of choice, is not the ſame with determining the *act* of choice itſelf, among various poſſible acts of choice.— The queſtion is, What influences, directs, or determines the mind or will to come to ſuch a

conclusion or choice as it does? Or what is the cause, ground or reason, why it concludes thus. and not otherwise? Now it must be answered, according to the *Arminian* notion of freedom, that the will influences, orders and determines itself thus to act. And if it does, I say, it must be by some antecedent act. To say, it is caused, influenced and determined by something, and yet not determined by any thing antecedent, either in order of time or nature, is a contradiction. For that is what is meant by a thing's being prior in the order of nature, that it is some way the cause or reason of the thing, with respect to which it is said to be prior.

If the particular act or exertion of will, which comes into existence, be any thing properly determined at all, then it has some cause of its existing, and of its existing in such a particular determinate manner, and not another; some cause, whose influence *decides the matter:* which cause is distinct from the effect, and prior to it. But to say, that the will or mind orders, influences and determines itself to exert such an act as it does, by the very exertion itself, is to make the exertion both cause and effect; or the exerting such an act, to be a cause of the exertion of such an act. For the question is, What is the cause and reason of the soul's exerting such an act? To which the answer is, The soul exerts such an act, and that is the cause of it. And so, by this, the exertion must be prior in the order of nature to itself, and distinct from itself.

(3.) If the meaning be, that the soul's exertion of such a particular act of will, is a thing that comes to pass *of itself,* without any cause; and that there is absolutely no ground or reason

of the ſoul's being determined to exert ſuch a volition, and make ſuch a choice, rather than another, I ſay, if this be the meaning of *Arminians*, when they contend ſo earneſtly for the will's determining its own acts, and for liberty of will conſiſting in ſelf-determining power; they do nothing but confound themſelves and others with words without a meaning. In the queſtion, *What determines the will?* and in their anſwer, that *the will determines itſelf*, and in all the diſpute about it, it ſeems to be taken for granted, that ſomething determines the will; and the controverſy on this head is not, whether any thing at all determines it, or whether its determination has any cauſe or foundation at all: but where the foundation of it is, whether in the will itſelf, or ſomewhere elſe. But if the thing intended be what is above-mentioned, then all comes to this, that nothing at all determines the will; volition having abſolutely no cauſe or foundation of its exiſtence, either within, or without. There is a great noiſe made about ſelf-determining power, as the ſource of all free acts of the will: but when the matter comes to be explained, the meaning is, that no power at all is the ſource of theſe acts, neither ſelf-determining power, nor any other, but they ariſe from nothing; no cauſe, no power, no influence, being at all concerned in the matter.

However, this very thing, even that the free acts of the will are events which come to paſs without a cauſe, is certainly implied in the *Arminian* notion of liberty of will; though it be very inconſiſtent with many other things in their ſcheme, and repugnant to ſome things implied in their notion of liberty. Their opinion implies, that the particular determination of voli-

tion is without any cause; because they hold the free acts of the will to be *contingent* events; and contingence is essential to freedom in their notion of it. But certainly, those things which have a prior ground and reason of their particular existence, a cause which antecedently determines them to be, and determines them to be just as they are, do not happen contingently. If something foregoing, by a causal influence and connection, determines and fixes precisely their coming to pass, and the manner of it, then it does not remain a contingent thing whether they shall come to pass or no.

And because it is a question, in many respects, very important in this controversy about the freedom of will, *whether the free acts of the will are events which come to pass without a cause?* I shall be particular in examining this point in the two following sections.

## SECTION III.

*Whether any Event whatsoever, and* Volition *in particular, can come to pass* without *a* Cause *of its existence.*

BEFORE I enter on any argument on this subject, I would explain how I would be understood, when I use the word *Cause* in this discourse: since, for want of a better word, I shall have occasion to use it in a sense which is more extensive, than that in which it is sometimes used. The word is often used in so restrained a sense as to signify only that which has a *positive efficiency* or influence *to produce* a thing, or bring it to pass. But there are many things which have

no ſuch poſitive productive influence; which yet are Cauſes in that reſpect, that they have truly the nature of a ground or reaſon why ſome things are, rather than others; or why they are as they are, rather than otherwiſe. Thus the abſence of the ſun in the night, is not the Cauſe of the falling of the dew at that time, in the ſame manner as its beams are the Cauſe of the aſcending of the vapours in the day-time; and its withdrawment in the winter, is not in the ſame manner the Cauſe of the freezing of the waters, as its approach in the ſpring is the cauſe of their thawing. But yet the withdrawment or abſence of the ſun is an antecedent, with which theſe effects in the night and winter are connected, and on which they depend; and is one thing that belongs to the ground and reaſon why they come to paſs at that time, rather than at other times; though the abſence of the ſun is nothing poſitive, nor has any poſitive influence.

It may be further obſerved, that when I ſpeak of *connection of Cauſes and Effects*, I have reſpect to *moral* Cauſes, as well as thoſe that are called *natural* in diſtinction from them. Moral Cauſes may be Cauſes in as proper a ſenſe, as any cauſes whatſoever; may have as real an influence, and may as truly be the ground and reaſon of an Event's coming to paſs.

Therefore I ſometimes uſe the word *Cauſe*, in this enquiry, to ſignify any *antecedent*, either natural or moral, poſitive or negative, on which an Event, either a thing, or the manner and circumſtance of a thing, ſo depends, that it is the ground and reaſon, either in whole, or in part, why it is, rather than not; or why it is as it is,

rather than otherwise; or, in other words, any antecedent with which a consequent Event is so connected, that it truly belongs to the reason why the proposition which affirms that Event, is true; whether it has any positive influence, or not. And in an agreeableness to this, I sometimes use the word effect for the consequence of another thing, which is perhaps rather an occasion than a Cause, most properly speaking.

I am the more careful thus to explain my meaning, that I may cut off occasion, from any that might seek occasion to cavil and object against some things which I may say concerning the dependence of all things which come to pass, on some cause, and their connection with their Cause.

Having thus explained what I mean by *Cause*, I assert that nothing ever comes to pass without a Cause. What is self-existent must be from eternity, and must be unchangeable: but as to all things that *begin to be*, they are not self-existent, and therefore must have some foundation of their existence without themselves.——That whatsoever begins to be, which before was not, must have a Cause why it then begins to exist, seems to be the first dictate of the common and natural sense which God hath implanted in the minds of all mankind, and the main foundation of all our reasonings about the existence of things, past, present, or to come.

And this dictate of common sense equally respects substances and modes, or things and the manner and circumstances of things. Thus, if we see a body which has hitherto been at rest, start out of a state of rest, and begin to move, we do as naturally and necessarily suppose there is

ſome Cauſe or reaſon of this new mode of exiſtence, as of the exiſtence of a body itſelf which had hitherto not exiſted. And ſo if a body, which had hitherto moved in a certain direction, ſhould ſuddenly change the direction of its motion; or if it ſhould put off its old figure, and take a new one; or change its colour: the beginning of theſe new modes is a new Event, and the mind of mankind neceſſarily ſuppoſes that there is ſome Cauſe or reaſon of them.

If this grand principle of common ſenſe be taken away, all arguing from effects to Cauſes ceaſeth, and ſo all knowledge of any exiſtence, beſides what we have by the moſt direct and immediate intuition. Particularly all our proof of the being of God ceaſes: we argue His being from our own being, and the being of other things, which we are ſenſible once were not, but have begun to be; and from the being of the world, with all its conſtituent parts, and the manner of their exiſtence; all which we ſee plainly are not neceſſary in their own nature, and ſo not ſelf-exiſtent, and therefore muſt have a Cauſe. But if things, not in themſelves neceſſary, may begin to be without a Cauſe, all this arguing is vain.

Indeed, I will not affirm, that there is in the nature of things no foundation for the knowledge of the Being of God without any evidence of it from His works. I do ſuppoſe there is a great abſurdity, in the nature of things ſimply conſidered, in ſuppoſing that there ſhould be no God, or in denying Being in general, and ſuppoſing an eternal, abſolute, univerſal nothing: and therefore that here would be foundation of intuitive evidence that it cannot be, and that

eternal infinite most perfect Being must be; if we had strength and comprehension of mind sufficient, to have a clear idea of general and universal Being, or, which is the same thing, of the infinite, eternal, most perfect Divine Nature and Essence. But then we should not properly come to the knowledge of the Being of God by arguing; but our evidence would be intuitive: we should see it, as we see other things that are necessary in themselves, the contraries of which are in their own nature absurd and contradictory; as we see that twice two is four; and as we see that a circle has no angles. If we had as clear an idea of universal infinite entity, as we have of these other things, I suppose we should most intuitively see the absurdity of supposing such Being not to be; should immediately see there is no room for the question, whether it is possible that Being, in the most general abstracted notion of it, should not be. But we have not that strength and extent of mind, to know this certainly in this intuitive independent manner: but the way that mankind come to the knowledge of the Being of God, is that which the apostle speaks of, Rom. i. 20. *The invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen; being understood by the things that are made; even his eternal Power and Godhead.* We *first ascend*, and prove *a posteriori*, or from effects, that there must be an eternal Cause; and then *secondly*, prove by argumentation, not intuition, that this Being must be necessarily existent; and then *thirdly*, from the proved necessity of his existence, we may *descend*, and prove many of his perfections *a priori*.

But if once this grand principle of common sense be given up, that *what is not necessary in itself, must have a Cause;* and we begin to maintain,

that things may come into existence, and begin to be, which heretofore have not been, of themselves, without any cause; all our means of ascending in our arguing from the creature to the Creator, and all our evidence of the Being of God, is cut off at one blow. In this case, we cannot prove that there is a God, either from the Being of the world, and the creatures in it, or from the manner of their being, their order, beauty and use. For if things may come into existence without any cause at all, then they doubtless may without any Cause answerable to the effect. Our minds do alike naturally suppose and determine both these things; namely, that what begins to be has a Cause, and also that it has a Cause proportionable and agreeable to the effect. The same principle which leads us to determine, that there cannot be any thing coming to pass without a Cause, leads us to determine that there cannot be more in the effect than in the Cause.

Yea, if once it should be allowed, that things may come to pass without a Cause, we should not only have no proof of the Being of God, but we should be without evidence of the existence of any thing whatsoever, but our own immediately present ideas and consciousness. For we have no way to prove any thing else, but by arguing from effects to Causes: from the ideas now immediately in view: we argue other things not immediately in view: from sensations now excited in us, we infer the existence of things without us, as the Causes of these sensations: and from the existence of these things, we argue other things, which they depend on, as effects on Causes. We infer the past existence of ourselves, or any thing else, by memory; only as we argue, that the ideas, which are now in our

minds, are the consequences of past ideas and sensations. We immediately perceive nothing else but the ideas which are this moment extant in our minds. We perceive or know other things only *by means* of these, as necessarily connected with others, and dependent on them. But if things may be without Causes, all this necessary connection and dependence is dissolved, and so all means of our knowledge is gone. If there be no absurdity or difficulty in supposing one thing to start out of non-existence, into being, of itself without a Cause; then there is no absurdity or difficulty in supposing the same of millions of millions. For nothing, or no difficulty multiplied, still is nothing, or no difficulty: nothing multiplied by nothing, don't increase the sum.

And indeed, according to the hypothesis I am opposing, of the acts of the will coming to pass without a Cause, it is the case in fact, that millions of millions of Events are continually coming into existence *contingently*, without any Cause or reason why they do so, all over the world, every day and hour, through all ages. So it is in a constant succession, in every moral agent. This contingency, this efficient nothing, this effectual No-Cause, is always ready at hand, to produce this sort of effects, as long as the agent exists, and as often as he has occasion.

If it were so, that things only of one kind, *viz.* acts of the will, seemed to come to pass of themselves; but those of this sort in general came into being thus; and it were an event that was continual, and that happened in a course, wherever were capable subjects of such events; this very thing would demonstrate that there was some Cause of them, which made such a difference

between this Event and others, and that they did not really happen contingently. For contingence is blind, and does not pick and chuſe for a particular ſort of Events. Nothing has no choice. This No-Cauſe, which cauſes no exiſtence, cannot cauſe the exiſtence which comes to paſs, to be of one particular ſort only, diſtinguiſhed from all others. Thus, that only one ſort of matter drops out of the heavens, even water, and that this comes ſo often, ſo conſtantly and plentifully, all over the world, in all ages, ſhows that there is ſome Cauſe or Reaſon of the falling of water out of the heavens; and that ſomething beſides mere contingence has a hand in the matter.

If we ſhould ſuppoſe Non-entity to be about to bring forth; and things were coming into exiſtence, without any Cauſe or Antecedent, on which the exiſtence, or kind, or manner of exiſtence depends; or which could at all determine whether the things ſhould be; ſtones, or ſtars, or beaſts, or angels, or human bodies, or ſouls, or only ſome new motion or figure in natural bodies, or ſome new ſenſations in animals, or new ideas in the human underſtanding, or new volitions in the will; or any thing elſe of all the infinite number of poſſibles; then certainly it would not be expected, although many millions of millions of things are coming into exiſtence in this manner, all over the face of the earth, that they ſhould all be only of one particular kind, and that it ſhould be thus in all ages, and that this ſort of exiſtences ſhould never fail to come to paſs where there is room for them, or a ſubject capable of them, and that conſtantly, whenever there is occaſion for them.

If any ſhould imagine, there is ſomething in the ſort of Event that renders it poſſible for it to come into exiſtence without a Cauſe, and ſhould ſay, that the free acts of the will are exiſtences of an exceeding different nature from other things; by reaſon of which they may come into exiſtence without any previous ground or reaſon of it, tho' other things cannot; if they make this objection in good earneſt, it would be an evidence of their ſtrangely forgetting themſelves: for they would be giving an account of ſome ground of the exiſtence of a thing, when at the ſame time they would maintain there is no ground of its exiſtence. Therefore I would obſerve, that the particular nature of exiſtence, be it never ſo diverſe from others, can lay no foundation for that thing's coming into exiſtence without a Cauſe; becauſe to ſuppoſe this, would be to ſuppoſe the particular nature of exiſtence to be a thing prior to the exiſtence; and ſo a thing which makes way for exiſtence, with ſuch a circumſtance, namely, without a cauſe or reaſon of exiſtence. But that which in any reſpect makes way for a thing's coming into being, or for any manner or circumſtance of its firſt exiſtence, muſt be prior to the exiſtence. The diſtinguiſhed nature of the effect, which is ſomething belonging to the effect, cannot have influence backward, to act before it is. The peculiar nature of that thing called volition, can do nothing, can have no influence, while it is not. And afterwards it is too late for its influence: for then the thing has made ſure of exiſtence already, without its help.

So that it is indeed as repugnant to reaſon, to ſuppoſe that an act of the will ſhould come into exiſtence without a cauſe, as to ſuppoſe the hu-

man soul, or an angel, or the globe of the earth, or the whole universe, should come into existence without a cause. And if once we allow, that such a sort of effect as a Volition may come to pass without a Cause, how do we know but that many other sorts of effects may do so too? It is not the particular kind of effect that makes the absurdity of supposing it has being without a Cause, but something which is common to all things that ever begin to be, *viz.* That they are not self-existent, or necessary in the nature of things.

## SECTION IV.

### *Whether* Volition *can arise without a Cause through the* Activity *of the Nature of the Soul.*

THE author of the *Essay on the Freedom of the Will in God and the Creatures*, in answer to that objection against his doctrine of a self-determining power in the will, (p. 68, 69.) *That nothing is, or comes to pass, without a sufficient reason why it is, and why it is in this manner rather than another*, allows that it is thus in corporeal things, *which are, properly and philosophically speaking, passive being;* but denies that it is thus in *spirits, which are beings of an active nature, who have the spring of action within themselves, and can determine themselves.* By which it is plainly supposed, that such an event as an act of the will, may come to pass in a spirit, without a sufficient reason why it comes to pass, or why it is after this manner, rather than another; by reason of the activity of the nature of a spirit.——But certainly this au-

thor, in this matter, must be very unwary and inadvertent. For,

1. The objection or difficulty proposed by this author, seems to be forgotten in his answer or solution. The very difficulty, as he himself proposes it, is this; How an event can *come to pass without a sufficient reason why it is, or why it is in this manner rather than another?* Instead of solving this difficulty, or answering this question with regard to Volition, as he proposes, he forgets himself, and answers another question quite diverse, and wholly inconsistent with this, *viz.* What is a sufficient reason why it is, and why it is in this manner rather than another? And he assigns the active being's own determination as the Cause, and a Cause sufficient for the effect; and leaves all the difficulty unresolved, and the question unanswered, which yet returns, even, How the soul's own determination, which he speaks of, came to exist, and to be what it was without a Cause? The activity of the soul may enable it to be the Cause of effects; but it does not at all enable or help it to be the subject of effects which have no Cause; which is the thing this author supposes concerning acts of the will. Activity of nature will no more enable a being to produce effects, and determine the manner of their existence, *within* itself, without a Cause, than *out of* itself, in some other being. But if an active being should, through its activity, produce and determine an effect in some external object, how absurd would it be to say, that the effect was produced without a Cause!

2. The question is not so much, How a spirit endowed with activity comes to act, as why it exerts such an act, and not another; or why it

acts with such a particular determination? If activity of nature be the Cause why a spirit (the soul of man for instance) acts, and does not lie still; yet that alone is not the Cause why its action is thus and thus limited, directed and determined. Active nature is a *general* thing; it is an ability or tendency of nature to action, generally taken; which may be a Cause why the soul acts as occasion or reason is given; but this alone cannot be a sufficient Cause why the soul exerts such a *particular* act, at such a time, rather than others. In order to this, there must be something besides a *general* tendency to action; there must also be a *particular* tendency to that individual action.— If it should be asked, why the soul of man uses its activity in such a manner as it does; and it should be answered, that the soul uses its activity thus, rather than otherwise, because it has activity; would such an answer satisfy a rational man? Would it not rather be looked upon as a very impertinent one?

3. An active being can bring no effects to pass by his activity, but what are consequent upon his acting: he produces nothing by his activity, any other way than by the exercise of his activity, and so nothing but the fruits of its exercise: he brings nothing to pass by a dormant activity. But the exercise of his activity is action; and so his action, or exercise of his activity, must be prior to the effects of his activity. If an active being produces an effect in another being, about which his activity is conversant, the effect being the fruit of his activity, his activity must be first exercised or exerted, and the effect of it must follow. So it must be, with equal reason, if the active being is his own object, and his activity is conversant about himself, to produce

and determine some effect in himself; still the exercise of his activity must go before the effect, which he brings to pass and determines by it. And therefore his activity cannot be the Cause of the determination of the first action, or exercise of activity itself, whence the effects of activity arise; for that would imply a contradiction; it would be to say, the first exercise of activity is before the first exercise of activity, and is the Cause of it.

4. That the soul, though an active substance, cannot *diversify* its own acts, but by first acting; or be a determining Cause of *different* acts, or any different effects, sometimes of one kind, and sometimes of another, any other way than in consequence of its own diverse acts, is manifest by this; that if so, then the *same* Cause, the *same* causal Power, Force or Influence, *without variation in any respect*, would produce *different* effects at different times. For the same substance of the soul before it acts, and the same active nature of the soul before it is exerted (*i. e.* before in the order of nature) would be the Cause of different effects, *viz.* Different Volitions at different times. But the substance of the soul before it acts, and its active nature before it is exerted, are the same without variation. For it is some act that makes the first variation in the Cause, as to any causal exertion, force or influence. But if it be so, that the soul has no different causality, or diverse causal force or influence, in producing these diverse effects; then it is evident, that the soul has no influence, no hand in the diversity of the effect; and that the difference of the effect cannot be owing to any thing in the soul; or which is the same thing, the soul does not determine the diversity of the effect; which is contrary to the

ſuppoſition.—It is true, the ſubſtance of the ſoul before it acts, and before there is any difference in that reſpect, may be in a different ſtate and circumſtances: but thoſe whom I oppoſe, will not allow the different circumſtances of the ſoul to be the determining Cauſes of the acts of the will; as being contrary to their notion of ſelf-determination and ſelf-motion.

5. Let us ſuppoſe, as theſe divines do, that there are no acts of the ſoul, ſtrictly ſpeaking, but free Volitions; then it will follow, that the ſoul is an active being in nothing further than it is a voluntary or elective being; and whenever it produces effects actively, it produces effects voluntarily and electively. But to produce effects thus, is the ſame thing as to produce effects *in conſequence of* and *according to* its own choice. And if ſo, then ſurely the ſoul does not by its activity produce all its own acts of will or choice themſelves: for this, by the ſuppoſition, is to produce all its free acts of choice voluntarily and electively, or in conſequence of its own free acts of choice, which brings the matter directly to the fore-mentioned contradiction, of a free act of choice before the firſt free act of choice.—According to theſe gentlemen's own notion of action, if there ariſes in the mind a Volition without a free act of the will or choice to determine and produce it, the mind is not the active voluntary Cauſe of that Volition; becauſe it does not ariſe from, nor is regulated by choice or deſign. And therefore it cannot be, that the mind ſhould be the active, voluntary, determining Cauſe of the firſt and leading Volition that relates to the affair. —The mind's being a *deſigning* Cauſe, only enables it to produce effects in conſequence of its *deſign;* it will not enable it to be the deſigning Cauſe of

all its own designs. The mind's being an *elective* Cause, will only enable it to produce effects in consequence of its *elections*, and according to them; but cannot enable it to be the elective Cause of all its own elections; because that supposes an election before the first election. So the mind's being an *active* Cause enables it to produce effects in consequence of its own *acts*, but cannot enable it to be the determining Cause of all its own *acts;* for that is still in the same manner a contradiction; as it supposes a determining act conversant about the first act, and prior to it, having a causal influence on its existence, and manner of existence.

I can conceive of nothing else that can be meant by the soul's having power to cause and determine its own Volitions, as a being to whom God has given a power of action, but this; that God has given power to the soul, sometimes at least, to excite Volitions at its pleasure, or according as it chuses. And this certainly supposes, in all such cases, a choice preceding all Volitions which are thus caused, even the first of them. Which runs into the fore-mentioned great absurdity.

Therefore the activity of the nature of the soul affords no relief from the difficulties which the notion of a self-determining power in the will is attended with, nor will it help, in the least, its absurdities and inconsistences.

## SECTION V.

*Shewing, that if the things asserted in these Evasions should be supposed to be true, they are altogether impertinent, and cannot help the cause of* Arminian *Liberty; and how (this being the state of the case)* Arminian *Writers are obliged to talk inconsistently.*

WHAT was last observed in the preceding section may shew, not only that the active nature of the soul cannot be a reason why an act of the will is, or why it is in this manner, rather than another; but also that if it could be so, and it could be proved that volitions are contingent events, in that sense, that their being and manner of being is not fixed or determined by any cause, or any thing antecedent; it would not at all serve the purpose of *Arminians*, to establish the Freedom of the Will, according to their notion of its freedom, as consisting in the will's *determination of itself;* which supposes every free act of the will to be determined by some act of the will going before to determine it; inasmuch as for the *will* to determine a thing, is the same as for the soul to determine a thing by *willing;* and there is no way that the *will* can determine an act of the will, than by willing that act of the will, or, which is the same thing, *chusing* it. So that here must be two acts of the will in the case, one going before another, one conversant about the other, and the latter the object of the former, and chosen by the former. If the will does not cause and determine the act by choice, it does not cause or determine it at all; for that which

is not determined by choice, is not determined voluntarily or *willingly:* and to say, that the will determines something which the soul does not determine willingly, is as much as to say, that something is done by the will, which the soul doth not with its will.

So that if *Arminian* liberty of will, consisting in the will's determining its own acts, be maintained, the old absurdity and contradiction must be maintained, that every free act of will is caused and determined by a foregoing free act of will. Which doth not consist with the free acts arising without any cause, and being so contingent, as not to be fixed by any thing foregoing. So that this evasion must be given up, as not at all relieving, and as that which, instead of supporting this sort of liberty, directly destroys it.

And if it should be supposed, that the soul determines its own acts of will some other way, than by a foregoing act of will; still it will not help the cause of their liberty of will. If it determines them by an act of the understanding, or some other power, then *the will* does not determine *itself;* and so the *self-determining* power of the will is given up. And what liberty is there exercised according to their own opinion of liberty, by the soul's being determined by something besides *its own choice?* The acts of the will, it is true, may be directed, and effectually determined and fixed; but it is not done by the soul's own will and pleasure: there is no exercise at all of choice or will in producing the effect: and if *will* and choice are not exercised in it, how is the *liberty of the will* exercised in it?

So that let *Arminians* turn which way they please with their notion of liberty, consisting in the will's determining its own acts, their notion destroys itself. If they hold every free act of will to be determined by the soul's own free choice, or foregoing free act of will; *foregoing*, either in the order of time, or nature; it implies that gross contradiction, that the first free act belonging to the affair, is determined by a free act which is before it. Or if they say that the free acts of the will are determined by some *other act* of the soul, and not an act of will or choice. This also destroys their notion of liberty consisting in the acts of the will being determined by the *will itself;* or if they hold that the acts of the will are determined by *nothing at all* that is prior to them, but that they are contingent in that sense, that they are determined and fixed by no cause at all; this also destroys their notion of liberty, consisting in the will's determining its own acts.

This being the true state of the *Arminian* notion of liberty, it hence comes to pass, that the writers that defend it are forced into gross inconsistences, in what they say upon this subject. To instance in Dr. Whitby; he in his discourse on the freedom of the will, * opposes the opinion of the *Calvinists*, who place man's liberty *only in a power of doing what he will*, as that wherein they plainly agree with Mr. Hobbes. And yet he himself mentions the very same notion of liberty, as the dictate of *the sense and common reason of mankind, and a rule laid down by the light of nature;* viz. that *liberty is a power of acting from ourselves, or DOING WHAT WE WILL.* † This

* In his Book on the five Points, Second Edit. p. 350, 351, 352. † Ibid. p. 325, 326.

is indeed, as he says, a thing agreeable to *the sense and common reason of mankind;* and therefore it is not so much to be wondered at, that he unawares acknowledges it against himself: for if liberty does not consist in this, what else can be devised that it should consist in? if it be said, as Dr. Whitby elsewhere insists, that it does not only consist in liberty of *doing what we will*, but also a liberty of willing without necessity; still the question returns, what does that liberty of willing without necessity consist in, but in a power of willing *as we please*, without being impeded by a contrary necessity? or in other words, a liberty for the soul in its willing to act *according to its own choice?* Yea, this very thing the same author seems to allow, and suppose again and again, in the use he makes of sayings of the Fathers, whom he quotes as his vouchers. Thus he cites the words of Origen, which he produces as a testimony on his side; * *The soul acts by HER OWN CHOICE, and it is free for her to incline to whatever part SHE WILL.* And those words of Justin Martyr; † *the doctrine of the Christians is this, that nothing is done or suffered according to fate, but that every man doth good or evil ACCORDING TO HIS OWN FREE CHOICE.* And from Eusebius, these words; ‡ *If fate be established, philosophy and piety are overthrown.— All these things depending upon the necessity introduced by the stars, and not upon meditation and exercise PROCEEDING FROM OUR OWN FREE CHOICE.* And again, the words of Maccarius; ‖ *God, to preserve the liberty of man's will, suffered their bodies to die, that it might be IN THEIR CHOICE to turn to good or evil.——They who are acted by the Holy Spirit, are not held under any ne-*

* In his Book on the five Points, Second Edit. p. 342.
† Ibid. p. 360. ‡ Ibid. 363. ‖ Ibid. 369, 370.

*ceſſity, but have liberty to turn themſelves, and DO WHAT THEY WILL in this life.*

Thus, the doctor in effect comes into that very notion of liberty, which the Calviniſts have; which he at the ſame time condemns, as agreeing with the opinion of Mr. Hobbes, namely, *the ſoul's acting by its own choice, men's doing good or evil according to their own free choice, their being in that exerciſe which proceeds from their own free choice, having it in their choice to turn to good or evil, and doing what they will.* So that if men exerciſe this liberty in the acts of the will themſelves, it muſt be in exerting acts of will as they will, or *according to their own* free *choice;* or exerting acts of will *that proceed from their choice.* And if it be ſo, then let every one judge whether this does not ſuppoſe a free choice going before the free act of will, or whether an act of choice does not go before that act of the will which *proceeds from it.* And if it be thus with all free acts of the will, then let every one judge, whether it will not follow that there is a free choice or will going before the firſt free act of the will exerted in the caſe. And then let every one judge, whether this be not a contradiction. And finally, let every one judge whether in the ſcheme of theſe writers there be any poſſibility of avoiding theſe abſurdities.

If liberty conſiſts, as Dr. Whitby himſelf ſays in a man's *doing what he will;* and a man exerciſes this liberty, not only in external actions, but in the acts of the will themſelves; then ſo far as liberty is exerciſed in the latter, it conſiſts in *willing what he wills:* and if any ſay ſo, one of theſe two things muſt be meant, either, 1. That a man has power to will, as he does will; becauſe

what he wills, he wills; and therefore has power to will what he has power to will. If this be their meaning, then all this mighty controversy about freedom of the will and self-determining power, comes wholly to nothing; all that is contended for being no more than this, that the mind of man does what is does, and is the subject of what it is the subject of, or that what is, is; wherein none has any controversy with them. Or, 2. The meaning must be, that a man has power to will as he pleases or chuses to will: that is, he has power by one act of choice, to chuse another; by an antecedent act of will to chuse a consequent act; and therein to execute his own choice. And if this be their meaning, it is nothing but shuffling with those they dispute with, and baffling their own reason. For still the question returns, wherein lies man's liberty in that antecedent act of will which chose the consequent act. The answer according to the same principles must be, that his liberty in this also lies in his willing as he would, or as he chose, or agreeable to another act of choice preceding that. And so the question returns *in infinitum* and the like answer must be made *in infinitum:* in order to support their opinion, there must be no beginning, but free acts of will must have been chosen by foregoing free acts of will in the soul of every man, without beginning; and so before he had a being, from all eternity.

## SECTION VI.

*Concerning the Will's determining in Things which are perfectly* indifferent, *in the View of the Mind.*

A Great argument for ſelf-determining power, is the ſuppoſed experience we univerſally have of an ability to determine our Wills, in caſes wherein no prevailing motive is preſented: the Will (as is ſuppoſed) has its choice to make between two or more things, that are perfectly equal in the view of the mind; and the Will is apparently altogether indifferent; and yet we find no difficulty in coming to a choice; the Will can inſtantly determine itſelf to one, by a ſovereign power which it has over itſelf, without being moved by any preponderating inducement.

Thus the fore-mentioned author of an *Eſſay on the Freedom of the Will*, &c. p. 25, 26, 27, ſuppoſes, " That there are many inſtances, wherein " the Will is determined neither by preſent un- " eaſineſs, nor by the greateſt apparent good, nor " by the laſt dictate of the underſtanding, nor " by any thing elſe, but merely by itſelf as a " ſovereign ſelf-determining power of the ſoul; " and that the ſoul does not will this or that " action, in ſome caſes, by any other influence " but becauſe it will. Thus (ſays he) I can turn " my face to the South, or the North; I can " point with my finger upward, or downward.— " And thus, in ſome caſes, the Will determines " itſelf in a very ſovereign manner, becauſe it " will, without a reaſon borrowed from the un- " derſtanding: and hereby it diſcovers its own " perfect power of choice, riſing from within it-

"self, and free from all influence or restraint of "any kind." And in pages 66, 70, and 73, 74. this author very expressly supposes the Will in many cases to be determined by *no motive at all, and acts altogether without motive, or ground of preference.*—Here I would observe,

1. The very supposition which is here made, directly contradicts and overthrows itself. For the thing supposed, wherein this grand argument consists, is, that among several things the Will actually chuses one before another, at the same time that it is perfectly indifferent; which is the very same thing as to say, the mind has a preference, at the same time that it has no preference. What is meant cannot be, that the mind is indifferent before it comes to have a choice, or until it has a preference; or, which is the same thing, that the mind is indifferent until it comes to be not indifferent. For certainly this author did not suppose he had a controversy with any person in supposing this. And then it is nothing to his purpose, that the mind which chuses, was indifferent once; unless it chuses, remaining indifferent; for otherwise, it does not chuse at all in that case of indifference, concerning which is all the question. Besides, it appears in fact, that the thing which this author supposes, is not that the Will chuses one thing before another, concerning which it is indifferent *before it chuses;* but also is indifferent *when* it *chuses;* and that its being otherwise than indifferent is not until afterwards, in consequence of its choice; that the chosen thing's appearing preferable and more agreeable than another, arises from its choice already made. His words are (p. 30.) "Where the objects "which are proposed, appear equally fit or good, "the Will is left without a guide or director;

" and therefore must take its own choice, by its " own determination; it being properly a self- " determining power. And in such cases the " will does as it were make a good to itself by " its own choice, *i. e.* creates its own pleasure " or delight in this self-chosen good. Even as " a man by seizing upon a spot of unoccupied " land, in an uninhabited country, makes it his " own possession and property, and as such re- " joices in it. Where things were indifferent " before, the will finds nothing to make them " more agreeable, considered meerly in themselves; " but the pleasure it feels ARISING FROM " ITS OWN CHOICE, and its perseverance " therein. We love many things which we have " chosen, AND PURELY BECAUSE WE " CHOSE THEM."

This is as much as to say, that we first begin to prefer many things, now ceasing any longer to be indifferent with respect to them, purely because we have preferred and chosen them before. —These things must needs be spoken inconsiderately by this author. Choice or preference cannot be before itself in the same instance, either in the order of time or nature: It cannot be the foundation of itself, or the fruit or consequence of itself. The very act of chusing one thing *rather than another*, is *preferring* that thing and that is setting a higher value on that thing. But that the mind sets an higher value on one thing than another, is not, in the first place, the fruit of its setting a higher value on that thing.

This author says, p. 36. " The will may be " perfectly indifferent, and yet the will may de- " termine itself to chuse one or the other." And again in the same page, " I am entirely in-

"different to either; and yet my Will may de-
"termine itself to chuse." And again, "Which
"I shall chuse must be determined by the mere
"act of my Will." If the choice is determined by a mere act of Will, then the choice is determined by a mere act of choice. And concerning this matter, *viz.* That the act of the Will itself is determined by an act of choice, this writer is express, in page 72. Speaking of the case, where there is no superior fitness in objects presented, he has these words: "There it must act
"by its own CHOICE, and determine itself as
"as it PLEASES." Where it is supposed that the very *determination*, which is the ground and spring of the Will's act, is an act of *choice* and *pleasure*, wherein one act is more agreeable, and the mind better pleased in it than another; and this *preference*, and *superior pleasedness* is the ground of all it does in the case. And if so, the mind is not indifferent when it determines itself, but *had rather* do one thing than another, had rather determine itself one way than another. And therefore the Will does not act at all in indifference; not so much as in the first step it takes, or the first rise and beginning of its acting. If it be possible for the understanding to act in indifference, yet to be sure the will never does; because the Will's beginning to act is the very same thing as its beginning to chuse or prefer. And if in the very first act of the Will, the mind prefers something, then the idea of that thing preferred, does at that time preponderate, or prevail in the mind: or, which is the same thing, the idea of is has a prevailing influence on the Will. So that this wholly destroys the thing supposed, *viz.* That the mind can by a sovereign power chuse one of two or more things, which in the view of the mind are, in every respect, perfectly

equal, one of which does not at all preponderate, nor has any prevailing influence on the mind above another.

So that this author, in his grand argument for the ability of the Will to chuſe one of two, or more things, concerning which it is perfectly indifferent, does at the ſame time, in effect, deny the thing he ſuppoſes, and allows and aſſerts the point he endeavours to overthrow; even that the Will, in chuſing, is ſubject to no prevailing influence of the idea, or view of the thing choſen. And indeed it is impoſſible to offer this argument without overthrowing it; the thing ſuppoſed in it being inconſiſtent with itſelf, and that which denies itſelf. To ſuppoſe the Will to act at all in a ſtate of perfect indifference, either to determine itſelf, or to do any thing elſe, is to aſſert that the mind chuſes without chuſing. To ſay that when it is indifferent, it can do as it pleaſes, is to ſay that it can follow its pleaſure, when it has no pleaſure to follow. And therefore if there be any difficulty in the inſtances of two cakes, or two eggs, &c. which are exactly alike, one as good as another; concerning which this author ſuppoſes the mind in fact has a *choice*, and ſo in effect ſuppoſes that it has a *preference;* it as much concerned himſelf to ſolve the difficulty, as it does thoſe whom he oppoſes. For if theſe inſtances prove any thing to his purpoſe, they prove that a man chuſes without choice. And yet this is not to his purpoſe; becauſe if this is what he aſſerts, his own words are as much againſt him, and do as much contradict him, as the words of thoſe he diſputes againſt can do.

2. There is no great difficulty in ſhewing, in ſuch inſtances as are alledged, not only *that it muſt needs be ſo*; that the mind muſt be influenced in its choice by ſomething that has a preponderating influence upon it; but alſo *how it is ſo*. A little attention to our own experience, and a diſtinct conſideration of the acts of our own minds, in ſuch caſes, will be ſufficient to clear up the matter.

Thus, ſuppoſing I have a cheſs-board before me; and becauſe I am required by a ſuperior, or deſired by a friend, or to make ſome experiment concerning my own ability and liberty, or on ſome other conſideration, I am determined to touch ſome one of the ſpots or ſquares on the board with my finger; not being limited or directed in the firſt propoſal, or my own firſt purpoſe, which is general, to any one in particular; and there being nothing in the ſquares in themſelves conſidered, that recommends any one of all the ſixty-four, more than another: in this caſe, my mind determines to give itſelf up to what is vulgarly called *accident**; by determining to touch that ſquare which happens to be moſt in view, which my eye is eſpecially upon at that moment, or which happens to be then moſt in my mind, or which I ſhall be directed to by ſome other ſuch-like accident. Here are ſeveral ſteps of the mind's proceeding (though all may be done as it were in a moment) the *firſt* ſtep is its *general* determination that it will touch one of the ſquares.

* I have elſewhere obſerved what that is which is vulgarly called *accident*; that it is nothing akin to the *Arminian* metaphyſical notion of *contingence*, ſomething not connected with any thing foregoing; but that it is ſomething that comes to paſs in the courſe of things, in ſome affair that men are concerned in, unforeſeen, and not owing to their deſign.

The *next* ſtep is another *general* determination to give itſelf up to accident, in ſome certain way; as to touch that which ſhall be moſt in the eye or mind at that time, or to ſome other ſuch-like accident. The *third* and laſt ſtep is a *particular* determination to touch a certain individual ſpot, even that ſquare, which, by that ſort of accident the mind has pitched upon, has actually offered itſelf beyond others. Now it is apparent that in none of theſe ſeveral ſteps does the mind proceed in abſolute indifference, but in each of them is influenced by a preponderating inducement. So it is in the *firſt* ſtep; the mind's general determination to touch one of the ſixty-four ſpots: the mind is not abſolutely indifferent whether it does ſo or no; it is induced to it, for the ſake of making ſome experiment, or by the deſire of a friend, or ſome other motive that prevails. So it is in the *ſecond* ſtep, the mind's determining to give itſelf up to accident, by touching that which ſhall be moſt in the eye, or the idea of which ſhall be moſt prevalent in the mind, &c. The mind is not abſolutely indifferent whether it proceeds by this rule or no; but chuſes it becauſe it appears at that time a convenient and requiſite expedient in order to fulfil the general purpoſe aforeſaid. And ſo it is in the *third* and laſt ſtep, it is determining to touch that individual ſpot which actually does prevail in the mind's view. The mind is not indifferent concerning this; but is influenced by a prevailing inducement and reaſon; which is, that this is a proſecution of the preceding determination, which appeared requiſite, and was fixed before in the ſecond ſtep.

Accident will ever ſerve a man, without hindering him a moment, in ſuch a caſe. It will al-

ways be ſo among a number of objects in view, one will prevail in the eye, or in idea beyond others. When we have our eyes open in the clear ſun-ſhine, many objects ſtrike the eye at once, and innumerable images may be at once painted in it by the rays of light; but the attention of the mind is not equal to ſeveral of them at once; or if it be, it does not continue ſo for any time. And ſo it is with reſpect to the ideas of the mind in general: ſeveral ideas are not in equal ſtrength in the mind's view and notice at once; or at leaſt, does not remain ſo for any ſenſible continuance. There is nothing in the world more conſtantly varying, than the ideas of the mind: they do not remain preciſely in the ſame ſtate for the leaſt perceivable ſpace of time: as is evident by this, That all perceivable time is judged and perceived by the mind only by the ſucceſſion or the ſucceſſive changes of its own ideas: Therefore while the views or perceptions of the mind remain preciſely in the ſame ſtate, there is no perceivable ſpace or length of time, becauſe no ſenſible ſucceſſion at all.

As the acts of the Will, in each ſtep of the fore-mentioned procedure, does not come to paſs without a particular cauſe, every act is owing to a prevailing inducement: ſo the accident, as I have called it, or that which happens in the unſearchable courſe of things, to which the mind yields itſelf, and by which it is guided, is not any thing that comes to paſs without a cauſe; and the mind in determining to be guided by it, is not determined by ſomething that has no cauſe; any more than if it determined to be guided by a lot, or the caſting of a die. For though the die's falling in ſuch a manner be accidental to him that caſts it, yet none will ſuppoſe that there is no

cauſe why it falls as it does. The involuntary changes in the ſucceſſion of our ideas, though the cauſe may not be obſerved, have as much a cauſe, as the changeable motions of the motes that float in the air, or the continual infinitely various, ſucceſſive changes of the uneveneſſes on the ſurface of the water.

There are two things eſpecially, which are probably the occaſions of confuſion in the minds of them who inſiſt upon it, that the will acts in a proper indifference, and without being moved by any inducement, in its determinations in ſuch caſes as have been mentioned.

1. They ſeem to miſtake the point in queſtion, or at leaſt not to keep it diſtinctly in view. The queſtion they diſpute about, is, Whether the mind be indifferent about the *objects* preſented, one of which is to be taken, touched, pointed to, &c. as two eggs, two cakes, which appear equally good. Whereas the queſtion to be conſidered, is, Whether the perſon be indifferent with reſpect to his own *actions;* whether he does not, on ſome conſideration or other, prefer one act with reſpect to theſe objects before another. The mind in its determination and choice, in theſe caſes, is not moſt immediately and directly converſant about the *objects preſented;* but *the acts to be done* concerning theſe objects. The objects may appear equal, and the mind may never properly make any choice between them: but the next act of the Will being about the external actions to be performed, taking, touching, &c. theſe may not appear equal, and one action may properly be choſen before another. In each ſtep of the mind's progreſs, the determination is not about the objects, unleſs indirectly and improperly, but about the actions, which it chuſes for

other reasons than any preference of the objects, and for reasons not taken at all from the objects.

There is no necessity of supposing, that the mind does ever at all properly chuse one of the objects before another; either before it has taken, or afterwards. Indeed the man chuses to *take* or *touch* one rather than another; but not because it chuses the *thing taken*, or *touched;* but from foreign considerations. The case may be so, that of two things offered, a man may, for certain reasons, chuse and prefer the taking of that which he *undervalues*, and chuse to neglect to take that which his mind *prefers*. In such a case, chusing the thing taken, and chusing to take, are diverse: and so they are in a case where the things presented are equal in the mind's esteem, and neither of them preferred. All that fact and experience makes evident, is, that the mind chuses one action rather than another. And therefore the arguments which they bring, in order to be to their purpose, ought to be to prove that the mind chuses the action in perfect indifference, with respect to *that action;* and not to prove that the mind chuses the action in perfect indifference with respect to the *object;* which is very possible, and yet the will not act at all without prevalent inducement, and proper preponderation.

2. Another reason of confusion and difficulty in this matter, seems to be, not distinguishing between a *general* indifference, or an indifference with respect to what is to be done in a more distant and general view of it, and a *particular* indifference, or an indifference with respect to the next immediate act, viewed with its particular and present circumstances. A man may be perfectly indifferent with respect to his own *actions*,

in the former respect; and yet not in the latter. Thus, in the foregoing instance of touching one of the squares of a chess-board; when it is first proposed that I should touch one of them, I may be perfectly indifferent which I touch; because as yet I view the matter remotely and generally, being but in the first step of the mind's progress in the affair. But yet, when I am actually come to the last step, and the very next thing to be determined is which is to be touched, having already determined that I will touch that which happens to be most in my eye or mind, and my mind being now fixed on a particular one, the act of touching that, considered thus immediately, and in these particular present circumstances, is not what my mind is absolutely indifferent about.

## SECTION VII.

### *Concerning the notion of* Liberty of Will, *consisting in* Indifference.

WHAT has been said in the foregoing section, has a tendency in some measure to evince the absurdity of the opinion of such as place Liberty in Indifference, or in that equilibrium whereby the Will is without all antecedent determination or bias, and left hitherto free from any prepossessing inclination to one side or the other; that the determination of the Will to either side may be entirely from itself, and that it may be owing only to its own power, and that sovereignty which it has over itself, that it goes this way rather than that*.

* Dr. Whitby, and some other *Arminians*, make a distinction of different kinds of freedom; one of God, and perfect

But in as much as this has been of ſuch long ſtanding, and has been ſo generally received, and ſo much inſiſted on by *Pelagians*, *Semi-Pelagians*, *Jeſuits*, *Socinians*, *Arminians*, and others, it may deſerve a more full conſideration. And therefore I ſhall now proceed to a more particular and thorough enquiry into this notion.

Now leſt ſome ſhould ſuppoſe that I do not underſtand thoſe that place Liberty in Indifference, or ſhould charge me with miſrepreſenting their opinion, I would ſignify, that I am ſenſible, there are ſome, who when they talk of the Liberty of the Will as conſiſting in Indifference, expreſs themſelves as tho' they would not be underſtood of the Indifference of the inclination or tendency of the will, but of, I know not what, Indifference of the ſoul's power of willing; or that the Will, with reſpect to its power or ability to chuſe, is indifferent, can go either way indifferently, either

ſpirits above; another of perſons in a ſtate of trial. The former Dr. Whitby allows to conſiſt with neceſſity; the latter he holds to be without neceſſity: and this latter he ſuppoſes to be requiſite to our being the ſubjects of praiſe or diſpraiſe, rewards or puniſhments, precepts and prohibitions, promiſes and threats, exhortations and dehortations, and a covenant-treaty. And to this freedom he ſuppoſes *Indifference* to be requiſite. In his Diſcourſe on the five points, p. 299, 300, he ſays; " It is a freedom (ſpeaking of a freedom not only from " co-action, but from neceſſity) requiſite, as we conceive, " to render us capable of trial or probation, and to render our " actions worthy of praiſe or diſpraiſe, and our perſons of re- " wards or puniſhments." And in the next page, ſpeaking of the ſame matter, he ſays, " Excellent to this purpoſe, are " the words of Mr. Thorndike: *We ſay not, that Indifference* " *is requiſite to all freedom, but to the freedom of man alone in* " *this ſtate of travail and proficience: the ground of which is* " *God's tender of a treaty, and conditions of peace and reconcile-* " *ment to fallen man, together with thoſe precepts and prohibitions,* " *thoſe promiſes and threats, thoſe exhortations and dehortations,* " *it is enforced with.*"

to the right hand or left, either act or forbear to act, one as well as the other. Tho' this seems to be a refining only of some particular writers, and newly invented, and which will by no means consist with the manner of expression used by the defenders of Liberty of Indifference in general. And I wish such refiners would thoroughly consider, whether they distinctly know their own meaning, when they make a distinction between Indifference of the soul as to its *power* or *ability* of willing or chusing, and the soul's Indifference as to the preference or choice itself; and whether they do not deceive themselves in imagining that they have any distinct meaning at all. The Indifference of the soul as to its ability or power to will, must be the same thing as the Indifference of the state of the power or faculty of the Will, or the indifference of the state which the soul itself, which has that power or faculty, hitherto remains in, as to the exercise of that power, in the choice it shall by and by make.

But not to insist any longer on the obstrusenes and inexplicableness of this distinction; let what will be supposed concerning the meaning of them that make use of it, thus much must at least be intended by *Arminians* when they talk of Indifference as essential to Liberty of Will, if they intend any thing, in any respect to their purpose, *viz.* That it is such an Indifference as leaves the Will not determined already; but free from actual possession, and vacant of predetermination, so far, that there may be room for the exercise of the *self-determining power* of the Will; and that the Will's freedom consists in, or depends upon this vacancy and opportunity that is left for the Will itself to be the determiner of the act that is to be the free act.

And here I would obſerve in the *firſt* place, that to make out this ſcheme of Liberty, the Indifference muſt be *perfect* and *abſolute;* there muſt be a perfect freedom from all antecedent preponderation or inclination. Becauſe if the Will be already inclined, before it exerts its own ſovereign power on itſelf, then its inclination is not wholly owing to itſelf: if when two oppoſites are propoſed to the ſoul for its choice, the propoſal does not find the ſoul wholly in a ſtate of Indifference, then it is not found in a ſtate of Liberty for mere ſelf-determination.—The leaſt degree of an antecedent bias muſt be inconſiſtent with their notion of Liberty. For ſo long as prior inclination poſſeſſes the Will, and is not removed, it binds the Will, ſo that it is utterly impoſſible that the Will ſhould act otherwiſe than agreeably to it. Surely the Will cannot act or chuſe contrary to a remaining prevailing inclination of the Will. To ſuppoſe otherwiſe, would be the ſame thing as to ſuppoſe, that the Will is *inclined* contrary to its preſent prevailing *inclination*, or contrary to what it is *inclined* to. That which the Will chuſes and prefers, that, all things conſidered, it preponderates and inclines to. It is equally impoſſible for the Will to chuſe contrary to its own remaining and preſent preponderating inclination, as it is to *prefer* contrary to its own preſent *preference*, or *chuſe* contrary to its own preſent *choice*. The Will, therefore, ſo long as it is under the influence of an old preponderating inclination, is not at Liberty for a new free act, or any act that ſhall now be an act of ſelf-determination. The act which is a ſelf-determined free act, muſt be an act which the will determines in the poſſeſſion and uſe of ſuch a Liberty, as conſiſts in a freedom from every thing, which, if it were there, would make it impoſſible that the Will, at that

time, ſhould be otherwiſe than that way to which it tends.

If any one ſhould ſay, there is no need that the Indifference ſhould be perfect; but although a former inclination and preference ſtill remains, yet, if it be not very ſtrong and violent, poſſibly the ſtrength of the Will may oppoſe and overcome it: —This is groſsly abſurd; for the ſtrength of the Will, let it be never ſo great, does not at all enable it to act one way, and not the contrary way, both at the ſame time. It gives it no ſuch ſovereignty and command, as to cauſe itſelf to prefer and not to prefer at the ſame time, or to chuſe contrary to its own preſent choice.

Therefore, if there be the leaſt degree of antecedent preponderation of the Will, it muſt be perfectly aboliſhed, before the Will can be at liberty to determine itſelf the contrary way. And if the Will determines itſelf the ſame way, it was not a *free determination*, becauſe the Will is not wholly at Liberty in ſo doing: its determination is not altogether *from itſelf*, but it was partly determined before, in its prior inclination: and all the Freedom the Will exerciſes in the caſe, is in an increaſe of inclination, which it gives itſelf, over and above what it had by foregoing bias; ſo much is from itſelf, and ſo much is from perfect Indifference. For though the Will had a previous tendency that way, yet as to that additional degree of inclination, it had no tendency. Therefore the previous tendency is of no conſideration, with reſpect to the act wherein the Will is free. So that it comes to the ſame thing which was ſaid at firſt, that as to the act of the Will, wherein the Will is free, there muſt be *perfect Indifference*, or *equilibrium*.

To illustrate this; if we should suppose a sovereign self-moving power in a natural body: but that the body is in motion already, by an antecedent bias; for instance, gravitation towards the center of the earth; and has one degree of motion already, by virtue of that previous tendency; but by its self-moving power it adds one degree more to its motion, and moves so much more swiftly towards the center of the earth than it would do by its gravity only: it is evident, that all that is owing to a self-moving power in this case, is the additional degree of motion; and that the other degree of motion which it had from gravity, is of no consideration in the case, does not help the effect of the free self-moving power in the least; the effect is just the same, as if the body had received from itself one degree of motion from a state of perfect rest. So if we should suppose a self-moving power given to the scale of a balance, which has a weight of one degree beyond the opposite scale; and we ascribe to it an ability to add to itself another degree of force the same way, by its self-moving power; this is just the same thing as to ascribe to it a power to give itself one degree of preponderation from a perfect equilibrium; and so much power as the scale has to give itself an over-balance from a perfect equipoise, so much self-moving self-preponderating power it has, and no more. So that its free power this way is always to be measured from perfect equilibrium.

I need say no more to prove, that if Indifference be essential to Liberty, it must be perfect Indifference; and that so far as the Will is destitute of this, so far it is destitute of that freedom by which it is its own master, and in a capacity of being its own determiner, without being at

all paſſive, or ſubject to the power and ſway of ſomething elſe, in its motions and determinations.

Having obſerved theſe things, let us now try whether this notion of the Liberty of Will conſiſting in Indifference and equilibrium, and the Will's ſelf-determination in ſuch a ſtate be not abſurd and inconſiſtent.

And here I would lay down this as an axiom of undoubted truth; *that every free act is done in a ſtate of freedom, and not only after ſuch a ſtate.* If an act of the Will be an act wherein the ſoul is free, it muſt be exerted in a *ſtate of freedom*, and in the *time of freedom*. It will not ſuffice, that the act immediately follows a ſtate of Liberty; but Liberty muſt yet continue, and co-exiſt with the act; the ſoul remaining in poſſeſſion of Liberty. Becauſe that is the notion of a free act of the ſoul, even an act wherein the ſoul *uſes* or *exerciſes Liberty*. But if the ſoul is not, in the very time of the act, in the *poſſeſſion* of Liberty, it cannot at that time be in the *uſe* of it.

Now the queſtion is, whether ever the ſoul of man puts forth an act of Will, while it yet remains in a ſtate of Liberty, in that notion of a ſtate of Liberty, *viz.* as implying a ſtate of Indifference; or whether the ſoul ever exerts an act of choice or preference, while at that very time the Will is in a perfect equilibrium, not inclining one way more than another. The very putting of the queſtion is ſufficient to ſhew the abſurdity of the affirmative anſwer: for how ridiculous would it be for any body to inſiſt, that the ſoul chuſes one thing before another, when at the very ſame inſtant it is perfectly indifferent with

respect to each! This is the same thing as to say, the soul prefers one thing to another, at the very same time that it has no preference.—— Choice and preference can no more be in a state of Indifference, than motion can be in a state of rest, or than the preponderation of the scale of a balance can be in a state of equilibrium. Motion may be the next moment after rest; but cannot co-exist with it, in *any*, even the *least* part of it. So choice may be immediately after a state of Indifference, but has no co-existence with it: even the very beginning of it is not in a state of Indifference. And therefore if this be Liberty, no act of the Will, in any degree, is ever performed in a state of Liberty, or in the time of Liberty. Volition and Liberty are so far from agreeing together, and being essential one to another, that they are contrary one to another, and one excludes and destroys the other, as much as motion and rest, light and darkness, or life and death. So that the Will acts not at all, does not so much as begin to act in the time of such Liberty: freedom is perfectly at an end, and has ceased to be, at the first moment of action; and therefore Liberty cannot reach the action, to affect, or qualify it, or give it a denomination, or any part of it, any more than if it had ceased to be twenty years before the action began. The moment that Liberty ceases to be, it ceases to be a qualification of any thing. If light and darkness succeed one another instantaneously, light qualifies nothing after it is gone out, to make any thing lightsome or bright, any more at the first moment of perfect darkness, than months or years after. Life denominates nothing *vital* at the first moment of perfect death. So freedom, if it consists in, or implies Indifference, can denominate nothing free, at the first moment of

preference or preponderation. Therefore it is manifeſt, that no Liberty which the ſoul is poſſeſſed of, or ever uſes, in any of its acts of volition, conſiſts in Indifference; and that the opinion of ſuch as ſuppoſe, that Indifference belongs to the very eſſence of Liberty, is to the higheſt degree abſurd and contradictory.

If any one ſhould imagine, that this manner of arguing is nothing but a trick and deluſion; and to evade the reaſoning, ſhould ſay, that the thing wherein the Will exerciſes its Liberty, is not in the act of choice or preponderation itſelf, but in *determining* itſelf to a certain choice or preference; that the act of the Will wherein it is free, and uſes its own ſovereignty, conſiſts in its *cauſing* or *determining* the *change* or *tranſition* from a ſtate of Indifference to a certain preference, or determining to give a certain turn to the balance, which has hitherto been even; and that this act the Will exerts in a ſtate of Liberty, or while the Will yet remains in equilibrium, and perfect maſter of itſelf.—I ſay, if any one chuſes to expreſs his notion of Liberty after this, or ſome ſuch manner, let us ſee if he can make out his matters any better than before.

What is aſſerted is, that the Will, while it yet remains in perfect equilibrium, without preference, determines to change itſelf from that ſtate, and excite in itſelf a certain choice or preference. Now let us ſee whether this does not come to the ſame abſurdity we had before. If it be ſo, that the Will, while it yet remains perfectly indifferent, determines to put itſelf out of that ſtate, and give itſelf a certain preponderation; then I would enquire, whether the ſoul does not determine this of choice; or whether the Will's coming to a determination to do ſo, be not the ſame thing

as the soul's coming to a choice to do so. If the soul does not determine this of choice, or in the exercise of choice, then it does not determine it voluntarily. And if the soul does not determine it voluntarily, or of its own *will*, then in what sense does its *will* determine it? And if the will does not determine it, then how is the *Liberty of the Will* exercised in the determination? What sort of Liberty is exercised by the soul in those determinations, wherein there is no exercise of choice, which are not voluntary, and wherein the will is not concerned?—But if it be allowed, that this determination is an act of choice, and it be insisted on, that the soul, while it yet remains in a state of perfect Indifference, chuses to put itself out of that state, and to turn itself one way; then the soul is already come to a choice, and chuses that way. And so we have the very same absurdity which we had before. Here is the soul in a state of choice, and in a state of equilibrium, both at the same time: the soul already chusing one way, while it remains in a state of perfect Indifference, and has no choice of one way more than the other.—And indeed this manner of talking, though it may a little hide the absurdity, in the obscurity of expression, is more nonsensical, and increases the inconsistence. To say, the free act of the will, or the act which the will exerts in a state of freedom and Indifference, does not imply preference in it, but is what the will does in order to causing or producing a preference, is as much as to say, the soul chuses (for to will and to chuse are the same thing) without choice, and prefers without preference, in order to cause or produce the beginning of a preference, or the first choice. And that is, that the first choice is exerted without choice, in order to produce itself.

If any, to evade these things, should own, that a state of Liberty, and a state of Indifference are not the same, and that the former may be without the latter; but should say, that Indifference is still *essential to* the freedom of an act of will, in some sort, namely, as it is necessary to go immediately *before it;* it being essential to the freedom of an act of will that it should directly and immediately *arise out* of a state of Indifference: still this will not help the cause of *Arminian* Liberty, or make it consistent with itself. For if the act springs immediately out of a state of Indifference, then it does not arise from *antecedent* choice or preference. But if the act arises directly out of a state of Indifference, without any intervening choice to chuse and determine it, then the act not being determined by choice, is not determined by the will; the mind exercises no free choice in the affair, and free choice and free will have no hand in the determination of the act. Which is entirely inconsistent with their notion of the freedom of Volition.

If any should suppose, that these difficulties and absurdities may be avoided, by saying, that the Liberty of the mind consists in a power to *suspend* the act of the will, and so to keep it in a state of *Indifference*, until there has been opportunity for consideration; and so shall say, that however Indifference is not essential to Liberty in such a manner, that the mind must make its choice in a state of Indifference, which is an inconsistency, or that the act of will must spring immediately out of Indifference; yet indifference may be essential to the Liberty of acts of the will in this respect; *viz.* That Liberty consists in a Power of the mind to forbear or suspend the act of Volition, and keep the mind in a state of In-

difference for the present, until there has been opportunity for proper deliberation: I say, if any one imagines that this helps the matter, it is a great mistake: it reconciles no inconsistency, and relieves no difficulty which the affair is attended with.—For here the following things must be observed,

1. That this *suspending* of Volition, if there be properly any such thing, is itself an act of Volition. If the mind determines to suspend its act, it determines it voluntarily; it chuses, on some consideration, to suspend it. And this choice or determination, is an act of the will: And indeed it is supposed to be so in the very hypothesis; for it is supposed that the Liberty *of the will* consists in its Power to do this, and that its doing it is the very thing wherein *the will exercises its Liberty.* But how can the will exercise Liberty in it, if it be not an act of the will? The Liberty of the will is not exercised in any thing but what the will does.

2. This determining to suspend acting is not only an act of the will, but it is supposed to be the only free act of the will; because it is said, that *this is the thing wherein the Liberty of the will consists.*—Now if this be so, then this is all the act of will that we have to consider in this controversy, about the Liberty of will, and in our enquiries, wherein the Liberty of man consists. And now the forementioned difficulties remain: the former question returns upon us; *viz.* Wherein consists the freedom of the will *in those acts* wherein it is free? And if this act of determining a suspension be the only act in which the will is free, then wherein consists the will's freedom with respect to this act of suspension?

And how is Indifference eſſential to this act? The anſwer muſt be, according to what is ſuppoſed in the evaſion under conſideration, that the Liberty of the will in this act of ſuſpenſion, conſiſts in a Power to ſuſpend even this act, until there has been opportunity for thorough deliberation. But this will be to plunge directly into the groſſeſt nonſenſe: for it is the act of ſuſpenſion itſelf that we are ſpeaking of; and there is no room for a ſpace of deliberation and ſuſpenſion in order to determine whether we will ſuſpend or no. For that ſuppoſes, that even ſuſpenſion itſelf may be deferred: which is abſurd; for the very deferring the determination of ſuſpenſion, to conſider whether we will ſuſpend or no, will be actually ſuſpending. For during the ſpace of ſuſpenſion, to conſider whether to ſuſpend, the act is *ipſo facto* ſuſpended. There is no medium between ſuſpending to act, and immediately acting; and therefore no poſſibility of avoiding either the one or the other one moment.

And beſides, this is attended with ridiculous abſurdity another way: for now it is come to that, that Liberty conſiſts wholly in the mind's having Power to ſuſpend its determination whether to ſuſpend or no; that there may be time for conſideration, whether it be beſt to ſuſpend. And if Liberty conſiſts in this only, then this is the Liberty under conſideration: we have to enquire now, how Liberty with reſpect to this act of ſuſpending a determination of ſuſpenſion, conſiſts in Indifference, or how Indifference is eſſential to it. The anſwer, according to the hypotheſis we are upon, muſt be, that it conſiſts in a Power of ſuſpending even this laſt-mentioned act, to have time to conſider whether to ſuſpend that. And then the ſame difficulties and enquiries re-

turn over again with respect to that; and so on for ever. Which, if it would shew any thing, would shew only that there is no such thing as a free act. It drives the exercise of freedom back *in infinitum;* and that is to drive it out of the world.

And besides all this, there is a Delusion, and a latent gross contradiction in the affair another way; in as much as in explaining how, or in what respect the will is free with regard to a particular act of Volition, it is said that its Liberty consists in a Power to determine to suspend *that act*, which places Liberty not in *that act* of Volition which the enquiry is about, but altogether in another antecedent act. Which contradicts the thing supposed in both the question and answer. The question is, wherein consists the mind's Liberty *in any particular act* of Volition? And the answer, in pretending to shew wherein lies the mind's Liberty *in that act*, in effect says, it does not lie in that act at all, but in another, *viz.* a Volition *to suspend that act.* And therefore the answer is both contradictory, and altogether impertinent and beside the purpose. For it does not shew wherein the Liberty of the will consists in the act in question; instead of that, it supposes it does not consist in that act at all, but in another distinct from it, even a Volition to suspend that act, and take time to consider of it. And no account is pretended to be given wherein the mind is free with respect to that act, wherein this answer supposes the Liberty of the mind indeed consists, *viz.* the act of suspension, or of determining the suspension.

On the whole, it is exceeding manifest, that the Liberty of the mind does not consist in Indiffe-

rence, and that Indifference is not eſſential or neceſſary to it, or at all belonging to it, as the *Arminians* ſuppoſe; that opinion being full of nothing but abſurdity and ſelf-contradiction.

## SECTION VIII.

### *Concerning the ſuppoſed Liberty of the Will, as oppoſite to all* Neceſſity.

IT is a thing chiefly inſiſted on by *Arminians*, in this controverſy, as a thing moſt important and eſſential in human Liberty, that volitions, or the acts of the will, are *contingent* events; underſtanding contingence as oppoſite, not only to conſtraint, but to all Neceſſity. Therefore I would particularly conſider this matter, And

1. I would enquire, whether there is, or can be any ſuch thing, as a volition which is contingent in ſuch a ſenſe, as not only to come to paſs without any Neceſſity of conſtraint or co-action, but alſo without a *Neceſſity of conſequence*, or an infallible connection with any thing foregoing.

2. Whether, if it were ſo, this would at all help the cauſe of Liberty.

I. I would conſider whether volition is a thing that ever does, or can come to paſs, in this manner, contingently.

And here it muſt be remembered, that it has been already ſhewn, that nothing can ever come to paſs without a cauſe, or reaſon why it exiſts in this manner rather than another; and the evidence of this has been particularly applied to the

acts of the will. Now if this be ſo, it will demonſtrably follow, that the acts of the will are never contingent, or without Neceſſity in the ſenſe ſpoken of; in as much as thoſe things which have a cauſe, or reaſon of their exiſtence, muſt be connected with their cauſe. This appears by the following conſiderations.

1. For an event to have a cauſe and ground of its exiſtence, and yet not to be connected with its cauſe, is an inconſiſtence. For if the event be not connected with the cauſe, it is not dependent on the cauſe; its exiſtence is as it were looſe from its influence, and may attend it, or may not; it being a mere contingence, whether it follows or attends the influence of the cauſe, or not: And that is the ſame thing as not to be dependent on it. And to ſay, the event is not dependent on its cauſe, is abſurd: It is the ſame thing as to ſay, it is not its cauſe, nor the event the effect of it: For dependence on the influence of a cauſe is the very notion of an effect. If there be no ſuch relation between one thing and another, conſiſting in the connection and dependence of one thing on the influence of another, then it is certain there is no ſuch relation between them as is ſignified by the terms *cauſe* and *effect*. So far as an event is dependent on a cauſe and connected with it, ſo much cauſality is there in the caſe, and no more. The cauſe does, or brings to paſs no more in any event, than is dependent on it. If we ſay, the connection and dependence is not total, but partial, and that the effect, though it has ſome connection and dependence, yet is not entirely dependent on it; that is the ſame thing as to ſay, that not all that is in the event is an effect of that cauſe, but that

only part of it ariſes from thence, and part ſome other way.

2. If there are ſome events which are not neceſſarily connected with their cauſes, then it will follow, that there are ſome things which come to paſs without any cauſe, contrary to the ſuppoſition. For if there be any event which was not neceſſarily connected with the influence of the cauſe under ſuch circumſtances, then it was contingent whether it would attend or follow the influence of the cauſe, or no; it might have followed, and it might not, when the cauſe was the ſame, its influence the ſame, and under the ſame circumſtances. And if ſo, why did it follow, rather than not follow? There is no cauſe or reaſon of this. Therefore here is ſomething without any cauſe or reaſon why it is, *viz.* the following of the effect on the influence of the cauſe, with which it was not neceſſarily connected. If there be a neceſſary connection of the effect on any thing antecedent, then we may ſuppoſe that ſometimes the event will follow the cauſe, and ſometimes not, when the cauſe is the ſame, and in every reſpect in the ſame ſtate and circumſtances. And what can be the cauſe and reaſon of this ſtrange phenomenon, even this diverſity, that in one inſtance, the effect ſhould follow, in another not? It is evident by the ſuppoſition, that this is wholly without any cauſe or ground. Here is ſomething in the preſent manner of the exiſtence of things, and ſtate of the world, that is abſolutely without a cauſe. Which is contrary to the ſuppoſition, and contrary to what has been before demonſtrated.

3. To ſuppoſe there are ſome events which have a cauſe and ground of their exiſtence, that

yet are not neceſſarily connected with their cauſe, is to ſuppoſe that they have a cauſe which is not their cauſe. Thus; if the effect be not neceſſarily connected with the cauſe, with its influence, and influential circumſtances; then, as I obſerved before, it is a thing poſſible and ſuppoſable, that the cauſe may ſometimes exert the ſame influence, under the ſame circumſtances, and yet the effect not follow. And if this actually happens in any inſtance, this inſtance is a proof, in fact, that the influence of the cauſe is not ſufficient to produce the effect. For if it had been ſufficient, it would have done it. And yet, by the ſuppoſition, in another inſtance, the ſame cauſe, with perfectly the ſame influence, and when all circumſtances which have any influence, are the ſame, it *was followed* with the effect. By which it is manifeſt, that the effect in this laſt inſtance was not owing to the influence of the cauſe, but muſt come to paſs ſome other way. For it was proved before, that the influence of the cauſe was not ſufficient to produce the effect. And if it was not ſufficient to produce it, then the production of it could not be owing to that influence, but muſt be owing to ſomething elſe, or owing to nothing. And if the effect be not owing to the influence of the cauſe, then it is not the cauſe. Which brings us to the contradiction, of a cauſe, and no cauſe, that which is the ground and reaſon of the exiſtence of a thing, and at the ſame time is not the ground and reaſon of its exiſtence, nor is ſufficient to be ſo.

If the matter be not already ſo plain as to render any further reaſoning upon it impertinent, I would ſay, that that which ſeems to be the cauſe in the ſuppoſed caſe, can be no cauſe; its power

and influence having, on a full trial, proved inſufficient to produce ſuch an effect: and if it be not ſufficient to produce it, then it does not produce it. To ſay otherwiſe, is to ſay, there is power to do that which there is not power to do. If there be in a cauſe ſufficient power exerted, and in circumſtances ſufficient to produce an effect, and ſo the effect be actually produced at *one time;* theſe things all concurring, will produce the effect at *all times*. And ſo we may turn it the other way; that which proves not ſufficient at one time, cannot be ſufficient at another, with preciſely the ſame influential circumſtances. And therefore if the effect follows, it is not owing to that cauſe; unleſs the different time be a circumſtance which has influence: but that is contrary to the ſuppoſition; for it is ſuppoſed that all circumſtances that have influence, are the ſame. And beſides, this would be to ſuppoſe the time to be the cauſe; which is contrary to the ſuppoſition of the other thing's being the cauſe. But if merely diverſity of time has no influence, then it is evident that it is as much of an abſurdity to ſay, the cauſe was ſufficient to produce the effect at one time, and not at another; as to ſay, that it is ſufficient to produce the effect at a certain time, and yet not ſufficient to produce the ſame effect at the ſame time.

On the whole, it is clearly manifeſt, that every effect has a neceſſary connection with its cauſe, or with that which is the true ground and reaſon of its exiſtence. And therefore if there be no event without a cauſe, as was proved before, then no event whatſoever is contingent in the manner, that *Arminians* ſuppoſe the free acts of the will to be contingent.

## SECTION IX.

### *Of the* Connection *of the Acts of the Will with the Dictates of the* Underſtanding.

IT is manifeſt, that the acts of the Will are none of them contingent in ſuch a ſenſe as to be without all neceſſity, or ſo as not to be neceſſary with a neceſſity of conſequence and Connection; becauſe every Act of the Will is ſome way connected with the Underſtanding, and is as the greateſt apparent good is, in the manner which has already been explained; namely, that the ſoul always wills or chuſes that which, in the preſent view of the mind, conſidered in the whole of that view, and all that belongs to it, appears moſt agreeable. Becauſe, as was obſerved before, nothing is more evident than that, when men act voluntarily, and do what they pleaſe, then they do what appears moſt agreeable to them; and to ſay otherwiſe, would be as much as to affirm, that men do not chuſe what appears to ſuit them beſt, or what ſeems moſt pleaſing to them; or that they do not chuſe what they prefer. Which brings the matter to a contradiction.

And it is very evident in itſelf, that the acts of the Will have ſome Connection with the dictates or views of the Underſtanding, ſo this is allowed by ſome of the chief of the *Arminian* writers: particularly by Dr. Whitby and Dr. Samuel Clark. Dr. Turnbull, though a great enemy to the doctrine of neceſſity, allows the ſame thing. In his *Chriſtian Philoſophy*, (p. 196.) he with much approbation cites another philoſopher, as of the ſame mind, in theſe words: "No man, (ſays an ex-

"cellent philosopher) sets himself about any "thing, but upon some view or other, which "serves him for a reason for what he does; and "whatsoever faculties he employs, the Under-"standing, with such light as it has, well or ill "formed, constantly leads; and by that light, "true or false, all her operative powers are di-"rected. The Will itself, how absolute and in-"controllable soever it may be thought, never "fails in its obedience to the dictates of the "Understanding. Temples have their sacred "images; and we see what influence they have "always had over a great part of mankind; but "in truth, the ideas and images in mens' minds "are the invisible powers that constantly govern "them; and to these they all pay universally a "ready submission."

But whether this be in a just consistence with themselves, and their own notions of liberty, I desire may now be impartially considered.

Dr. Whitby plainly supposes, that the Acts and Determinations of the Will always follow the Understanding's apprehension or view of the greatest good to be obtained, or evil to be avoided; or, in other words, that the Determinations of the Will constantly and infallibly follow these two things in the Understanding: 1. The *degree of good* to be obtained, and evil to be avoided, proposed to the Understanding, and apprehended, viewed, and taken notice of by it. 2. The *degree of the Understanding's view*, notice or apprehension of that good or evil; which is increased by attention and consideration. That this is an opinion he is exceeding peremptory in (as he is in every opinion which he maintains in his controversy with the *Calvinists*) with disdain of the contrary opinion, as absurd and self-contradictory,

will appear by the following words of his, in his Diſcourſe on the Five Points*.

"Now, it is certain, that what naturally makes "the Underſtanding to perceive, is evidence "propoſed, and apprehended, conſidered or ad-"verted to: for nothing elſe can be requiſite to "make us come to the knowledge of the truth. "Again, what makes the Will chuſe, is ſome-"thing approved by the Underſtanding; and "conſequently appearing to the ſoul as good. "And whatſoever it refuſeth, is ſomething re-"preſented by the Underſtanding, and ſo appear-"ing to the Will, as evil. Whence all that God "requires of us is and can be only this; to re-"fuſe the evil, and chuſe the good. Where-"fore, to ſay that evidence propoſed, apprehend-"ed and conſidered, is not ſufficient to make the "Underſtanding approve; or that the greateſt "good propoſed, the greateſt evil threatened, "when equally believed and reflected on, is "not ſufficient to engage the Will to chuſe the "good and refuſe the evil, is in effect to ſay, "*that which alone doth move the Will to chuſe or to* "*refuſe*, is not ſufficient to engage it ſo to do; "which being contradictory to itſelf, muſt of "neceſſity be falſe. Be it then ſo, that we na-"turally have an averſion to the truths pro-"poſed to us in the Goſpel; that only can make "us indiſpoſed to attend to them, but cannot "hinder our conviction, when we do apprehend "them, and attend to them.—Be it, that there is "in us alſo a renitency to the good we are to "chuſe; that only can indiſpoſe us to believe it "is, and to approve it as our chieſeſt good. Be "it, that we are prone to the evil that we ſhould "decline; that only can render it the more diffi-

* Second Edit. p. 211, 212, 213.

"cult for us to believe it is the worſt of evils.
"But yet, *what we do really believe to be our chiefeſt*
"*good, will ſtill be choſen; and what we apprehend*
"*to be the worſt of evils, will, whilſt we do continue*
"*under that conviction, be refuſed by us.* It there-
"fore can be only requiſite, in order to theſe ends,
"that the Good Spirit ſhould ſo illuminate our
"Underſtandings, that we attending to, and con-
"ſidering what lies before us, ſhould apprehend,
"and be convinced of our duty; and that the
"bleſſings of the Goſpel ſhould be ſo propounded
"to us, as that we may diſcern them to be our
"chiefeſt good; and the miſeries it threateneth,
"ſo as we may be convinced that they are the
"worſt of evils; that we may chuſe the one, and
"refuſe the other."

Here let it be obſerved, how plainly and peremptorily it is aſſerted, *that the greateſt good propoſed, and the greateſt evil threatened, when equally believed and reflected on, is ſufficient to engage the Will to chuſe the good, and refuſe the evil, and is that alone which doth move the Will to chuſe or to refuſe; and that it is contradictory to itſelf, to ſuppoſe otherwiſe; and therefore muſt of neceſſity be falſe; and then what we do really believe to be our chiefeſt good will ſtill be choſen, and what we apprehend to be the worſt of evils, will, whilſt we continue under that conviction, be refuſed by us.* Nothing could have been ſaid more to the purpoſe, fully to ſignify and declare, that the determinations of the Will muſt evermore follow the illumination, conviction and notice of the Underſtanding, with regard to the greateſt good and evil propoſed, reckoning both the degree of good and evil underſtood, and the degree of Underſtanding, notice and conviction of that propoſed good and evil; and that it is thus neceſſarily, and can be otherwiſe in no inſtance:

becauſe it is aſſerted, that it implies a contradiction, to ſuppoſe it ever to be otherwiſe.

I am ſenſible, the Doctor's aim in theſe aſſertions is againſt the *Calviniſts;* to ſhew, in oppoſition to them, that there is no need of any phyſical operation of the Spirit of God on the Will, to change and determine that to a good choice, but that God's operation and aſſiſtance is only moral, ſuggeſting ideas to the Underſtanding; which he ſuppoſes to be enough, if thoſe ideas are attended to, infallibly to obtain the end. But whatever his deſign was, nothing can more directly and fully prove, that every determination of the Will, in chuſing and refuſing, *is neceſſary;* directly contrary to his own notion of the liberty of the Will. For if the determination of the Will, evermore, in this manner, follows the light, conviction and view of the Underſtanding, concerning the greateſt good and evil, and this be that alone which moves the Will, and it be a contradiction to ſuppoſe otherwiſe; then it is *neceſſarily* ſo, the Will neceſſarily follows this light or view of the Underſtanding, not only in ſome of its acts, but in every act of chuſing and refuſing. So that the Will does not determine itſelf in any one of its own acts; but all its acts, every act of choice and refuſal depends on, and is neceſſarily connected with ſome antecedent cauſe; which cauſe is not the Will itſelf, nor any act of its own, nor any thing pertaining to that faculty, but ſomething belonging to another faculty, whoſe acts go before the Will, in all its acts, and govern and determine them every one.

Here, if it ſhould be replied, that although it be true, that according to the Doctor, the final determination of the Will always depends upon, and is infallibly connected with the Underſtand-

ing's conviction, and notice of the greateſt good; yet the Acts of the Will are not neceſſary; becauſe that conviction and notice of the Underſtanding is firſt dependent on a preceding Act of the Will, in determining to attend to, and take notice of the evidence exhibited; by which means the mind obtains that degree of conviction, which is ſufficient and effectual to determine the conſequent and ultimate choice of the Will; and that the Will with regard to that preceding act, whereby it determines whether to attend or no, is not neceſſary; and that in this, the liberty of the Will conſiſts, that when God holds forth ſufficient objective light, the Will is at liberty whether to command the attention of the mind to it.

Nothing can be more weak and inconſiderate than ſuch a reply as this. For that preceding Act of the Will, in determining to attend and conſider, ſtill is an *Act of the Will* (it is ſo to be ſure, if the *liberty of the Will* conſiſts in it, as is ſuppoſed) and if it be an Act of the Will, it is an act of *choice* or *refuſal.* And therefore, if what the Doctor aſſerts be true, it is determined by ſome antecedent light in the Underſtanding concerning the greateſt apparent good or evil. For he aſſerts, it is that light *which alone doth move the Will to chuſe or refuſe.* And therefore the Will muſt be moved by that in chuſing to attend to the objective light offered, in order to another conſequent act of choice: ſo that this act is no leſs neceſſary than the other. And if we ſuppoſe another Act of the Will, ſtill preceding both theſe mentioned, to determine both, ſtill that alſo muſt be an Act of the Will, and an act of choice; and ſo muſt, by the ſame principles, be infallibly determined by ſome certain degree of light in the Underſtanding concerning the greateſt good.

And let us ſuppoſe as many acts of the Will, one preceding another, as we pleaſe, yet they are every one of them neceſſarily determined by a certain degree of light in the Underſtanding, concerning the greateſt and moſt eligible good in that caſe; and ſo, not one of them free according to Dr. Whitby's notion of freedom. And if it be ſaid, the reaſon, why men do not attend to light held forth, is becauſe of ill habits contracted by evil acts committed before, whereby their minds are indiſpoſed to attend to, and conſider of the truth held forth to them by God, the difficulty is not at all avoided: ſtill the queſtion returns, What determined the Will in thoſe preceding evil acts? It muſt, by Dr. Whitby's principles, ſtill be the view of the Underſtanding concerning the greateſt good and evil. If this view of the underſtanding be *that alone which doth move the Will to chuſe* or refuſe, as the Doctor aſſerts, then every act of *choice or refuſal*, from a man's firſt exiſtence, is moved and determined by this view; and this view of the Underſtanding exciting and governing the act, muſt be before the act: And therefore the Will is neceſſarily determined, in every one of its acts, from a man's firſt exiſtence, by a cauſe beſide the Will, and a cauſe that does not proceed from, or depend on any act of the Will at all. Which at once utterly aboliſhes the Doctor's whole ſcheme of Liberty of Will; and he, at one ſtroke, has cut the ſinews of all his arguments from the goodneſs, righteouſneſs, faithfulneſs and ſincerity of God, in his commands, promiſes, threatenings, calls, invitations, expoſtulations; which he makes uſe of, under the heads of reprobation, election, univerſal redemption, ſufficient and effectual grace, and the freedom of the Will of man; and has enervated and made vain all thoſe excla-

mations against the doctrine of the *Calvinists*, as charging God with manifest unrighteousness, unfaithfulness, hypocrisy, fallaciousness, and cruelty; which he has over, and over, and over again, numberless times in his book.

Dr. Samuel Clark, in his Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, * to evade the argument to prove the necessity of volition, from its necessary Connection with the last dictate of the Understanding, supposes the latter not to be diverse from the Act of the Will itself. But if it be so, it will not alter the case as to the evidence of the necessity of the Act of the Will. If the dictate of the Understanding be the very same with the determination of the Will or Choice, as Dr. Clark supposes, then this determination is no *fruit* or *effect of choice:* and if so, no liberty of choice has any hand in it: as to volition or choice, it is necessary; that is, choice cannot prevent it. If the last dictate of the Understanding be the same with the determination of volition itself, then the existence of that determination must be necessary as to volition; in as much as volition can have no opportunity to determine whether it shall exist or no, it having existence already before volition has opportunity to determine any thing. It is itself the very rise and existence of volition. But a thing, after it exists, has no opportunity to determine as to its own existence; it is too late for that.

If liberty consists in that which *Arminians* suppose, *viz.* in the Will's determining its own acts, having free opportunity, and being without all necessity; this is the same as to say, that liber-

* Edit. VI. p. 93.

ty conſiſts in the ſoul's having power and opportunity to have what determinations of the Will it pleaſes or chuſes. And if the determinations of the Will, and the laſt dictates of the Underſtanding be the ſame thing, then Liberty conſiſts in the mind's having power to have, what dictates of the Underſtanding it pleaſes, having opportunity to chuſe its own dictates of Underſtanding. But this is abſurd; for it is to make the determination of choice prior to the dictate of Underſtanding, and the ground of it; which cannot conſiſt with the dictate of Underſtanding's being the determination of choice itſelf.

Here is no way to do in this caſe, but only to recur to the old abſurdity of one determination before another, and the cauſe of it; and another before that, determining that; and ſo on *in infinitum*. If the laſt dictate of the Underſtanding be the determination of the Will itſelf, and the ſoul be free with regard to that dictate, in the *Arminian* notion of freedom; then the ſoul, before that dictate of its Underſtanding exiſts, voluntarily and according to its own choice determines, in every caſe, what that dictate of the Underſtanding ſhall be; otherwiſe that dictate, as to the Will, is neceſſary; and the acts determined by it muſt alſo be neceſſary. So that here is a determination of the mind prior to that dictate of the Underſtanding, an act of choice going before it, chuſing and determining what that dictate of the Underſtanding ſhall be: and this preceding act of choice, being a free act of Will, muſt alſo be the ſame with another laſt dictate of the Underſtanding: And if the mind alſo be free in that dictate of Underſtanding, that muſt be determined ſtill by another; and ſo on for ever.

Beſides, if the dictate of the Underſtanding, and determination of the Will be the ſame, this confounds the Underſtanding and Will, and makes them the ſame. Whether they be the ſame or no, I will not now diſpute; but only would obſerve, that if it be ſo, and the *Arminian* notion of liberty conſiſts in a ſelf-determining power in the Underſtanding, free of all neceſſity; being independent, undetermined by any thing prior to its own acts and determinations; and the more the Underſtanding is thus independent, and ſovereign over its own determinations, the more free. By this therefore the freedom of the ſoul, as a moral agent, muſt conſiſt in the independence of the Underſtanding on any evidence or appearance of things, or any thing whatſoever, that ſtands forth to the view of the mind, prior to the Underſtanding's determination. And what a ſort of liberty is this! conſiſting in an ability, freedom and eaſineſs of judging, either according to evidence, or againſt it; having a ſovereign command over itſelf at all times, to judge, either agreeably or diſagreeably to what is plainly exhibited to its own view. Certainly, it is no liberty that renders perſons the proper ſubjects of perſuaſive reaſoning, arguments, expoſtulations, and ſuch like moral means and inducements. The uſe of which with mankind is a main argument of the *Arminians*, to defend their notion of liberty without all neceſſity. For according to this, the more free men are, the leſs they are under the government of ſuch means, leſs ſubject to the power of evidence and reaſon, and more independent on their influence, in their determinations.

And whether the Underſtanding and Will are the ſame or no, as Dr. Clark ſeems to ſuppoſe,

yet in order to maintain the *Arminian* notion of liberty without neceſſity, the free Will is not determined by the Underſtanding, nor neceſſarily connected with the Underſtanding; and the further from ſuch Connection, the greater the freedom. And when the liberty is full and compleat, the determinations of the Will have no Connection at all with the dictates of the Underſtanding. And if ſo, in vain are all the applications to the Underſtanding, in order to induce to any free virtuous act; and ſo in vain are all inſtructions, counſels, invitations, expoſtulations, and all arguments and perſuaſives whatſoever: for theſe are but applications to the Underſtanding, and a clear and lively exhibition of the objects of choice to the mind's view. But if, after all, the Will muſt be ſelf-determined, and independent on the Underſtanding, to what purpoſe are things thus repreſented to the Underſtanding, in order to determine the choice?

## SECTION X.

*Volition neceſſarily connected with the Influence of Motives; with particular Obſervations on the great Inconſiſtence of Mr. Chubb's Aſſertions and Reaſonings, about the Freedom of the Will.*

THAT every act of the will has ſome cauſe, and conſequently (by what has been already proved) has a neceſſary connection with its cauſe, and ſo is neceſſary by a neceſſity of connection and conſequence, is evident by this, that every act of the will whatſoever is excited by ſome motive: which is manifeſt, becauſe, if

the will or mind, in willing and chufing after the manner that it does, is excited fo to do by no motive or inducement, then it has no end which it propofes to itfelf, or purfues in fo doing; it aims at nothing, and feeks nothing. And if it feeks nothing, then it does not go after any thing, or exert any inclination or preference towards any thing. Which brings the matter to a contradiction; becaufe for the mind to will fomething, and for it to go after fomething by an act of preference and inclination, are the fame thing.

But if every act of the will is excited by a Motive, then that Motive is the caufe of the act of the will. If the acts of the will are excited by Motives, then Motives are the caufes of their being excited; or, which is the fame thing, the caufe of their being put forth into act and exiftence. And if fo, the exiftence of the acts of the will is properly the effect of their Motives. Motives do nothing as Motives or inducements, but by their influence; and fo much as is done by their influence is the effect of them. For that is the notion of an effect, fomething that is brought to pafs by the influence of another thing.

And if volitions are properly the effects of their Motives, then they are neceffarily connected with their Motives. Every effect and event being, as was proved before, neceffarily connected with that, which is the proper ground and reafon of its exiftence. Thus it is manifeft, that volition is neceffary, and is not from any felf-determining power in the will: the volition, which is caufed by previous Motive and inducement, is not caufed by the will exercifing a fovereign power over itfelf, to determine, caufe and excite

volitions in itself. This is not consistent with the will's acting in a state of indifference and equilibrium, to determine itself to a preference; for the way in which Motives operate, is by biassing the will, and giving it a certain inclination or preponderation one way.

Here it may be proper to observe, that Mr. Chubb, in his Collection of Tracts on various Subjects, has advanced a scheme of liberty, which is greatly divided against itself, and thoroughly subversive of itself; and that many ways.

I. He is abundant in asserting, that the will, in all its acts, is influenced by Motive and excitement; and that this is the *previous ground and reason* of all its acts, and that it is never otherwise in any instance. He says, (p. 262.) *No action can take place without some Motive to excite it.* And in p. 263. *Volition cannot take place without some PREVIOUS reason or Motive to induce it.* And in p. 310. *Action would not take place without some reason or Motive to induce it; it being absurd to suppose, that the active faculty would be exerted without some PREVIOUS reason to dispose the mind to action.* So also p. 257. And he speaks of these things, as what we may be absolutely certain of, and which are the foundation, the only foundation we have of a certainty of the moral perfections of God. p. 252, 253, 254, 255, 261, 262, 263, 264.

And yet at the same time, by his scheme, the influence of Motives upon us to excite to action, and to be actually a ground of volition, is *consequent* on the volition or choice of the mind. For he very greatly insists upon it, that in all free actions, before the mind is the subject of those vo-

litions, which Motives excite, it chuses to be so. It chuses, whether it will comply with the Motive, which presents itself in view, or not; and when various Motives are presented, it chuses, which it will yield to, and which it will reject. So p. 256. *Every man has power to act, or to refrain from acting agreeably with, or contrary to, any Motive that presents.* P. 257. *Every man is at liberty to act, or refrain from acting agreeably with, or contrary to, what each of these Motives, considered singly, would excite him to.—Man has power, and is as much at liberty to reject the Motive, that does prevail, as he has power, and is at liberty to reject those Motives that do not.* And so p. 310, 311. *In order to constitute a moral agent, it is necessary, that he should have power to act, or to refrain from acting, upon such moral Motives as he pleases.* And to the like purpose in many other places. According to these things, the will acts first, and chuses or refuses to comply with the Motive, that is presented, before it falls under its prevailing influence: and it is first determined by the mind's pleasure or choice, what Motives it will be induced by, before it is induced by them.

Now, how can these things hang together? How can the mind first act, and by its act of *volition* and *choice* determine, what Motives shall be the ground and reason of its *volition* and *choice?* For this supposes, the choice is already made, before the Motive has its effect; and that the volition is already exerted, before the Motive prevails, so as actually to be the ground of the volition; and makes the prevailing of the Motive, the consequence of the volition, which yet it is the ground of. If the mind has already chosen to comply with a Motive, and to yield to its excitement, it does not need to yield to it after

this: for the thing is effected already, that the Motive would excite to, and the will is beforehand with the excitement; and the excitement comes in too late, and is needlefs and in vain afterwards. If the mind has already chofen to yield to a Motive which *invites* to a thing, that implies and in fact is a chufing the thing *invited to;* and the very act of choice is before the influence of the Motive which induces, and is the ground of the choice; the fon is beforehand with the father that begets him: the choice is fuppofed to be the ground of that influence of the Motive, which very influence is fuppofed to be the ground of the choice. And fo *vice verfa*, the choice is fuppofed to be the confequence of the influence of the Motive, which influence of the Motive is the confequence of that very choice.

And befides, if the will acts firft towards the Motive before it falls under its influence, and the prevailing of the Motive upon it to induce it to act and chufe, be the fruit and confequence of its act and choice, then how is the Motive *a PREVIOUS ground and reafon of the act and choice*, fo that *in the nature of the things, volition cannot take place without fome PREVIOUS reafon and Motive to induce it;* and that this act is confequent upon, and follows the Motive? Which things Mr. Chubb often afferts, as of certain and undoubted truth. So that the very fame Motive is both *previous* and *confequent*, both before and after, both the ground and fruit of the very fame thing!

II. Agreeable to the fore-mentioned inconfiftent notion of the will's firft acting towards the Motive, chufing whether it will comply with it, in order to its becoming a ground of the will's

acting, before any act of volition can take place, Mr. Chubb frequently calls Motives and excitements to the action of the will, *the paſſive ground or reaſon of that action.* Which is a remarkable phraſe; than which I preſume there is none more unintelligible, and void of diſtinct and conſiſtent meaning, in all the writings of Duns Scotus, or Thomas Aquinas. When he repreſents the Motive to action or volition as paſſive, he muſt mean—paſſive in that affair, or paſſive with reſpect to that action, which he ſpeaks of; otherwiſe it is nothing to his purpoſe, or relating to the deſign of his argument: he muſt mean, (if that can be called a meaning) that the Motive to volition is firſt acted *upon* or *towards* by the volition, chuſing to yield to it, making it a ground of action, or determining to fetch its influence from thence; and ſo to make it a previous ground of its own excitation and exiſtence. Which is the ſame abſurdity, as if one ſhould ſay, that the ſoul of man, or any other thing ſhould, previous to its exiſting, chuſe what cauſe it would come into exiſtence by, and ſhould act upon its cauſe, to fetch influence from thence, to bring it into being; and ſo its cauſe ſhould be a paſſive ground of its exiſtence!

Mr. Chubb does very plainly ſuppoſe Motive or excitement to be the *ground of the being* of volition. He ſpeaks of it as the ground or reaſon of the EXERTION of an act of the will, p. 391, and 392, and expreſsly ſays, that *volition cannot TAKE PLACE* without ſome *previous ground or Motive to induce it*, p. 363. And he ſpeaks of the act as *FROM the Motive*, and *FROM THE INFLUENCE of the Motive*, p. 352. and from *the influence that the Motive has on the man, for the PRODUCTION of an action*, p. 317. Cer-

tainly there is no need of multiplying words about this; it is easily judged, whether Motive can be the ground of volition's being exerted and taking place, so that the very production of it is from the influence of the Motive, and yet the Motive, before it becomes the ground of the volition, is passive, or acted upon by the volition. But this I will say, that a man, who insists so much on clearness of meaning in others, and is so much in blaming their confusion and inconsistence, ought, if he was able, to have explained his meaning in this phrase of *passive ground of action*, so as to shew it not to be confused and inconsistent.

If any should suppose, that Mr. Chubb, when he speaks of Motive as a *passive ground of action*, does not mean passive with regard to that volition which it is the ground of, but some other antecedent volition (though his purpose and argument, and whole discourse, will by no means allow of such a supposition) yet it would not help the matter in the least. For, (1.) If we suppose there to be an act of volition or choice, by which the soul chuses to yield to the invitation of a Motive to another volition, by which the soul chuses something else; both these supposed volitions are in effect the very same. A volition, or chusing to yield to the force of a Motive inviting to chuse something, comes to just the same thing as chusing the thing, which the Motive invites to, as I observed before. So that here can be no room to help the matter, by a distinction of two volitions. (2.) If the Motive be passive with respect, not to the same volition, that the Motive excites to, but one truly distinct and prior; yet, by Mr. Chubb, that prior volition cannot take place, without a Motive or excitement, as a *previous ground*

of its exiſtence. For he inſiſts, that *it is abſurd to ſuppoſe any volition ſhould take place without ſome previous Motive to induce it.* So that at laſt it comes to juſt the ſame abſurdity: for if *every* volition muſt have a previous Motive, then the very *firſt* in the whole ſeries muſt be excited by a previous Motive; and yet the Motive to that firſt volition is paſſive; but cannot be paſſive with regard to another antecedent volition, becauſe, by the ſuppoſition, it is the very firſt: therefore if it be paſſive with reſpect to any volition, it muſt be ſo with regard to that very volition that it is the ground of, and that is excited by it.

III. Though Mr. Chubb aſſerts, as above, that every volition has ſome Motive, and that *in the nature of the thing, no volition can take place without ſome Motive to induce it;* yet he aſſerts, that volition does dot always follow the ſtrongeſt Motive; or, in other words, is not governed by any ſuperiour ſtrength of the Motive that is followed, beyond Motives to the contrary, previous to the volition itſelf. His own words, p. 258, are as follow: "Though with regard to phyſical cauſes, "that which is ſtrongeſt always prevails, yet it "is otherwiſe with regard to moral cauſes. Of "theſe, ſometimes the ſtronger, ſometimes the "weaker, prevails. And the ground of this "difference is evident, namely, that what we "call moral cauſes, ſtrictly ſpeaking, are no "cauſes at all, but barely paſſive reaſons of, or "excitements to the action, or to the refrain-"ing from acting: which excitements we have "power, or are at liberty to comply with or re-"ject, as I have ſhewed above." And ſo throughout the paragraph, he, in a variety of phraſes, inſiſts, that the will is not always determined by the ſtrongeſt Motive, unleſs by ſtrongeſt we pre-

posterously mean actually prevailing in the event; which is not in the Motive, but in the will; but that the will is not always determined by the Motive, which is strongest, by any strength previous to the volition itself. And he elsewhere does abundantly assert, that the will is determined by no superiour strength or advantage, that Motives have, from any constitution or state of things, or any circumstances whatsoever, previous to the actual determination of the will. And indeed his whole discourse on human liberty implies it, his whole scheme is founded upon it.

But these things cannot stand together.—— There is such a thing as a diversity of strength in Motives to choice, previous to the choice itself. Mr. Chubb himself supposes, that they do *previously invite*, *induce*, *excite* and *dispose the mind to action*. This implies, that they have something in themselves that is *inviting*, some tendency to *induce* and *dispose* to volition, previous to volition itself. And if they have in themselves this nature and tendency, doubtless they have it in certain limited degrees, which are capable of diversity; and some have it in greater degrees, others in less; and they that have most of this tendency, considered with all their nature and circumstances, previous to volition, they are the strongest motives; and those that have least, are the weakest Motives.

Now if volition sometimes does not follow the Motive which is strongest, or has most previous tendency or advantage, all things considered, to induce or excite it, but follows the weakest, or that which as it stands previously in the mind's view, has least tendency to induce it; herein the will apparently acts wholly without Motive, with-

out any previous reaſon to diſpoſe the mind to it, contrary to what the ſame author ſuppoſes. The act, wherein the will muſt proceed without a previous motive to induce it, is the act of preferring the weakeſt motive. For how abſurd is it to ſay, the mind ſees previous reaſon in the Motive, to prefer that Motive before the other; and at the ſame time to ſuppoſe, that there is nothing in the Motive, in its nature, ſtate or any circumſtance of it whatſoever, as it ſtands in the previous view of the mind, that gives it any preference; but on the contrary, the other Motive that ſtands in competition with it, in all theſe reſpects, has moſt belonging to it, that is inviting and moving, and has moſt of a tendency to choice and preference. This is certainly as much as to ſay, there is previous ground and reaſon in the Motive for the act of preference, and yet no previous reaſon for it. By the ſuppoſition, as to all that is in the two rival Motives, which tends to preference, previous to the act of preference, it is not in that which is preferred, but wholly in the other: becauſe appearing ſuperiour ſtrength, and all appearing preferableneſs is in that; and yet Mr. Chubb ſuppoſes, that the act of preference is from *previous ground and reaſon* in the Motive which is preferred. But are theſe things conſiſtent? Can there be previous ground in a thing for an event that takes place, and yet no previous tendency in it to that event? If one thing follows another, without any previous tendency to its following, then I ſhould think it very plain, that it follows it without any manner of previous reaſon, why it ſhould follow.

Yea, in this caſe, Mr. Chubb ſuppoſes, that the event follows an antecedent or a previous thing, as the ground of its exiſtence, not only

that has *no tendency* to it, but *a contrary tendency*. The event is the preference, which the mind gives to that Motive, which is weaker, as it ſtands in the previous view of the mind; the immediate antecedent is the view the mind has of the two rival Motives conjunctly; in which previous view of the mind, all the preferableneſs, or previous tendency to preference, is ſuppoſed to be on the other ſide, or in the contrary Motive; and all the unworthineſs of preference, and ſo previous tendency to comparative neglect, rejection or undervaluing, is on that ſide which is preferred: and yet in this view of the mind is ſuppoſed to be the *previous ground or reaſon* of this act of preference, *exciting it, and diſpoſing the mind to it*. Which, I leave the reader to judge, whether it be abſurd or not. If it be not, then it is not abſurd to ſay, that the previous tendency of an antecedent to a conſequent, is the ground and reaſon why that conſequent does not follow; and the want of a previous tendency to an event, yea, a tendency to the contrary, is the true ground and reaſon why that event does follow.

An act of choice or preference is a comparative act, wherein the mind acts with reference to two or more things that are compared, and ſtand in competition in the mind's view. If the mind, in this comparative act, prefers that which appears inferiour in the compariſon, then the mind herein acts abſolutely without Motive, or inducement, or any temptation whatſoever. Then, if a hungry man has the offer of two ſorts of food, both which he finds an appetite to, but has a ſtronger appetite to one than the other; and there be no circumſtances or excitements whatſoever in the caſe to induce him to

take either the one or the other, but merely his appetite: if in the choice he makes between them, he chuſes that, which he has leaſt appetite to, and refuſes that, to which he has the ſtrongeſt appetite, this is a choice made abſolutely without previous Motive, Excitement, Reaſon, or Temptation, as much as if he were perfectly without all appetite to either: becauſe his volition in this caſe is a comparative act, attending and following a comparative view of the food, which he chuſes, viewing it as related to, and compared with the other ſort of food, in which view his preference has abſolutely no previous ground, yea, is againſt all previous ground and Motive. And if there be any principle in man, from whence an act of choice may ariſe after this manner, from the ſame principle volition may ariſe wholly without Motive on either ſide. If the mind in its volition can go beyond Motive, then it can go without Motive: for when it is beyond the Motive, it is out of the reach of the Motive, out of the limits of its influence, and ſo without Motive. If volition goes beyond the ſtrength and tendency of Motive, and eſpecially if it goes againſt its tendency, this demonſtrates the independence of volition or Motive. And if ſo, no reaſon can be given for what Mr. Chubb ſo often aſſerts, even that *in the nature of things volition cannot take place without a Motive to induce it.*

If the Moſt High ſhould endow a balance with agency or activity of nature, in ſuch a manner, that when unequal weights are put into the ſcales, its agency could enable it to cauſe that ſcale to deſcend, which has the leaſt weight, and ſo to raiſe the greater weight; this would clearly demonſtrate, that the motion of the balance does

not depend on weights in the ſcales, at leaſt as much as if the balance ſhould move itſelf, when there is no weight in either ſcale. And the activity of the balance which is ſufficient to move itſelf againſt the greater weight, muſt certainly be more than ſufficient to move it when there is no weight at all.

Mr. Chubb ſuppoſes, that the will cannot ſtir at all without ſome motive; and alſo ſuppoſes, that if there be a Motive to one thing, and none to the contrary, volition will infallibly follow that Motive. This is is virtually to ſuppoſe an entire dependence of the will on Motives: if it were not wholly dependent on them, it could ſurely help itſelf a little without them, or help itſelf a little againſt a Motive, without help from the ſtrength and weight of a contrary Motive. And yet his ſuppoſing that the will, when it has before it various oppoſite Motives, can uſe them as it pleaſes, and chuſe its own influence from them, and neglect the ſtrongeſt, and follow the weakeſt, ſuppoſes it to be wholly independent on Motives.

It further appears, on Mr. Chubb's ſuppoſition, that volition muſt be without any previous ground in any motive, thus: if it be, as he ſuppoſes, that the will is not determined by any previous ſuperiour ſtrength of the motive, but determines and chuſes its own motive, then, when the rival motives are exactly equal in ſtrength and tendency to induce, in all reſpects, it may follow either; and may in ſuch a caſe, ſometimes follow one, ſometimes the other. And if ſo, this diverſity which appears between the acts of the will, is plainly without previous ground in either of the motives; for all that is previouſly in the motives, is ſuppoſed preciſely and perfectly the ſame, with-

out any diverſity whatſoever. Now perfect identity, as to all that is previous in the antecedent, cannot be the ground and reaſon of diverſity in the conſequent. Perfect identity in the ground cannot be a reaſon why it is not followed with the ſame conſequence. And therefore the ſource of this diverſity of conſequence muſt be ſought for elſewhere.

And laſtly, it may be obſerved, that however Mr. Chubb does much inſiſt that no volition can take place without ſome motive to induce it, which previouſly diſpoſes the mind to it; yet, as he alſo inſiſts that the mind, without reference to any ſuperiour ſtrength of motives, picks and chuſes for its motive to follow; he himſelf herein plainly ſuppoſes, that with regard to the mind's preference of one motive before another, it is not the motive that diſpoſes the will, but the will diſpoſes itſelf to follow the motive.

IV. Mr. Chubb ſuppoſes neceſſity to be utterly inconſiſtent with *agency;* and that to ſuppoſe a being to be an agent in that which is neceſſary, is a plain contradiction. P. 311. and throughout his diſcourſes on the ſubject of Liberty, he ſuppoſes, that neceſſity cannot conſiſt with agency or freedom; and that to ſuppoſe otherwiſe, is to make Liberty and Neceſſity, Action and Paſſion, the ſame thing. And ſo he ſeems to ſuppoſe, that there is no action, ſtrictly ſpeaking, but volition; and that as to the effects of volition in body or mind, in themſelves conſidered, being neceſſary, they are ſaid to be free, only as they are the effects of an act that is not neceſſary.

And yet, according to him, volition itſelf is the *effect of volition;* yea, every act of free vo-

lition: and therefore every act of free volition must, by what has now been observed from him, be necessary. That every act of free volition is itself the effect of volition, is abundantly supposed by him. In p. 341, he says, "If a man "is such a creature as I have proved him to be, "that is, if he has in him a power or Liberty "of doing either good or evil, and either of "these is the subject of his own free choice, so "that he might, IF HE HAD PLEASED, "have CHOSEN and done the contrary."—— Here he supposes, all that is good or evil in man is the effect of his choice; and so that his good or evil choice itself, is the effect of his pleasure or choice, in these words, *he might if he had PLEASED, have CHOSEN the contrary*. So in p. 356, "Though it be highly reasonable, that a "man should always chuse the greater good,— "yet he may, if he PLEASE, CHUSE other- "wise." Which is the same thing as if he had said, *he may, if he chuses, chuse otherwise*. And then he goes on, "—that is, he may, *if he pleases*, "*chuse* what is good for himself, &c." And again in the same page, "The will is not con- "fined by the understanding, to any particular "sort of good, whether greater or less; but is at "liberty *to chuse* what kind of good *it pleases*." —If there be any meaning in the last words, the meaning must be this, that *the will is at liberty to chuse what kind of good it chuses to chuse;* supposing the act of choice itself determined by an antecedent choice. The Liberty Mr. Chubb speaks of, is not only a man's having power to move his body agreeably to an antecedent act of choice, but to use, or exert the faculties of his soul. Thus, in p. 379, speaking of the faculties of his mind, he says, "Man has power, and "is at liberty to neglect these faculties, to use

" them aright, or to abuse them, *as he pleases.*" And that he supposes an act of choice, or exercise of pleasure, properly distinct *from*, and antecedent *to*, those acts thus chosen, directing, commanding and producing the chosen acts, and even the acts of choice themselves, is very plain in p. 283. " He can *command his actions;* and here-" in consists his Liberty; he can give or deny " himself that pleasure, *as he pleases.*" And p. 377. " If the actions of men—are not the *produce of a* " *free choice*, or election, but spring from a ne-" cessity of nature,——he cannot in reason be " the object of reward or punishment on their " account. Whereas, if action in man, whether " good or evil, is *the produce of will or free* " *choice;* so that a man in either case, had it in " his power, and was at liberty to have CHO-" SEN the contrary, he is the proper object of " reward or punishment, according as he CHU-" SES to behave himself." Here, in these last words, he speaks of *Liberty of CHUSING, according as he CHUSES.* So that the behaviour which he speaks of as subject to his choice, is his *chusing* itself, as well as his external conduct consequent upon it. And therefore it is evident, he means not only external actions, but the acts of choice themselves, when he speaks of *all free actions, as the PRODUCE of free choice.* And this is abundantly evident in what he says in p. 372, 373.

Now these things imply a twofold great absurdity and inconsistence.

1. To suppose, as Mr. Chubb plainly does, that every free act of choice is *commanded by*, and is the *produce of free choice*, is to suppose the first free act of choice belonging to the case, yea, the first free act of choice that ever man exerted, to be *the produce* of an antecedent act of choice.

But I hope I need not labour at all to convince my readers, that it is an absurdity to say, the very *first* act is the produce of another act that went *before* it.

2. If it were both possible and real, as Mr. Chubb insists, that every free act of choice were the produce or the effect of a free act of choice; yet even then, according to his principles, no one act of choice would be free, but every one necessary; because, every act of choice being the effect of a foregoing act, every act would be necessarily connected with that foregoing cause. For Mr. Chubb himself says, p. 389, "When the "self moving power is exerted, it becomes the "necessary cause of its effects."——So that his notion of a free act, that is rewardable or punishable, is a heap of contradictions. It is a free act, and yet, by his own notion of freedom, is necessary; and therefore by him it is a contradiction, to suppose it to be free. According to him, every free act is the produce of a free act; so that there must be an infinite number of free acts in succession, without any beginning, in an agent that has a beginning. And therefore here is an infinite number of free acts, every one of them free; and yet not any one of them free, but every act in the whole infinite chain a necessary effect. All the acts are rewardable or punishable, and yet the agent cannot, in reason, be the object of reward or punishment, on account of any one of these actions. He is active in them all, and passive in none; yet active in none, but passive in all, &c.

V. Mr. Chubb does most strenuously deny, that motives are *causes* of the acts of the will; or that the moving principle in man is *moved*, or *caused to be exerted* by motives. His words, p. 388

and 389, are, "If the moving principle in man "is MOVED, or CAUSED TO BE EXERT-"ED, by ſomething external to man, *which all* "*Motives are*, then it would not be a ſelf-moving "principle, ſeeing it would be moved by a prin-"ciple external to itſelf. And to ſay, that a "ſelf-moving principle is MOVED, or CAU-"SED TO BE EXERTED, by a cauſe ex-"ternal to itſelf, is abſurd and a contradiction, "&c."—And in the next page, it is particularly and largely inſiſted, that motives are cauſes in no caſe, that *they are merely paſſive in the production of action, and have no cauſality in the production of it,—no cauſality, to be the cauſe of the exertion of the will.*

Now I deſire it may be conſidered, how this can poſſibly conſiſt with what he ſays in other places. Let it be noted here,

1. Mr. Chubb abundantly ſpeaks of motives as *excitements of the acts of the will*; and ſays, that *Motives do excite volition, and induce it*, and that they are neceſſary to this end; that *in the reaſon and nature of things, volition cannot take place without Motives to excite it.* But now, if motives *excite* the will, they *move* it; and yet he ſays, it is abſurd to ſay, the will is moved by motives. And again (if language is of any ſignificancy at all) if motives excite volition, then they are the *cauſe* of its being excited; and to cauſe volition to be excited, is to cauſe it to be put forth or *exerted.* Yea, Mr. Chubb ſays himſelf, p. 317, motive is neceſſary to the *exertion* of the active faculty. To excite, is poſitively to *do* ſomething; and certainly that which does ſomething, is the cauſe of the thing *done* by it. To create, is to cauſe to be created; to make, is to cauſe to be

made; to kill, is to cause to be killed; to quicken, is to cause to be quickened; and *to excite*, is *to cause to be excited*. To excite, is to be a cause, in the most proper sense, not merely a negative occasion, but a ground of existence by positive influence. The notion of *exciting*, is exerting influence to cause the effect to arise or come forth into existence.

2. Mr. Chubb himself, p. 317, speaks of motives as the ground and reason of action BY INFLUENCE, and BY PREVAILING INFLUENCE. Now, what can be meant by a cause, but something that is the ground and reason of a thing by its influence, an influence that is *prevalent* and so effectual?

3. This author not only speaks of motives as the ground and reason of action, by prevailing influence; but expressly of their *influence as prevailing* FOR THE PRODUCTION of an action, in the same p. 317: which makes the inconsistency still more palpable and notorious. The production of an effect is certainly the *causing* of an effect; and *productive influence* is *causal influence*, if any thing is; and that which has this influence prevalently, so as thereby to become the ground of another thing, is a cause of that thing, if there be any such thing as a cause. This influence, Mr. Chubb says, motives have to produce an action; and yet, he says, it is absurd and a contradiction, to say they are causes.

4. In the same page, he once and again speaks of motives as *disposing* the Agent to action, *by their influence*. His words are these: "As motive, which takes place in the understanding, "and is the product of intelligence, is NECES-

" SARY to action, that is, to the EXERTION
" of the active faculty, because that faculty
" would not be exerted without some PREVI-
" OUS REASON to DISPOSE the mind to
" action; so from hence it plainly appears, that
" when a man is said to be *disposed* to one action
" rather than another, this properly signifies the
" PREVAILING INFLUENCE that one mo-
" tive has upon a man FOR THE PRODUC-
" TION of an action, or for the being at rest,
" before all other motives, for the *production* of
" the contrary. For as motive is the ground
" and reason of any action, so the motive that
" *prevails*, DISPOSES the agent to the perform-
" ance of that action."

Now, if motives dispose the mind to action, then they *cause* the mind to be disposed; and to cause the mind to be disposed is to cause it to be willing; and to cause it to be willing is to cause it to will; and that is the same thing as to be the cause of an act of the will. And yet this same Mr. Chubb holds it to be absurd, to suppose motive to be a cause of the act of the will.

And if we compare these things together, we have here again a whole heap of inconsistences. *Motives are the previous ground and reason* of the acts of the will; yea, the *necessary* ground and reason of *their exertion, without which they will not be exerted, and cannot, in the nature of things, take place;* and they do *excite* these acts of the will, and do this by *a prevailing influence;* yea, *an influence which prevails for the production of the act* of the will, and for *the disposing of the mind to it;* and yet it is *absurd*, to suppose *Motive to be a cause* of an act of the will, or that *a principle of will is moved or caused to be exerted by it*, or that it has

*any causality in the production of it*, or *any causality to be the cause of the exertion of the will.*

A due consideration of these things which Mr. Chubb has advanced, the strange inconsistences which the notion of Liberty, consisting in the will's power of self-determination void of all necessity, united with that dictate of common sense, that there can be no volition without a motive, drove him into, may be sufficient to convince us, that it is utterly impossible ever to make that notion of Liberty consistent with the influence of motives in volition. And as it is in a manner self-evident, that there can be no act of will, choice, or preference of the mind, without some motive or inducement, something in the mind's view, which it aims at, seeks, inclines to, and goes after; so it is most manifest, there is no such Liberty in the universe as *Arminians* insist on; nor any such thing possible, or conceivable.

## SECTION XI.

### *The Evidence of GOD's certain* Foreknowledge *of the Volitions of moral Agents.*

THAT the acts of the wills of moral Agents are not contingent events, in that sense, as to be without all necessity, appears by God's certain Foreknowledge of such events.

In handling this argument, I would in the *first* place prove, that God has a certain Foreknowledge of the voluntary acts of moral Agents; and *secondly* shew the consequence, or how it follows from hence, that the Volitions of moral Agents

are not contingent, ſo as to be without neceſſity of connection and conſequence.

First, I am to prove, that God has an abſolute and certain Foreknowledge of the free actions of moral Agents.

One would think, it ſhould be wholly needleſs to enter on ſuch an argument with any that profeſs themſelves Chriſtians: but ſo it is; God's certain Foreknowledge of the free acts of moral Agents, is denied by ſome that pretend to believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God; and eſpecially of late. I therefore ſhall conſider the evidence of ſuch a preſcience in the Moſt High, as fully as the deſigned limits of this eſſay will admit of; ſuppoſing myſelf herein to have to do with ſuch as own the truth of the Bible.

Arg. I. My *firſt* argument ſhall be taken from God's *prediction* of ſuch events. Here I would, in the firſt place, lay down theſe two things as axioms.

(1.) If God does not foreknow, He cannot foretel ſuch events; that is, He cannot peremptorily and certainly foretel them. If God has no more than an uncertain gueſs concerning events of this kind, then He can declare no more than an uncertain gueſs. Poſitively to foretel, is to profeſs to foreknow, or declare poſitive Foreknowledge.

(2.) If God does not certainly foreknow the future Volitions of moral Agents, then neither can He certainly foreknow thoſe events which are conſequent and dependent on theſe Volitions. The exiſtence of the one depending on the exiſtence of the other, the knowledge of the exiſtence of the

one depends on the knowledge of the existence of the other; and the one cannot be more certain than the other.

Therefore, how many, how great, and how extensive soever the consequences of the Volitions of moral Agents may be; though they should extend to an alteration of the state of things thro' the universe, and should be continued in a series of successive events to all eternity, and should in the progress of things branch forth into an infinite number of series, each of them going on in an endless line or chain of events; God must be as ignorant of all these consequences, as He is of the Volition whence they first take their rise: all these events, and the whole state of things depending on them, how important, extensive and vast soever, must be hid from him.

These positions being such as, I suppose, none will deny, I now proceed to observe the following things.

1. Men's moral conduct and qualities, their virtues and vices, their wickedness and good practice, things rewardable and punishable, have often been foretold by God.—Pharaoh's moral conduct, in refusing to obey God's command, in letting his people go, was foretold. God says to Moses, Exod. iii. 19. *I am sure, that the King of Egypt will not let you go.* Here God professes not only to guess at, but to know Pharaoh's future disobedience. In chap. vii. 4. God says, *but Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you; that I may lay mine hand upon Egypt*, &c. And chap. ix. 30, Moses says to Pharaoh, *as for thee, and thy servants, I KNOW that ye will not fear the Lord.* See also chap. xi. 9.—The moral conduct of Josiah, by

name, in his zealoufly exerting himfelf in oppofition to idolatry, in particular acts of his, was foretold above three hundred years before he was born, and the prophecy fealed by a miracle, and renewed and confirmed by the words of a fecond prophet, as what furely would not fail, 1 Kings xiii. 1,——6, 32. This prophecy was alfo in effect a prediction of the moral conduct of the people, in upholding their fchifmatical and idolatrous worfhip until that time, and the idolatry of thofe priefts of the high places, which it is foretold Jofiah fhould offer upon that altar of Bethel.—— Micaiah foretold the foolifh and finful conduct of Ahab, in refufing to hearken to the Word of the Lord by him, and chufing rather to hearken to the falfe prophets, in going to Ramoth-Gilead to his ruin, 1 Kings xxi. 20,—22. The moral conduct of Hazael was foretold, in that cruelty he fhould be guilty of; on which Hazael fays, *What, is thy fervant a dog, that he fhould do this thing!* The prophet fpeaks of the event as what he knew, and not what he conjectured, 2 Kings viii. 12. *I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Ifrael: Thou wilt dafh their children, and rip up their women with child.* The moral conduct of Cyrus is foretold, long before he had a being, in his mercy to God's people, and regard to the true God, in turning the captivity of the Jews, and promoting the building of the Temple, Ifai. xliv. 28. and lxv. 13. Compare 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22. 23. and Ezra i. 1,—4. How many inftances of the moral conduct of the *Kings of the North and South*, particular inftances of the wicked behaviour of the Kings of Syria and Egypt, are foretold in the xith chapter of Daniel? Their corruption, violence, robbery, treachery, and lies. And particularly, how much is foretold of the horrid wickednefs of Antiochus Epiphanes, called there

a *vile person*, instead of Epiphanes, or illustrious. In that chapter, and also in chap. viii. verses 9, 14, 23, to the end, are foretold his flattery, deceit and lies, his having *his heart set to do mischief*, and set *against the holy covenant*, his *destroying and treading under foot the holy people*, in a marvellous manner, his *having indignation against the holy covenant, setting his heart against it*, and *conspiring against it*, his *polluting the sanctuary of strength, treading it under foot, taking away the daily sacrifice, and placing the abomination that maketh desolate;* his great pride, *magnifying himself against God*, and *uttering marvellous blasphemies against Him*, until God in *indignation should destroy him*. Withal, the moral conduct of the Jews, on occasion of his persecution, is predicted. It is foretold, that *he should corrupt many by flatteries*, chap. xi. 32,—34. But that others should behave with a glorious constancy and fortitude in opposition to him, ver. 32. And that some good men should fall and repent, ver. 35. Christ foretold Peter's sin, in denying his Lord, with its circumstances, in a peremptory manner. And so, that great sin of Judas, in betraying his master, and its dreadful and eternal punishment in hell, was foretold in the like positive manner, Matt. xxvi. 21,—25. and parallel places in the other Evangelists.

2. Many events have been foretold by God, which are consequent and dependent on the moral conduct of particular persons, and were accomplished, either by their virtuous or vicious actions.—Thus, the children of Israel's going down into Egypt to dwell there, was foretold to Abraham, Gen. xv. which was brought about by the wickedness of Joseph's brethren in selling him, and the wickedness of Joseph's mistress, and his

own ſignal virtue in reſiſting her temptation. The accompliſhment of the thing prefigured in Joſeph's dream, depended on the ſame moral conduct. Jotham's parable and prophecy, Judges ix. 15,—20. was accompliſhed by the wicked conduct of Abimelech, and the men of Shechem. The prophecies againſt the houſe of Eli, 1 Sam. chap. ii. and iii. were accompliſhed by the wickedneſs of Doeg the Edomite, in accuſing the prieſts; and the great impiety, and extreme cruelty of Saul in deſtroying the prieſts at Nob, 1 Sam. xxii. —Nathan's prophecy againſt David, 2 Sam. xii. 11, 12. was fulfilled by the horrible wickedneſs of Abſalom, in rebelling againſt his father, ſeeking his life, and lying with his concubines in the ſight of the ſun. The prophecy againſt Solomon, 1 Kings xi. 11,—13. was fulfilled by Jeroboam's rebellion and uſurpation, which are ſpoken of as his wickedneſs, 2 Chron. xiii. 5, 6. compare ver. 18. The prophecy againſt Jeroboam's family, 1 Kings xiv. was fulfilled by the conſpiracy, treaſon, and cruel murders of Baaſha, 2 Kings xv. 27, &c. The predictions of the prophet Jehu againſt the houſe of Baſhaa, 1 Kings xvi. at the beginning, were fulfilled by the treaſon and parricide of Zimri, 1 Kings xvi. 9, 13, 20.

3. How often has God foretold the future moral conduct of nations and people, of numbers, bodies, and ſucceſſions of men: with God's judicial proceedings, and many other events conſequent and dependent on their virtues and vices; which could not be foreknown, if the Volitions of men, wherein they acted as *moral Agents*, had not been foreſeen? The future cruelty of the Egyptians in oppreſſing Iſrael, and God's judging and puniſhing them for it, was foretold long be-

fore it came to pafs, Gen. xv. 13, 14. The continuance of the iniquity of the Amorites, and the increafe of it until it *fhould be full*, and they ripe for deftruction, was foretold above four hundred years before-hand, Gen. xv. 16. Acts vii. 6, 7. The prophecies of the deftruction of Jerufalem, and the land of Judah, were abfolute; 2 Kings xx. 17,—19. chap. xxii. 15, to the end. It was foretold in Hezekiah's time, and was abundantly infifted on in the book of the prophet Ifaiah, who wrote nothing after Hezekiah's days. It was foretold in Jofiah's time, in the beginning of a great reformation, 2 Kings xxii. And it is manifeft by innumerable things in the prediction of the prophets, relating to this event, its time, its circumftances, its continuance and end; the return from the captivity, the reftoration of the temple, city and land, and many circumftances, and confequences of *that;* I fay, thefe fhew plainly, that the prophecies of this great event were *abfolute.* And yet this event was connected with, and dependent on two things in men's moral conduct: firft, the injurious rapine and violence of the king of Babylon and his people, as the efficient caufe; which God often fpeaks of as what he highly refented, and would feverely punifh; and 2dly, the final obftinacy of the Jews. That great event is often fpoken of as fufpended on this, Jer. iv. 1. and v. 1. vii. 1,—7. xi. 1,—6. xvii. 24, to the end. xxv. 1,---7. xxvi. 1,---8, 13. and xxxviii. 17, 18. Therefore this deftruction and captivity could not be foreknown, unlefs fuch a moral conduct of the Chaldeans and Jews had been foreknown. And then it was foretold, that the people *fhould be finally obftinate*, to the deftruction and utter defolation of the city and land, Ifa. vi. 9,---11. Jer. i. 18, 19. vii. 27,---29. Ezek iii. 7. and xxiv. 13, 14.

The final obſtinacy of thoſe Jews who were left in the land of Iſrael, in their idolatry and rejection of the true God, was foretold by God, and the prediction confirmed with an oath, Jer. xliv. 26, 27. And God tells the people, Iſa. xlviii. 3. 4,---8. that he had predicted thoſe things which ſhould be conſequent on their treachery and obſtinacy, becauſe he knew they would be obſtinate; and that he had declared theſe things before-hand, for their conviction of his being the only true God, *&c.*

The deſtruction of Babylon with many of the circumſtances of it, was foretold, as the judgment of God for the exceeding pride and haughtineſs of the heads of that monarchy, Nebuchadnezzar, and his ſucceſſors, and their wickedly deſtroying other nations, and particularly for their exalting themſelves againſt the true God and his people, before any of theſe monarchs had a being; Iſa. chap. xiii, xiv, xlvii: compare Habbak. ii. 5. to the end, and Jer. chap. l. and li. That Babylon's deſtruction was to be a *recompence, according to the works of their own hands*, appears by Jer. xxv. 14.——The immorality with which the people of Babylon, and particularly her princes and great men, were guilty of, that very night that the city was deſtroyed, their revelling and drunkenneſs at Balſhazzar's idolatrous feaſt, was foretold, Jer. li. 39, 57.

The return of the Jews from the Babyloniſh captivity is often very particularly foretold with many circumſtances, and the promiſes of it are very peremptory; Jer. xxxi. 35,---40. and xxxii. 6,---15, 41.---44. and xxxiii. 24,---26. And the very time of their return was prefixed; Jer.

xxv. 11, 12. and xxix. 10, 11. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21. Ezek. iv. 6. and Dan. ix. 2. And yet the prophecies represent their return as consequent on their repentance. And their repentance itself is very expressly and particularly foretold, Jer. xxix. 12, 13, 14. xxxi. 8, 9, 18,---31. xxxiii. 8. l. 4, 5. Ezek. vi. 8, 9, 10. vii. 16. xiv. 22, 23. and xx. 43, 44.

It was foretold under the Old Testament, that the Messiah should suffer greatly through the malice and cruelty of men; as is largely and fully set forth, Psal. xxii. applied to Christ in the New Testament, Matt. xxvii. 35, 43. Luke xxiii. 34. John xix. 24. Heb. ii. 12. And likewise in Psal. lxix. which, it is also evident by the New Testament, is spoken of Christ; John xv. 25. vii. 5, *&c.* and ii. 17. Rom. xv. 3. Matt. xxvii. 34, 48. Mark xv. 23. John xix. 29. The same thing is also foretold, Isa. liii. and l. 6. and Mic. v. 1. This cruelty of men was their sin, and what they acted as moral Agents. It was foretold, that there should be an union of Heathen and Jewish rulers against Christ, Psal. ii. 1, 2. compared with Acts iv. 25,—28. It was foretold, that the Jews should generally reject and despise the Messiah, Isa. xlix. 5, 6, 7. and liii. 1,—3. Psal. xxii. 6, 7. and lxix. 4, 8, 19, 20. And it was foretold, that the body of that nation should be rejected in the Messiah's days, from being God's people, for their obstinacy in sin; Isa. xlix. 4, —7. and viii. 14, 15, 16. compared with Rom. x. 19. and Isa. lxv. at the beginning, compared with Rom. x. 20, 21. It was foretold, that Christ should be rejected by the chief priests and rulers among the Jews, Psalm cxviii. 22. compared with Matt. xxi. 42. Acts iv. 11. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 7.

Chriſt himſelf foretold his being delivered into the hands of the elders, chief prieſts and ſcribes, and his being cruelly treated by them, and condemned to death; and that He by them ſhould be *delivered to the Gentiles:* and that He ſhould be *mocked* and *ſcourged* and *crucified* (Matt. xvi. 21. and xx. 17,---19. Luke ix. 22. John viii. 28.) and that the people ſhould be concerned in and conſenting to his death, (Luke xx. 13.---18.) eſpecially the Inhabitants of Jeruſalem; Luke xiii. 33, ---35. He foretold, that the diſciples ſhould all be offended becauſe of Him that night that he was betrayed, and ſhould forſake him; Matt. xxvi. 31. John xvi. 32. He foretold, that he ſhould be rejected of that generation, even the body of the people, and that they ſhould continue obſtinate, to their ruin; Matt. xii. 45. xxi. 33,—42. and xxii. 1,---7. Luke xiii. 16, 21, 24. xvii. 25. xix. 14, 27, 41,---44. xx. 13,---18. and xxiii. 34,---39.

As it was foretold in both Old Teſtament and New, that the Jews ſhould reject the Meſſiah, ſo it was foretold that the Gentiles ſhould receive Him, and ſo be admitted to the privileges of God's people; in places too many to be now particularly mentioned. It was foretold in the Old Teſtament, that the Jews ſhould envy the Gentiles on this account; Deut. xxxii. 21. compared with Rom. x. 19. Chriſt himſelf often foretold, that the Gentiles would embrace the true religion, and become his followers and people; Matt. viii. 10, 11, 12. xxi. 41,—43. and xxii. 8,---10. Luke xiii. 28. xiv. 16,---24. and xx. 16. John x. 16. He alſo foretold the Jews envy of the Gentiles on this occaſion; Matt. xx. 12,---16. Luke xv. 26, to the end. He foretold, that they ſhould continue in this oppoſition and envy, and ſhould mani-

feſt it in the cruel perſecutions of his followers, to their utter deſtruction; Matt. xxi. 33,—42. xxii. 6. and xxiii. 34,—39. Luke xi. 49,—51. The Jews obſtinacy is alſo foretold, Acts xxii. 18. Chriſt often foretold the great perſecutions his followers ſhould meet with, both from Jews and Gentiles; Matt. x. 16,—18, 21, 22, 34,—36. and xxiv. 9. Mark xiii. 9. Luke x. 3. xii. 11, 49,—53. and xxi. 12, 16, 17. John xv. 18,—21. and xvi. 1,—4. 20,—22, 23. He foretold the martyrdom of particular perſons; Matt. xx. 23. John xiii. 36. and xxi. 18, 19, 22. He foretold the great ſucceſs of the Goſpel in the city of Samaria, as near approaching; which afterwards was fulfilled by the preaching of Philip, John iv. 35,—38. He foretold the riſing of many deceivers after his departure, Matt. xxiv. 4, 5, 11. and the apoſtacy of many of his profeſſed followers; Matt. xxiv. 10,—12.

The perſecutions, which the apoſtle Paul was to meet with in the world, were foretold; Acts ix. 16.—xx. 23, and xxi. 11. The apoſtle ſays to the Chriſtian Epheſians, Acts xx. 29, 30. *I know, that after my departure ſhall grievous wolves enter in among you, not ſparing the flock; alſo of your own ſelves ſhall men ariſe, ſpeaking perverſe things, to draw away diſciples after them.* The apoſtle ſays, *He knew this:* but he did not know it, if God did not know the future actions of moral Agents.

4. Unleſs God foreknows the future acts of moral Agents, all the prophecies we have in Scripture concerning the great Antichriſtian apoſtacy; the riſe, reign, wicked qualities, and deeds of the *man of ſin*, and his inſtruments and adherents; the extent and long continuance of

his dominion, his influence on the minds of princes and others, to corrupt them, and draw them away to idolatry, and other foul vices; his great and cruel perſecutions; the behaviour of the ſaints under theſe great temptations, &c. &c. I ſay, unleſs the Volitions of moral Agents are foreſeen, all theſe prophecies are uttered without knowing the things foretold.

The predictions relating to this great apoſtacy are all of a moral nature, relating to men's virtues and vices, and their exerciſes, fruits and conſequences, and events depending on them; and are very particular; and moſt of them often repeated, with many preciſe characteriſticks, deſcriptions, and limitations of qualities, conduct, influence, effects, extent, duration, periods, circumſtances, final iſſue, &c. which it would be very long to mention particularly. And to ſuppoſe, all theſe are predicted by God without any certain knowledge of the future moral behaviour of free Agents, would be to the utmoſt degree abſurd.

5. Unleſs God foreknows the future acts of men's wills, and their behaviour as moral Agents, all thoſe great things which are foretold in both Old and New Teſtament concerning the erection, eſtabliſhment, and univerſal extent of the *Kingdom* of the *Meſſiah*, were predicted and promiſed while God was in ignorance whether any of theſe things would come to paſs or no, and did but gueſs at them. For that kingdom is not of this world, it does not conſiſt in things external, but is within men, and conſiſts in the dominion of virtue in their hearts, in righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt; and in theſe things made manifeſt in practice, to

the praiſe and glory of God. The Meſſiah came to *ſave men from their ſins*, and deliver them *from their* ſpiritual *enemies; that they might ſerve him in righteouſneſs and holineſs before him: he gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* And therefore his ſucceſs conſiſts in gaining men's hearts to virtue, in their being made *God's willing people in the day of his power.* His conqueſt of his enemies conſiſts in his victory over men's corruptions and vices. And ſuch ſucceſs, ſuch victory, and ſuch a reign and dominion is often expreſsly foretold: that his kingdom *ſhall fill the earth; that all people, nations and languages ſhould ſerve and obey him;* and ſo that *all nations ſhould go up to the mountain of the Houſe of the Lord, that he might teach them his ways, and that they might walk in his paths:* and that *all men ſhould be drawn to Chriſt, and the earth be full of the knowledge of the Lord* (by which, in the ſtyle of Scripture, is meant true virtue and religion) *as the waters cover the ſeas;* that *God's law ſhould be put into men's inward parts, and written in their hearts;* and that *God's people ſhould be all righteous*, &c. &c.

A very great part of the prophecies of the Old Teſtament is taken up in ſuch predictions as theſe.---And here I would obſerve, that the prophecies of the univerſal prevalence of the kingdom of the Meſſiah, and true religion of Jeſus Chriſt, are delivered in the moſt peremptory manner, and confirmed by the oath of God, Iſa. xlv. 22, to the end, *Look to me, and be ye ſaved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none elſe. I have SWORN by my Self, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteouſneſs, and ſhall not return, that unto Me every knee ſhall bow; and every*

*tongue ſhall ſwear. SURELY, ſhall one ſay, in the Lord have I righteouſneſs and ſtrength: even to Him ſhall men come*, &c. But here this peremptory declaration, and great oath of the Moſt High, are delivered with ſuch mighty ſolemnity, to things which God did not know, if he did not certainly foreſee the Volitions of moral Agents.

And all the predictions of Chriſt and his apoſtles, to the like purpoſe, muſt be without knowledge; as thoſe of our Saviour comparing the kingdom of God to a grain of muſtard-ſeed, growing exceeding great, from a ſmall beginning; and to leaven, hid in three meaſures of meal, until the whole was leavened, *&c.*—And the prophecies in the epiſtles concerning the reſtoration of the nation of the Jews to the true church of God, and the bringing in the fulneſs of the Gentiles; and the prophecies in all the Revelation concerning the glorious change in the moral ſtate of the world of mankind, attending the deſtruction of Antichriſt, *the kingdoms of the world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Chriſt;* and *its being granted to the church to be arrayed in that fine linen, white and clean, which is the righteouſneſs of ſaints*, &c.

*Corol.* 1. Hence that great promiſe and oath of God to Abraham, Iſaac and Jacob, ſo much celebrated in Scripture, both in the Old Teſtament and New, namely, *That in their ſeed all the nations and families of the earth ſhould be bleſſed*, muſt be made on uncertainties, if God does not certainly foreknow the Volitions of moral Agents. For the fulfilment of this promiſe conſiſts in that ſucceſs of Chriſt in the work of redemption, and that ſetting up of his ſpiritual kingdom over the nations of the world, which has been ſpoken of.

Men are *bleſſed in Chriſt* no otherwiſe than as they are brought to acknowledge Him, truſt in Him, love and ſerve Him, as is repreſented and predicted in Pſal. lxxii. 11. *All kings ſhall fall down before Him; all nations ſhall ſerve Him.* With ver. 17. *Men ſhall be bleſſed in Him; all nations ſhall call Him bleſſed.* This oath to Jacob and Abraham is fulfilled in ſubduing men's iniquities; as is implied in that of the prophet Micah, chap. vii. 19, 20.

*Corol.* 2. Hence alſo it appears, that firſt goſpel-promiſe that ever was made to mankind, that great prediction of the ſalvation of the Meſſiah, and his victory over Satan, made to our firſt parents, Gen. iii. 15. if there be no certain preſcience of the Volitions of moral Agents, muſt have no better foundation than conjecture. For Chriſt's victory over Satan conſiſts in men's being ſaved from ſin, and in the victory of virtue and holineſs, over that vice and wickedneſs, which Satan, by his temptation has introduced, and wherein his kingdom conſiſts.

6. If it be ſo, that God has not a preſcience of the future actions of moral Agents, it will follow, that the prophecies of Scripture in *general* are with out fore-knowledge. For Scripture-prophecies, almoſt all of them, if not univerſally without any exception, are either predictions of the actings and behaviours of moral Agents or of events depending on them, or ſome way connected with them; judicial diſpenſations, judgments on men for their wickedneſs, or rewards of virtue and righteouſneſs, remarkable manifeſtations of favour to the righteous or manifeſtations of ſovereign mercy to ſinners, forgiving their iniquities, and magnifying the riches of di-

vine Grace; or dispensations of Providence, in some respect or other, relating to the conduct of the subjects of God's moral government, wisely adapted thereto; either providing for what should be in a future state of things, through the Volitions and voluntary actions of moral Agents, or consequent upon them, and regulated and ordered according to them. So that all events that are foretold, are either moral events, or other events which are connected with, and accommodated to moral events.

That the predictions of Scripture in general must be without knowledge, if God does not foresee the Volitions of men, will further appear, if it be considered, that almost all events belonging to the future state of the world of mankind, the changes and revolutions which come to pass in empires, kingdoms, and nations, and all societies, depend innumerable ways on the acts of men's wills; yea, on an innumerable multitude of millions of millions of Volitions of mankind. Such is the state and course of things in the world of mankind, that one single event, which appears in itself exceeding inconsiderable, may, in the progress and series of things, occasion a succession of the greatest and most important and extensive events; causing the state of mankind to be vastly different from what it would otherwise have been, for all succeeding generations.

For instance, the coming into existence of those particular men, who have been the great conquerors of the world, which, under God, have had the main hand in all the consequent state of the world, in all after-ages; such as Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander, Pompey, Julius Cæsar, &c. undoubtedly depended on many millions of acts

of the will, which followed, and were occasioned one by another, in their parents. And perhaps most of these Volitions depended on millions of Volitions of hundreds and thousands of others, their contemporaries of the same generation; and most of these on millions of millions of Volitions of others in preceding generations.---As we go back, still the number of Volitions, which were some way the occasion of the event, multiply as the branches of a river, until they come at last, as it were, to an infinite number. This will not seem strange, to any one who well considers the matter; if we recollect what philosophers tell us of the innumerable multitudes of those things which are, as it were, the *principia*, or *stamina vitæ*, concerned in generation; the *animalcula* in *semen & masculo*, and the *ova* in the womb of the female; the impregnation, or animating of one of these in distinction from all the rest, must depend on things infinitely minute, relating to the time and circumstances of the act of the parents, the state of their bodies, *&c.* which must depend on innumerable foregoing circumstances and occurrences; which must depend, infinite ways, on foregoing acts of their wills; which are occasioned by innumerable things that happen in the course of their lives, in which their own, and their neighbour's behaviour, must have a hand, an infinite number of ways. And as the Volitions of others must be so many ways concerned in the conception and birth of such men; so, no less, in their preservation, and circumstances of life, their particular determinations and actions, on which the great revolutions they were the occasions of, depended. As, for instance, when the conspirators in Persia, against the Magi, were consulting about a succession to the empire, it came into the mind of one of them, to propose,

that he whoſe horſe neighed firſt, when they came together the next morning, ſhould be king. Now ſuch a thing's coming into his mind, might depend on innumerable incidents, wherein the Volitions of mankind had been concerned. But, in conſequence of this accident, Darius, the ſon of Hiſtaſpes, was king. And if this had not been, probably his ſucceſſor would not have been the ſame, and all the circumſtances of the Perſian empire might have been far otherwiſe. And then perhaps Alexander might never have conquered that empire. And then probably the circumſtances of the world in all ſucceeding ages, might have been vaſtly otherwiſe. I might further inſtance in many other occurrences; ſuch as thoſe on which depended Alexander's preſervation, in the many critical junctures of his life, wherein a ſmall trifle would have turned the ſcale againſt him; and the preſervation and ſucceſs of the Roman people, in the infancy of their kingdom and common-wealth, and afterwards; which all the ſucceeding changes in their ſtate, and the mighty revolutions that afterwards came to paſs in the habitable world, depended upon. But theſe hints may be ſufficient for every diſcerning conſiderate perſon, to convince him, that the whole ſtate of the world of mankind, in all ages, and the very being of every perſon who has ever lived in it, in every age, ſince the times of the ancient prophets, has depended on more Volitions, or acts of the wills of men, than there are ſands on the ſeaſhore.

And therefore, unleſs God does moſt exactly and perfectly foreſee the future acts of men's wills, all the predictions which he ever uttered concerning David, Hezekiah, Joſiah, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, Alexander; concerning the four

monarchies, and the revolutions in them; and concerning all the wars, commotions, victories, prosperities and calamities, of any of the kingdoms, nations or communities of the world, have all been without knowledge.

So that, according to this notion of God's not foreseeing the Volitions and free actions of men, God could foresee nothing appertaining to the state of the world of mankind in future ages; not so much as the being of one person that should live in it; and could foreknow no events, but only such as He would bring to pass himself by the extraordinary interposition of his immediate power; or things which should come to pass in the natural material world, by the laws of motion, and course of nature, wherein that is independent on the actions or works of mankind: that is, as he might, like a very able mathematician and astronomer, with great exactness calculate the revolutions of the heavenly bodies, and the greater wheels of the machine of the external creation.

And if we closely consider the matter, there will appear reason to convince us, that he could not, with any absolute certainty foresee even these. As to the *first*, namely, things done by the immediate and extraordinary interposition of God's power, these cannot be foreseen, unless it can be foreseen when there shall be occasion for such extraordinary interposition. And that cannot be foreseen, unless the state of the moral world can be foreseen. For whenever God thus interposes, it is with regard to the state of the moral world, requiring such divine interposition. Thus God could not certainly foresee the universal deluge, the calling of Abraham, the destruction of Sodom

and Gomorrah, the plagues on Egypt, and Ifrael's redemption out of it, the expelling the feven nations of Canaan, and the bringing Ifrael into that land; for thefe all are reprefented as connected with things belonging to the ftate of the moral world. Nor can God foreknow the moft proper and convenient time of the day of judgment and general conflagration; for that chiefly depends on the courfe and ftate of things in the moral world.

Nor, *Secondly*, can we on this fuppofition reafonably think, that God can certainly forefee what things fhall come to pafs, in the courfe of things, in the natural and material world, even thofe which in an ordinary ftate of things might be calculated by a good aftronomer. For the moral world is the end of the natural world; and the courfe of things in the former, is undoubtedly fubordinate to God's defigns with refpect to the latter. Therefore he has feen caufe, from regard to the ftate of things in the moral world, extraordinarily to interpofe, to interrupt and lay an arreft on the courfe of things in the natural world; and even in the greater wheels of its motion; even fo as to ftop the fun in its courfe. And unlefs he can forefee the Volitions of men, and fo know fomething of the future ftate of the moral world, He cannot know but that he may ftill have as great occafion to interpofe in this manner, as ever he had; nor can He forefee how, or when, He fhall have occafion thus to interpofe.

*Corol.* 1. It appears from the things which have been obferved, that unlefs God forefees the Volitions of moral Agents, that cannot be true which is obferved by the apoftle *James*, Acts xv.

18. *Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.*

*Corol.* 2. It appears from what has been observed, that unless God foreknows the Volitions of moral Agents, all the prophecies of Scripture have no better foundation than mere conjecture; and *That*, in most instances, a conjecture which must have the utmost uncertainty; depending on an innumerable, and, as it were, infinite multitude of Volitions, which are all, even to God, uncertain events: however, these prophecies are delivered as absolute predictions, and very many of them in the most positive manner, with asseverations; and some of them with the most solemn oaths.

*Corol.* 3. It also follows, from what has been observed, that if this notion of God's ignorance of future Volitions be true, in vain did Christ say (after uttering many great and important predictions, concerning God's moral kingdom, and things depending on men's moral actions) Matt. xxiv. 35. *Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away.*

*Corol.* 4. From the same notion of God's ignorance, it would follow, that in vain has God Himself often spoken of the predictions of his word, as evidences of foreknowledge; and so as evidences of that which is his prerogative as GOD, and his peculiar glory, greatly distinguishing Him from all other beings; as in Isa. xli. 22.---26. xliii. 9, 10. xliv. 8. xlv. 21. xlvi. 10. and xlviii. 14.

Arg. II. If God does not foreknow the Volitions of moral Agents, then he did not foreknow the *fall* of man, nor of angels, and so could not

foreknow the great things which are *consequent* on these events; such as his sending his Son into the world to die for sinners, and all things pertaining to the great work of redemption; all the things which were done for four thousand years before Christ came, to prepare the way for it; and the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ; and the setting Him at the head of the universe, as King of heaven and earth, angels and men; and the setting up His church and kingdom in this world, and appointing Him the Judge of the world; and all that Satan should do in the world in opposition to the kingdom of Christ: and the great transactions of the day of judgment, that men and devils shall be the subjects of, and angels concerned in; they are all what God was ignorant of before the fall. And if so, the following Scriptures, and others like them, must be without any meaning, or contrary to truth. Eph. i. 4. *According as he hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world.* 1 Pet. i. 20. *Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world.* 2 Tim. i. 9. *Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.* So, Eph. iii. 11. (speaking of the wisdom of God in the work of redemption) *according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus.* Tit. i. 2. *In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began.* Rom. viii. 29. *Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate,* &c. 1 Pet. i. 2. *Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.*

If God did not foreknow the fall of man, nor the redemption by Jesus Christ, nor the Volitions

of man ſince the fall; then he did not foreknow the ſaints in any ſenſe; neither as particular perſons, nor as ſocieties or nations; either by election, or mere foreſight of their virtue or good works; or any foreſight of any thing about them relating to their ſalvation; or any benefit they have by Chriſt, or any manner of concern of their's with a Redeemer.

Arg. III. On the ſuppoſition of God's ignorance of the future Volitions of free agents, it will follow, that God muſt in many caſes truly *repent* what He has done, ſo as properly to wiſh He had done otherwiſe: by reaſon that the event of things, in thoſe affairs which are moſt important, *viz.* the affairs of his moral kingdom, being uncertain and contingent, often happens quite otherwiſe than he was aware before-hand. And there would be reaſon to underſtand, that in the moſt literal ſenſe, in Gen. vi. 6. *It repented the Lord, that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.* And that 1 Sam. xv. 11. contrary to that, Numb. xxiii. 19. *God is not the Son of man, that He ſhould repent.* And 1 Sam. xv. 15, 29. *Alſo the ſtrength of Iſrael will not lie, nor repent; for He is not a man that He ſhould repent.* Yea, from this notion it would follow, that God is liable to repent and be grieved at His heart, in a literal ſenſe, continually; and is always expoſed to an infinite number of real diſappointments in his governing the world; and to manifold, conſtant, great perplexity and vexation: but this is not very conſiſtent with his title of *God over all, bleſſed for ever more;* which repreſents Him as poſſeſſed of perfect, conſtant and uninterrupted tranquillity and felicity, as God over the univerſe, and in his management of the affairs of the world, as ſupreme and univerſal

Ruler. See Rom. i. 25. ix. 5. 2 Cor. xi. 31. 1 Tim. vi. 15.

Arg. IV. It will alſo follow from this notion, that as God is liable to be continually repenting what He has done; ſo He muſt be expoſed to be conſtantly *changing* his mind and intentions, as to his future conduct; altering his meaſures, relinquiſhing his old deſigns, and forming new ſchemes and projections. For his purpoſes, even as to the main parts of his ſcheme, namely, ſuch as belong to the ſtate of his moral kingdom, muſt be always liable to be broken, through want of foreſight; and he muſt be continually putting his ſyſtem to rights, as it gets out of order, through the contingence of the actions of moral Agents: He muſt be a Being, who in ſtead of being abſolutely immutable, muſt neceſſarily be the ſubject of infinitely the moſt numerous acts of repentance, and changes of intention, of any being whatſoever; for this plain reaſon, that his vaſtly extenſive charge comprehends an infinitely greater number of thoſe things which are to Him contingent and uncertain. In ſuch a ſituation, He muſt have little elſe to do, but to mend broken links as well as he can, and be rectifying his disjointed frame and diſordered movements; in the beſt manner the caſe will allow. The Supreme Lord of all things muſt needs be under great and miſerable diſadvantages, in governing the world which he has made and has the care of, through his being utterly unable to find out things of chief importance, which hereafter ſhall befal his ſyſtem; which if he did but know, He might make ſeaſonable proviſion for. In many caſes, there may be very great neceſſity that He ſhould make proviſion, in the manner of his ordering and diſpoſing things, for ſome great e-

vents which are to happen, of vast and extensive influence, and endless consequence to the universe; which He may see afterwards, when it is too late, and may wish in vain that He had known before-hand, that He might have ordered his affairs accordingly. And it is in the power of man, on these principles, by his devices, purposes and actions, thus to disappoint God, break his measures, make Him continually to change his mind, subject Him to vexation, and bring Him into confusion.

But how do these things consist with reason, or with the Word of God? Which represents, that *all God's works*, all that He has ever to do, the whole scheme and series of his operations, are *from the beginning* perfectly in his view; and declares, that *whatever devices* and designs *are in the hearts of men, the counsel of the Lord is that which shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart to all generations*, Prov. xix. 21. Psal. xxxiii. 10, 11. *And that which the Lord of Hosts hath purposed, none shall disannul*, Isa. xiv. 27. And that he cannot be frustrated *in one design or thought*, Job xlii. 2. *And that which God doth, it shall be forever, that nothing can be put to it, or taken from it*, Eccl. iii. 14. The stability and perpetuity of God's counsels are expressly spoken of as connected with the Foreknowledge of God, Isaiah xlvi. 10. *Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.*—And how are these things consistent with what the Scripture says of God's immutability, which represents Him as *without variableness*, or *shadow of turning*; and speaks of Him most particularly as unchangeable with regard to his purposes, Mal. iii. 6. *I am the Lord; I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are*

*not consumed*, Exod. iii. 14. *I AM THAT I AM*, Job xxiii. 13, 14. *He is in one mind; and who can turn Him? And what his soul desireth, even that he doth: for he performeth the thing that is appointed for me.*

Arg. V. If this notion of God's ignorance of future Volitions of moral Agents be thoroughly considered in its consequences, it will appear to follow from it, that God, after he had made the world, was liable to be wholly *frustrated of his end* in the creation of it; and so has been, in like manner, liable to be frustrated of his end in all the great works, He hath wrought. It is manifest, the moral world is the end of the natural: the rest of the creation is but an house which God hath built, with furniture, for moral Agents: and the good or bad state of the moral world depends on the improvement they make of their natural Agency, and so depends on their Volitions. And therefore, if these cannot be foreseen by God, because they are contingent, and subject to no kind of necessity, then the affairs of the moral world are liable to go wrong, to any assignable degree; yea, liable to be utterly ruined. As on this scheme, it may well be supposed to be literally said, when mankind, by the abuse of their moral Agency, became very corrupt before the flood, *that the Lord repented that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at his heart;* so, when He made the universe, He did not know but that he might be so disappointed in it, that it might grieve Him at his heart that he had made it. It actually proved, that all mankind became sinful, and a very great part of the angels apostatised: and how could God know before-hand, that all of them would not? And how could God know but that all mankind, notwithstanding

means uſed to reclaim them, being ſtill left to the freedom of their own will, would continue in their apoſtacy, and grow worſe and worſe, as they of the old world before the flood did?

According to the ſcheme I am endeavouring to confute, neither the fall of men nor angels, could be foreſeen, and God muſt be greatly diſappointed in theſe events; and ſo the grand ſcheme and contrivance for our redemption, and deſtroying the works of the devil, by the Meſſiah, and all the great things God has done in the proſecution of theſe deſigns, muſt be only the fruits of his own diſappointment, and contrivances of his to mend and patch up, as well as he could, his ſyſtem, which originally was all very good, and perfectly beautiful; but was marr'd, broken and confounded by the free will of angels and men. And ſtill he muſt be liable to be totally diſappointed a ſecond time: He could not know, that He ſhould have his deſired ſucceſs, in the incarnation, life, death, reſurrection and exaltation of his only begotten Son, and other great works accompliſhed to reſtore the ſtate of things: he could not know, after all, whether there would actually be any tolerable meaſure of reſtoration; for this depended on the free will of man. There has been a general great apoſtacy of almoſt all the Chriſtian World, to that which was worſe than Heatheniſm; which continued for many ages. And how could God, without foreſeeing men's Volitions, know whether ever Chriſtendom would return from this apoſtacy? And which way could He tell beforehand how ſoon it would begin? The apoſtle ſays, it began to work in his time; and how could it be known how far it would proceed in that age? Yea, how could it be known that the Goſpel

which was not effectual for the reformation of the Jews, would ever be effectual for the turning of the heathen nations from their heathen apostacy, which they had been confirmed in for so many ages?

It is represented often in Scripture, that God, who made the world for Himself, and created it for his pleasure, would infallibly obtain his end in the creation, and in all his works; that as all things are *of* Him, so they would all be *to* Him; and that in the final issue of things, it would appear that He is *the first, and the last*, Rev. xxi. 6. *And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.* But these things are not consistent with God's being so liable to be disappointed in all his works, nor indeed with his failing of his end in any thing that He has undertaken, or done.

## SECTION XII.

*GOD's certain* Foreknowledge *of the future volitions of moral agents, inconsistent with such a* Contingence *of those volitions, as is without all* Necessity.

HAVING proved, that GOD has a certain and infallible Prescience of the act of the will of moral agents, I come now, in the *second* place, to shew the consequence; to shew how it follows from hence, that these events are *necessary*, with a Necessity of connection or consequence.

The chief *Arminian* divines, so far as I have had opportunity to observe, deny this consequence; and affirm, that if such Foreknowledge

be allowed, it is no evidence of any neceſſity of the event foreknown. Now I deſire, that this matter may be particularly and thoroughly enquired into. I cannot but think, that on particular and full conſideration, it may be perfectly determined, whether it be indeed ſo, or not.

In order to a proper conſideration of this matter, I would obſerve the following things.

I. It is very evident, with regard to a thing whoſe exiſtence is infallibly and indiſſolubly connected with ſomething which already hath, or has had exiſtence, the exiſtence of that thing is neceſſary. Here may be noted,

1. I obſerved before, in explaining the nature of Neceſſity, that in things which are paſt, their paſt exiſtence is now neceſſary: having already made ſure of exiſtence, it is too late for any poſſibility of alteration in that reſpect: it is now impoſſible that it ſhould be otherwiſe than true, that that thing has exiſted.

2. If there be any ſuch thing as a divine Foreknowledge of the volitions of free agents, that Foreknowledge, by the ſuppoſition, is a thing which already *has*, and long ago *had* exiſtence; and ſo, now its exiſtence is neceſſary; it is now utterly impoſſible to be otherwiſe, than that this Foreknowledge ſhould be, or ſhould have been.

3. It is alſo very manifeſt, that thoſe things which are indiſſolubly connected with other things that are neceſſary, are themſelves neceſſary. As that propoſition whoſe truth is neceſſarily connected with another propoſition, which is neceſſarily true, is itſelf neceſſarily true. To ſay

otherwiſe, would be a contradiction: it would be in effect to ſay, that the connection was indiſſoluble, and yet was not ſo, but might be broken. If That, whoſe exiſtence is indiſſolubly connected with ſomething, whoſe exiſtence is now neceſſary, is itſelf not neceſſary, then it may *poſſibly not exiſt*, notwithſtanding that indiſſoluble connection of its exiſtence.—Whether the abſurdity be not glaring, let the reader judge.

4. It is no leſs evident, that if there be a full, certain and infallible Foreknowledge of the future exiſtence of the volitions of moral agents, then there is a certain infallible and indiſſoluble connection between thoſe events and that Foreknowledge; and that therefore, by the preceding obſervations, thoſe events are neceſſary events; being infallibly and indiſſolubly connected with that, whoſe exiſtence already is, and ſo is now neceſſary, and cannot but have been.

To ſay, the Foreknowledge is certain and infallible, and yet the connection of the event with that Foreknowledge is not indiſſoluble, but diſſoluble and fallible, is very abſurd. To affirm it, would be the ſame thing as to affirm, that there is no neceſſary connection between a propoſition's being infallibly known to be true, and its being true indeed. So that it is perfectly demonſtrable, that if there be any infallible knowledge of future volitions, the event is *neceſſary;* or, in other words, that it is *impoſſible* but the event ſhould come to paſs. For if it be not impoſſible but that it may be otherwiſe, then it is not impoſſible, but that the propoſition which affirms its future coming to paſs, may not now be true. But how abſurd is that, on the ſuppoſition that there is now an infallible knowledge (*i. e.* know-

ledge which it is impossible should fail) that it is true. There is this absurdity in it that it is not impossible, but that there now should be no truth in that proposition, which is now infallibly known to be true.

II. That no future event can be certainly foreknown, whose existence is contingent, and without all Necessity, may be proved thus; It is impossible for a thing to be certainly known to any intellect without *evidence*. To suppose otherwise, implies a contradiction: because for a thing to be certainly known to any understanding, is for it to be *evident* to that understanding; and for a thing to be *evident* to any understanding is the same thing, as for that understanding to *see evidence* of it: but no understanding, created or increated, can *see evidence* where there is none: for that is the same thing, as to see that to be, which is not. And therefore, if there be any truth which is absolutely without evidence, that truth is absolutely unknowable, insomuch that it implies a contradiction to suppose that it is known.

But if there be any future event, whose existence is contingent, without all Necessity, the future existence of the event is absolutely *without evidence*. If there be any evidence of it, it must be one of these two sorts, either *self-evidence*, or *proof;* for there can be no other sort of evidence, but one of these two; an evident thing must be either evident *in itself*, or evident *in something else;* that is, evident by connection with something else. But a future thing, whose existence is without all Necessity, can have neither of these sorts of evidence. It cannot be *self-evident:* for if it be, it may be now known, by what is now to be seen in the thing itself; either its present

exiſtence, or the Neceſſity of its nature: but both theſe are contrary to the ſuppoſition. It is ſuppoſed, both that the thing has no preſent exiſtence to be ſeen; and alſo that it is not of ſuch a nature as to be neceſſarily exiſtent for the future: ſo that its future exiſtence is not ſelf-evident. And, *ſecondly*, neither is there any *proof*, or evidence *in any thing elſe*, or evidence of connection with ſomething elſe that is evident; for this is alſo contrary to the ſuppoſition. It is ſuppoſed, that there is now nothing exiſtent with which the future exiſtence of the *contingent* event is connected. For ſuch a connection deſtroys its *Contingence*, and ſuppoſes Neceſſity. Thus it is demonſtrated, that there is in the nature of things abſolutely no evidence at all of the future exiſtence of that event, which is contingent, without all Neceſſity (if any ſuch event there be) neither ſelf-evidence nor proof. And therefore the thing in reality is not evident; and ſo cannot be ſeen to be evident, or, which is the ſame thing, cannot be known.

Let us conſider this in an example. Suppoſe that five thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty years ago, there was no other being but the Divine Being; and then this world, or ſome particular body or ſpirit, all at once ſtarts out of nothing into being, and takes on itſelf a particular nature and form; all in *abſolute Contingence*, without any concern of God, or any other cauſe, in the matter; without any manner of ground or reaſon of its exiſtence; or any dependence upon, or connection at all with any thing foregoing: I ſay, that if this be ſuppoſed, there was no evidence of that event before-hand. There was no evidence of it to be ſeen *in the thing itſelf;* for the thing itſelf as yet, was not. And there was no

evidence of it to be seen *in any thing else;* for *evidence in* something else, is *connection with* something else: but such connection is contrary to the supposition. There was no evidence before, that this thing *would happen;* for by the supposition, there was no reason why *it should happen*, rather than something else, or rather than nothing. and if so, then all things before were exactly equal, and the same, with respect to that and other possible things; there was no preponderation, no superior weight or value; and therefore, nothing that could be of any weight or value; to determine any understanding. The thing was absolutely without evidence, and absolutely unknowable. An increase of understanding, or of the capacity of discerning, has no tendency, and makes no advance, to a discerning any signs or evidences of it, let it be increased never so much; yea, if it be increased infinitely. The increase of the strength of sight may have a tendency to enable to discern the evidence which is far off, and very much hid, and deeply involved in clouds and darkness; but it has no tendency to enable to discern evidence where there is none. If the sight be infinitely strong, and the capacity of discerning infinitely great, it will enable to see all that there is, and to see it perfectly, and with ease; yet it has no tendency at all to enable a being to discern that evidence which is not; but, on the contrary, it has a tendency to enable to discern with great certainty that there is none.

III. To suppose the future volitions of moral agents not to be necessary events; or, which is the same thing, events which it is not impossible but that they may not come to pass; and yet to suppose that God certainly foreknows them, and knows all things; is to suppose God's knowledge

to be inconſiſtent with itſelf. For to ſay, that God certainly, and without all conjecture, knows that a thing will infallibly be, which at the ſame time he knows to be ſo *contingent*, that it may poſſibly not be, is to ſuppoſe his Knowledge inconſiſtent with itſelf; or that one thing, that he knows, is utterly inconſiſtent with another thing, that he knows. It is the ſame thing as to ſay, he now knows a propoſition to be of certain infallible truth, which he knows to be of contingent uncertain truth. If a future volition is ſo without all Neceſſity, that there is nothing hinders but that it may not be, then the propoſition, which aſſerts its future exiſtence, is ſo uncertain, that there is nothing hinders, but that the truth of it may entirely fail. And if God knows all things, he knows this propoſition to be thus uncertain. And that is inconſiſtent with his knowing that it is infallibly true; and ſo inconſiſtent with his infallibly knowing that it is true. If the thing be indeed contingent, God views it ſo, and judges it to be contingent, if he views things as they are. If the event be not neceſſary, then it is poſſible it may never be: and if it be poſſible it may never be, God knows it may poſſibly never be; and that is to know that the propoſition, which affirms its exiſtence, may poſſibly not be true; and that is to know that the truth of it is uncertain; which ſurely is inconſiſtent with his knowing it as a certain truth. If volitions are in themſelves contingent events, without all Neceſſity, then it is no argument of perfection of Knowledge in any being to determine peremptorily that they will be; but on the contrary, an argument of ignorance and miſtake: becauſe it would argue, that he ſuppoſes that propoſition to be certain, which in its own nature, and all things conſidered, is uncertain and contingent. To ſay, in ſuch a caſe,

that God may have ways of knowing contingent events which we cannot conceive of, is ridiculous; as much so, as to say, that God may know contradictions to be true, for ought we know, or that he may know a thing to be certain, and at the same time know it not to be certain, though we cannot conceive how; because he has ways of knowing, which we cannot comprehend.

*Corol.* 1. From what has been observed it is evident, that the absolute *decrees* of God are no more inconsistent with human liberty, on account of any Necessity of the event, which follows from such decrees, than the absolute *Foreknowledge* of God. Because the connection between the event and certain Foreknowledge, is as infallible and indissoluble, as between the event and an absolute decree. That is, it is no more impossible, that the event and decree should not agree together, than that the event and absolute Knowledge should disagree. The connection between the event and Foreknowledge is absolutely perfect, by the supposition: because it is supposed, that the certainty and infallibility of the Knowledge is absolutely perfect. And it being so, the certainty cannot be increased; and therefore the connection, between the Knowledge and thing known, cannot be increased; so that if a decree be added to the Foreknowledge, it does not at all increase the connection, or make it more infallible and indissoluble. If it were not so, the certainty of Knowledge might be increased by the addition of a decree; which is contrary to the supposition, which is, that the Knowledge is absolutely perfect, or perfect to the highest possible degree.

There is as much of an impoſſibility but that the things which are infallibly foreknown, ſhould be, or (which is the ſame thing) as great a Neceſſity of their future exiſtence, as if the event were already written down, and was known and read by all mankind, through all preceding ages, and there was the moſt indiſſoluble and perfect connection poſſible, between the writing, and the thing written. In ſuch a caſe, it would be as impoſſible the event ſhould fail of exiſtence, as if it had exiſted already; and a decree cannot make an event ſurer or more neceſſary than this.

And therefore, if there be any ſuch foreknowledge, as it has been proved there is, then Neceſſity of connection and conſequence, is not at all inconſiſtent with any liberty which man, or any other creature enjoys. And from hence it may be inferred, that abſolute decrees of God, which does not at all increaſe the Neceſſity, are not at all inconſiſtent with the liberty which man enjoys, on any ſuch account, as that they make the event decreed neceſſary, and render it utterly impoſſible but that it ſhould come to paſs. Therefore, if abſolute decrees are inconſiſtent with man's liberty as a moral agent, or his liberty in a ſtate of probation, or any liberty whatſoever that he enjoys, it is not on account of any neceſſity which abſolute decrees infer.

Dr. Whitby ſuppoſes, there is a great difference between God's Foreknowledge, and his decrees, with regard to Neceſſity of future events. In his Diſcourſe on the five Points, p. 474, &c. he ſays, " God's Preſcience has no influence at all " on our actions:——ſhould God (ſays he), by " immediate Revelation, give me the knowledge " of the event of any man's ſtate or actions,

" would my knowledge of them have any in-
" fluence upon his actions? Surely none at all.—
" Our knowledge doth not affect the things we
" know, to make them more certain, or more
" future, than they would be without it. Now,
" Foreknowledge in God is Knowledge. As
" therefore Knowledge has no influence on things
" that are, so neither has Foreknowledge on
" things that shall be. And consequently, the
" Foreknowledge of any action that would be
" otherwise free, cannot alter or diminish that
" freedom. Whereas God's decree of election
" is powerful and active, and comprehends the
" preparation and exhibition of such means, as
" shall unfrustrably produce the end.——Hence
" God's Prescience renders no actions necessary."
And to this purpose, p. 473. he cites Origen, where he says, *God's Prescience is not the cause of things future, but their being future is the cause of God's Prescience that they will be:* and Le Blanc, where he says, *This is the truest resolution of this difficulty, that Prescience is not the cause that things are future; but their being future is the cause they are foreseen.* In like manner, Dr. Clark, in his Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God, p. 95—99. And the Author of *the Freedom of Will, in God and the Creature*, speaking to the like purpose with Dr. Whitby, represents *Foreknowledge as having no more influence on things known, to make them necessary*, than *After-knowledge*, or to that purpose.

To all which I would say; that what is said about Knowledge, its not having influence on the thing known to make it necessary, is nothing to the purpose, nor does it in the least affect the foregoing reasoning. Whether Prescience be the thing that *makes* the event necessary or no, it al-

ters not the caſe. Infallible Foreknowledge may *prove* the Neceſſity of the event foreknown, and yet not be the thing which *cauſes* the Neceſſity. If the Foreknowledge be abſolute, this *proves* the event known to be neceſſary, or proves that it is impoſſible but that the event ſhould be, by ſome means or other, either by a decree, or ſome other way, if there be any other way: becauſe, as was ſaid before, it is abſurd to ſay, that a propoſition is known to be certainly and infallibly true, which yet may poſſibly prove not true.

The whole of the ſeeming force of this evaſion lies in this; that, in as much as certain Foreknowledge does not *cauſe* an event to be neceſſary, as a decree does; therefore it does not *prove* it to be neceſſary, as a decree does. But there is no force in this arguing: for it is built wholly on this ſuppoſition, that nothing can *prove*, or *be an evidence* of a thing's being neceſſary, but that which has *a cauſal influence to make it ſo*. But this can never be maintained. If certain Foreknowledge of the future exiſting of an event, be not the thing, which firſt *makes* it impoſſible that it ſhould fail of exiſtence; yet it may, and certainly does *demonſtrate*, that it is impoſſible it ſhould fail of it, however that impoſſibility comes. If Foreknowledge be not the cauſe, but the effect of this impoſſibility, it may prove that there is ſuch an impoſſibility, as much as if it were the cauſe. It is as ſtrong arguing from the effect to the cauſe, as from the cauſe to the effect. It is enough, that an exiſtence, which is infallibly foreknown, cannot fail, whether that impoſſibility ariſes from the Foreknowledge, or is prior to it. It is as evident, as it is poſſible any thing ſhould be, that it is impoſſible a thing, which is infallibly known to be true, ſhould prove not to be true: therefore there is a *Neceſſity* that it ſhould be other-

wise; whether the Knowledge be the cause of this Necessity, or the Necessity the cause of the Knowledge.

All certain Knowledge, whether it be Foreknowledge or After-knowledge, or concomitant Knowledge, proves the thing known now to be necessary, by some means or other; or proves that it is impossible it should now be otherwise than true.---I freely allow, that Foreknowledge does not prove a thing to be necessary any more than After-knowledge: but then After-knowledge, which is certain and infallible, proves that it is now become impossible but that the proposition known should be true. Certain After-knowledge, proves that it is now, in the time of the Knowledge, by some means or other, become impossible but that the proposition, which predicates *past* existence on the event, should be true. And so does certain Foreknowledge prove, that now, in the time of the Knowledge, it is by some means or other, become impossible but that the proposition, which predicates *future* existence on the event, should be true. The Necessity of the truth of the propositions, consisting in the present impossibility of the non-existence of the event affirmed, in both cases, is the immediate ground of the certainty of the Knowledge; there can be no certainty of Knowledge without it.

There must be a certainty in things themselves, before they are certainly known, or (which is the same thing) known to be certain. For certainty of Knowledge is nothing else but knowing or discerning the certainty there is in the things themselves, which are known. Therefore there must be a certainty in things to be a ground of certainty of Knowledge, and to render things capable of being known to be certain. And this is nothing but the necessity of the truth known, or its be-

ing impoſſible but that it ſhould be true; or, in other words, the firm and infallible connection between the ſubject and predicate of the propoſition that contains that truth. All certainty of Knowledge conſiſts in the view of the firmneſs of that connection. So God's certain Foreknowledge of the future exiſtence of any event, is his view of the firm and indiſſoluble connection of the ſubject and predicate of the propoſition that affirms its future exiſtence. The ſubject is that poſſible event; the predicate is its future exiſting: but if future exiſtence be firmly and indiſſolubly connected with that event, then the future exiſtence of that event is neceſſary. If God certainly knows the future exiſtence of an event which is wholly contingent, and may poſſibly never be, then He ſees a firm connection between a ſubject and predicate that are not firmly connected; which is a contradiction.

I allow what Dr. Whitby ſays to be true, *That mere Knowledge does not affect the thing known, to make it more certain or more future.* But yet, I ſay, it *ſuppoſes* and *proves* the thing to be *already*, both *future*, and *certain;* i. e. neceſſarily future. Knowledge of *futurity*, ſuppoſes *futurity*; and a *certain Knowledge* of futurity, ſuppoſes *certain futurity*, antecedent to that certain Knowledge. But there is no other certain futurity of a thing, antecedent to certainty of Knowledge, than a prior impoſſibility but that the thing ſhould prove true; or (which is the ſame thing) the Neceſſity of the event.

I would obſerve one thing further concerning this Matter, it is this; that if it be as thoſe forementioned writers ſuppoſe, that God's Foreknowledge is not the cauſe, but the effect of the

existence of the event foreknown; this is so far from shewing that this Foreknowledge doth not infer the Necessity of the existence of that event, that it rather shews the contrary the more plainly. Because it shews the existence of the event to be so settled and firm, that it is as if it had already been; in as much as *in effect* it actually exists already; its future existence has already had actual *influence* and *efficiency*, and has *produced an effect*, viz. Prescience: the effect exists already; and as the effect supposes, the cause is connected with the cause, and depends entirely upon it, therefore it is as if the future event, which is the cause, had existed already. The effect is firm as possible, it having already the possession of existence, and has made sure of it. But the effect cannot be more firm and stable than its cause, ground and reason. The building cannot be firmer than the foundation.

To illustrate this matter, let us suppose the appearances and images of things in a glass; for instance, a reflecting telescope to be the real effects of heavenly bodies (at a distance, and out of sight) which they resemble: if it be so, then, as these images in the telescope have had a past actual existence, and it is become utterly impossible now that it should be otherwise than that they have existed; so they being the true effects of the heavenly bodies they resemble, this proves the existing of those heavenly bodies to be as real, infallible, firm and necessary, as the existing of these effects; the one being connected with, and wholly depending on the other.---Now let us suppose future existences some way or other to have influence back, to produce effects before-hand, and cause exact and perfect images of themselves in a glass, a thousand years before they exist,

yea, in all preceding ages; but yet that these images are real effects of these future existences, perfectly dependent on, and connected with their cause; these effects and images, having already had actual existence, rendering that matter of their existing perfectly firm and stable, and utterly impossible to be otherwise; this proves in like manner, as in the other instance, that the existence of the things, which are their causes, is also equally sure, firm and necessary; and that it is alike impossible but that they should be, as if they had been already, as their effects have. And if instead of images in a glass, we suppose the antecedent effects to be perfect ideas of them in the Divine Mind, which have existed there from all eternity, which are as properly effects, as truly and properly connected with their cause, the case is not altered.

Another thing which has been said by some *Arminians*, to take off the force of what is urged from God's Prescience, against the Contingence of the volitions of moral agents, is to this purpose; "That when we talk of Foreknowledge in "God, there is no strict propriety in our so "speaking; and that although it be true, that "there is in God the most perfect Knowledge of all "events from eternity to eternity, yet there is no "such thing as *before* and *after* in God, but He "sees all things by one perfect unchangeable view, "without any succession."——To this I answer,

1. It has been already shewn, that all certain Knowledge proves the Necessity of the truth known; whether it be *before*, *after*, or *at the same time*.---Though it be true, that there is no succession in God's Knowledge, and the manner of his Knowledge is to us inconceivable, yet thus much

we know concerning it, that there is no event, past, present, or to come, that God is ever uncertain of; He never is, never was, and never will be without infallible Knowledge of it; He always sees the existence of it to be certain and infallible. And as he always sees things just as they are in truth; hence there never is in reality any thing contingent in such a sense, as that possibly it may happen never to exist. If, strictly speaking, there is no Foreknowledge in God, it is because those things, which are future to us, are as present to God, as if they already had existence: and that is as much as to say, that future events are always in God's view as evident, clear, sure and necessary, as if they already were. If there never is a time wherein the existence of the event is not present with God, then there never is a time wherein it is not as much impossible for it to fail of existence, as if its existence were present, and were already come to pass.

God's viewing things so perfectly and unchangeably as that there is no succession in his ideas or judgment, do not hinder but that there is properly now, in the mind of God, a certain and perfect Knowledge of moral actions of men, which to us are an hundred years hence: yea the objection supposes this; and therefore it certainly does not hinder but that, by the foregoing arguments, it is now impossible these moral actions should not come to pass.

We know, that God knows the future voluntary actions of men in such a sense before-hand, as that he is able particularly to declare, and foretell them, and write them, or cause them to be written down in a book, as He often has done; and that therefore the necessary connection which

there is between God's Knowledge and the event known, does as much prove the event to be neceſſary before-hand, as if the Divine Knowledge were in the ſame ſenſe before the event, as the prediction or writing is. If the Knowledge be infallible, then the expreſſion of it in the written prediction is infallible; that is, there is an infallible connection between that written prediction and the event. And if ſo, then it is impoſſible it ſhould ever be otherwiſe, than that that prediction and the event ſhould agree: and this is the ſame thing as to ſay, it is impoſſible but that the event ſhould come to paſs: and this is the ſame as to ſay that its coming to paſs is neceſſary.—So that it is manifeſt, that there being no proper ſucceſſion in God's mind, makes no alteration as to the Neceſſity of the exiſtence of the events which God knows. Yea,

2. This is ſo far from weakening the proof, which has been given of the impoſſibility of the not coming to paſs of future events known, as that it eſtabliſhes that, wherein the ſtrength of the foregoing arguments conſiſts, and ſhews the clearneſs of the evidence. For,

(1.) The very reaſon, why God's Knowledge is without ſucceſſion, is, becauſe it is abſolutely perfect, to the higheſt poſſible degree of clearneſs and certainty: all things, whether paſt, preſent, or to come, being viewed with equal evidence and fulneſs; future things being ſeen with as much clearneſs, as if they were preſent; the view is always in abſolute perfection; and abſolute conſtant perfection admits of no alteration, and ſo no ſucceſſion; the actual exiſtence of the thing known, does not at all increaſe, or add to the clearneſs or certainty of the thing known: God calls

the things that are not, as though they were; they are all one to him as if they had already exiſted. But herein conſiſts the ſtrength of the demonſtration before given, of the impoſſibility of the not exiſting of thoſe things, whoſe exiſtence God knows; that it is as impoſſible they ſhould fail of exiſtence, as if they exiſted already. This objection, inſtead of weakening this argument, ſets it in the cleareſt and ſtrongeſt light; for it ſuppoſes it to be ſo indeed, that the exiſtence of future events is in God's view ſo much as if it already had been, that when they come actually to exiſt, it makes not the leaſt alteration or variation in his view or Knowledge of them.

(2.) The objection is founded on the *immutability* of God's Knowledge: for it is the immutability of Knowledge makes his Knowledge to be without ſucceſſion. But this moſt directly and plainly demonſtrates the thing I inſiſt on, *viz.* that it is utterly impoſſible the known events ſhould fail of exiſtence. For if that were poſſible, then it would be poſſible for there to be a change in God's Knowledge and view of things. For if the known event ſhould fail of exiſtence, and not come into being, as God expected, then God would ſee it, and ſo would change his mind, and ſee his former miſtake; and thus there would be change and ſucceſſion in his Knowledge. But as God is immutable, and ſo it is utterly infinitely impoſſible that his view ſhould be changed; ſo it is, for the ſame reaſon, juſt ſo impoſſible that the fore-known event ſhould not exiſt: and that is to be impoſſible in the higheſt degree: and therefore the contrary is neceſſary. Nothing is more impoſſible than that the immutable God ſhould be changed, by the ſucceſſion of time; who comprehends all things, from eternity to

eternity, in one, moſt perfect, and unalterable view; ſo that his whole eternal duration is *vitæ interminabilis, tota, ſimul, & perfecta poſſeſſio.*

On the whole, I need not fear to ſay, that there is no geometrical theorem or propoſition whatſoever, more capable of ſtrict demonſtration, than that God's certain Preſcience of the volitions of moral agents is inconſiſtent with ſuch a Contingence of theſe events, as is without all Neceſſity; and ſo is inconſiſtent with the *Arminian* notion of liberty.

*Corol.* 2. Hence the doctrine of the *Calviniſts*, concerning the abſolute decrees of God, does not at all infer any more *fatality* in things, than will demonſtrably follow from the doctrine of moſt *Arminian* divines, who acknowledge God's omniſcience, and univerſal Preſcience. Therefore all objections they make againſt the doctrine of the *Calviniſts*, as implying Hobbe's doctrine of Neceſſity, or the *ſtoical* doctrine of *fate*, lie no more againſt the doctrine of *Calviniſts*, than their own doctrine: and therefore it doth not become thoſe divines, to raiſe ſuch an out-cry againſt the *Calviniſts*, on this account.

*Corol.* 3. Hence all arguing from Neceſſity, againſt the doctrine of the inability of unregenerate men to perform the conditions of ſalvation, and the commands of God requiring ſpiritual duties, and againſt the *Calviniſtic* doctrine of efficacious grace; I ſay, all arguings of *Arminians* (ſuch of them as own God's omniſcience) againſt theſe things, on this ground, that theſe doctrines, though they do not ſuppoſe men to be under any conſtraint or coaction, yet ſuppoſe them under Neceſſity, with reſpect to their moral ac-

tions, and those things which are required of them in order to their acceptance with God; and their arguing against the Necessity of men's volitions, taken from the reasonableness of God's commands, promises, and threatenings, and the sincerity of his counsels and invitations; and all objections against any doctrines of the *Calvinists* as being inconsistent with human liberty, because they infer Necessity; I say, all these arguments and objections must fall to the ground; and be justly esteemed vain and frivolous, as coming from them; being maintained in an inconsistence with themselves, and in like manner levelled against their own doctrine, as against the doctrine of the *Calvinists*.

## SECTION XIII.

*Whether we suppose the volitions of moral agents to be connected with any thing antecedent, or not, yet they must be necessary in such a sense as to overthrow* Arminian *Liberty.*

EVERY act of the will has a cause, or it has not. If it has a cause, then, according to what has already been demonstrated, it is not contingent, but necessary; the effect being necessarily dependent and consequent on its cause; and that, let the cause be what it will. If the cause is the will itself, by antecedent acts chusing and determining; still the *determined* and *caused* act must be a necessary effect. The act, that is the determined effect of the foregoing act which is its cause, cannot prevent the efficiency of its cause; but must be wholly subject to its determination and command, as much as

the motions of the hands and feet. The conſequent commanded acts of the will are as paſſive and as neceſſary, with reſpect to the antecedent determining acts, as the parts of the body are to the volitions which determine and command them. And therefore, if all the free acts of the will are thus, if they are all determined effects, determined by the will itſelf, that is, determined by antecedent choice, then they are all neceſſary; they are all ſubject to, and deciſively fixed by the foregoing act, which is their cauſe: yea, even the determining act itſelf; for that muſt be determined and fixed by another act, preceding that, if it be a free and voluntary act; and ſo muſt be neceſſary. So that by this all the free acts of the will are neceſſary, and cannot be free unleſs they are neceſſary: becauſe they cannot be free, according to the *Arminian* notion of freedom, unleſs they are determined by the will; which is to be determined by antecedent choice; which being their cauſe, proves them neceſſary. And yet they ſay, Neceſſity is utterly inconſiſtent with Liberty. So that, by their ſcheme, the acts of the will cannot be free, unleſs they are neceſſary, and yet cannot be free if they be not neceſſary!

But if the other part of the dilemma be taken, and it be affirmed that the free acts of the will have no cauſe, and are connected with nothing whatſoever that goes before them and determines them, in order to maintain their proper and abſolute Contingence, and this ſhould be allowed to be poſſible; ſtill it will not ſerve their turn. For if the volition come to paſs by perfect Contingence, and without any cauſe at all, then it is certain, no act of the will, no prior act of the ſoul was the cauſe, no determination or choice of the ſoul, had any hand in it. The will, or

the soul, was indeed the subject of what happened to it accidentally, but was not the cause. The will is not active in causing or determining, but purely the passive subject; at least, according to their notion of action and passion. In this case, Contingence does as much prevent the determination of the will, as a proper cause; and as to the will, it was necessary, and could be no otherwise. For to suppose that it could have been otherwise, if the will or soul had pleased, is to suppose that the act is dependent on some prior act of choice or pleasure; contrary to what now is supposed: it is to suppose that it might have been otherwise, if its cause had made it or ordered it otherwise. But this does not agree to its having no cause or orderer at all. That must be necessary as to the soul: which is dependent on no free act of the soul: but that which is without a cause, is dependent on no free act of the soul: because, by the supposition, it is dependent on nothing, and is connected with nothing. In such a case, the soul is necessarily subjected to what accident brings to pass, from time to time, as much as the earth, that is inactive, is necessarily subjected to what falls upon it. But this does not consist with the *Arminian* notion of liberty, which is the will's power of determining itself in its own acts, and being wholly active in it, without passiveness, and without being subject to Necessity.——Thus, Contingence belongs to the *Arminian* notion of Liberty, and yet is inconsistent with it.

I would here observe, that the author of the *Essay on the Freedom of Will, in God and the Creature*, page 76, 77, says as follows: "The word "*Chance* always means something done without "design. Chance and design stand in direct

" oppoſition to each other: and Chance can ne-
" ver be properly applied to acts of the will,
" which is the ſpring of all deſign, and which
" deſigns to chuſe whatſoever it doth chuſe, whe-
" ther there be any ſuperior fitneſs in the thing
" which it chuſes, or no; and it deſigns to de-
" termine itſelf to one thing, where two things,
" perfectly equal, are propoſed, merely becauſe
" it will." But herein it appears a very great inadvertence in this author. For if *the will be the ſpring of all deſign*, as he ſays, then certainly it is not always the *effect* of deſign; and the acts of the will themſelves muſt ſometimes come to paſs, when they do not *ſpring from* deſign; and conſequently come to paſs by Chance, according to his own definition of Chance. And if *the will deſigns to chuſe whatſoever it does chuſe*, and *deſigns to determine itſelf*, as he ſays, then it deſigns to determine all its deſigns. Which carries us back from one deſign to a foregoing deſign determining that, and to another determining that; and ſo on *in infinitum*. The very firſt deſign muſt be the effect of foregoing deſign, or elſe it muſt be by Chance, in his notion of it.

Here another alternative may be propoſed, relating to the connection of the acts of the will with ſomething foregoing that is their cauſe, not much unlike to the other; which is this: either human liberty is ſuch, that it may well ſtand with volitions being neceſſarily connected with the views of the underſtanding, and ſo is conſiſtent with Neceſſity; or it is inconſiſtent with, and contrary to ſuch a connection and Neceſſity. The former is directly ſubverſive of the *Arminian* notion of liberty, conſiſting in freedom from all Neceſſity. And if the latter be choſen, and it be ſaid, that liberty is inconſiſtent with any ſuch

necessary connection of volition with foregoing views of the understanding, it consisting in freedom from any such Necessity of the will as that would imply; then the liberty of the soul consists (in part at least) in the freedom from restraint, limitation and government, in its actings, by the understanding, and in liberty and liableness to act contrary, to the understanding's views and dictates: and consequently the more the soul has of this disengagedness, in its acting, the more liberty. Now let it be considered what this brings the noble principle of human liberty to, particularly, when it is possessed and enjoyed in its perfection, *viz.* a full and perfect freedom and liableness to act altogether at random, without the least connection with, or restraint or government by, any dictate of reason, or any thing whatsoever apprehended, considered or viewed by the understanding; as being inconsistent with the full and perfect sovereignty of the will over its own determinations.—The notion mankind have conceived of liberty, is some dignity or privilege, something worth claiming. But what dignity or privilege is there, in being given up to such a wild Contingence as this, to be perfectly and constantly liable to act unintelligently and unreasonably, and as much without the guidance of understanding, as if we had none, or were as destitute of perception, as the smoke that is driven by the wind!

# PART III.

*Wherein is enquired, whether any ſuch liberty of will as* Arminians *hold, be neceſſary to* MORAL AGENCY, VIRTUE *and* VICE, PRAISE *and* DISPRAISE, *&c.*

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## SECTION I.

### GOD's moral Excellency *neceſſary, yet virtuous and praiſe-worthy.*

HAVING conſidered the *firſt* thing that was propoſed to be enquired into, relating to that freedom of will which *Arminians* maintain; namely, Whether any ſuch thing does, ever did, or ever can exiſt, or be conceived of; I come now to the *ſecond* thing propoſed to be the ſubject of enquiry, *viz.* Whether any ſuch kind of liberty be requiſite to moral agency, virtue and vice, praiſe and blame, reward and puniſhment, *&c.*

I ſhall begin with ſome conſideration of the virtue and agency of the ſupreme moral Agent, and Fountain of all Agency and virtue.

Dr. Whitby, in his diſcourſe on the five Points, P. 14, ſays, " If all human actions are neceſſary, " virtue and vice muſt be empty names; we " being capable of nothing that is blame-wor- " thy, or deſerveth praiſe; for who can blame " a perſon for doing only what he could not help, " or judge that he deſerveth praiſe only for what " he could not avoid?" To the like purpoſe he ſpeaks in places innumerable; eſpecially in his Diſcourſe on the *Freedom of the Will*; conſtantly maintaining, that a *Freedom not only from coaction, but neceſſity*, is abſolutely requiſite, in order to actions being either worthy of blame, or deſerving of praiſe. And to this agrees, as is well known, the current doctrine of *Arminian* writers, who, in general, hold, that there is no virtue or vice, reward or puniſhment, nothing to be commended or blamed, without this freedom. And yet Dr. Whitby, p. 300, allows, that God is without this freedom; and *Arminians*, ſo far as I have had opportunity to obſerve, generally acknowledge that God is neceſſarily holy, and his will neceſſarily determined to that which is good.

So that, putting theſe things together, the infinitely holy God, who always uſed to be eſteemed by God's people not only virtuous but a Being in whom is all poſſible virtue, and every virtue in the moſt abſolute purity and perfection, and in infinitely greater brightneſs and amiableneſs than in any creature; the moſt perfect pattern of virtue, and the fountain from whom all others virtue is but as beams from the ſun; and who has been ſuppoſed to be, on the account of his vir-

tue and holineſs, infinitely more worthy to be eſteemed, loved, honoured, admired, commended, extolled and praiſed, than any creature: and He, who is thus every where repreſented in Scripture; I ſay, this Being, according to this notion of Dr. Whitby, and other *Arminians*, has no virtue at all: virtue, when aſcribed to him, is but *an empty name*; and he is deſerving of no commendation or praiſe: becauſe he is under neceſſity, He cannot avoid being holy and good as he is; therefore no thanks to him for it. It ſeems, the holineſs, juſtice, faithfulneſs, &c. of the Moſt High, muſt not be accounted to be of the nature of that which is virtuous and praiſe-worthy. They will not deny, that theſe things in God are good; but then we muſt underſtand them, that they are no more virtuous, or of the nature of any thing commendable, than the good that is in any other being that is not a moral agent; as the brightneſs of the ſun, and the fertility of the earth, are good, but not virtuous, becauſe theſe properties are neceſſary to theſe bodies, and not the fruit of ſelf-determining power.

There needs no other confutation of this notion of God's not being virtuous or praiſe worthy, to Chriſtians acquainted with the Bible, but only ſtating and particularly repreſenting of it. To bring texts of Scripture, wherein God is repreſented as in every reſpect, in the higheſt manner virtuous, and ſupremely praiſe-worthy, would be endleſs, and is altogether needleſs to ſuch as have been brought up in the light of the Goſpel.

It were to be wiſhed, that Dr. Whitby, and other divines of the ſame ſort, had explained themſelves, when they have aſſerted, that *that* which

is neceſſary, is *not deſerving of praiſe;* at the ſame time that they have owned God's perfection to be neceſſary, and ſo in effect repreſenting God as not deſerving praiſe. Certainly, if their words have any meaning at all, by *praiſe*, they muſt mean the exerciſe or teſtimony of ſome ſorts of eſteem, reſpect or honourable regard. And will they then ſay, that men are worthy of that eſteem, reſpect and honour for their virtue, ſmall and imperfect as it is, which yet God is not worthy of, for his infinite righteouſneſs, holineſs and goodneſs? If ſo, it muſt be, becauſe of ſome ſort of peculiar Excellency in the virtuous man, which is his prerogative, wherein he really has the preference; ſome dignity, that is entirely diſtinguiſhed from any Excellency, amiableneſs or honourableneſs in God: not in imperfection and dependence, but in pre-eminence: which therefore he does not receive from God, nor is God the fountain or pattern of it; nor can God, in that reſpect, ſtand in competition with him, as the object of honour and regard; but man may claim a peculiar eſteem, commendation and glory, that God can have no pretenſion to. Yea, God has no right, by virtue of his neceſſary holineſs, to entermeddle with that grateful reſpect and praiſe, due to the virtuous man, who chuſes virtue, in the exerciſe of a freedom *ad utrumque;* any more than a precious ſtone, which cannot avoid being hard and beautiful.

And if it be ſo, let it be explained what that peculiar reſpect is, that is due to the virtuous man, which differs in nature and kind, in ſome way of pre-eminence, from all that is due to God. What is the name or deſcription of that peculiar affection? Is it eſteem, love, admiration, honour,

praiſe or gratitude? The Scripture every where repreſents God as the higheſt object of all theſe: there we read of the *ſoul's magnifying the Lord, of loving Him with all the heart, with all the ſoul, with all the mind, and with all the ſtrength; admiring* him, and *his righteous acts*, or greatly regarding them, as *marvellous and wonderful; honouring, glorifying, exalting, extolling, bleſſing, thanking* and *praiſing* Him; *giving unto Him all the glory* of the good which is done or received, rather than unto men; *that no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence;* but that He ſhould be regarded as the Being to whom all glory is due. What then is that reſpect? What paſſion, affection, or exerciſe is it, that *Arminians* call *praiſe*, diverſe from all theſe things, which men are worthy of for their virtue, and which God is not worthy of, in any degree?

If that neceſſity which attends God's moral perfections and actions, be as inconſiſtent with a Being worthy of praiſe, as a neceſſity of coaction; as is plainly implied in, or infetred from Dr. Whitby's diſcourſe; then why ſhould we thank God for his goodneſs, any more than if He were forced to be good, or any more than we ſhould thank one of our fellow-creatures who did us good, not freely, and of good will, or from any kindneſs of heart, but from mere compulſion, or extrinſical Neceſſity? *Arminians* ſuppoſe, that God is neceſſarily a good and gracious Being: for this they make the ground of ſome of their main arguments againſt many doctrines maintained by *Calviniſts*; they ſay, theſe are *certainly* falſe, and it is *impoſſible* they ſhould be true, becauſe they are not conſiſtent with the goodneſs of God. This ſuppoſes, that it is *impoſſible* but that God ſhould be good: for if it be poſſible that

He ſhould be otherwiſe, then that impoſſibility of the truth of theſe doctrines ceaſes, according to their own argument.

That virtue in God is not, in the moſt proper ſenſe, *rewardable*, is not for want of merit in his moral perfections and actions, ſufficient to deſerve rewards from his creatures; but becauſe He is infinitely above all capacity of receiving any reward or benefit from the creature: He is already infinitely and unchangeably happy, and we cannot be profitable unto Him. But ſtill he is worthy of our ſupreme benevolence for his virtue; and would be worthy of our beneficence, which is the fruit and expreſſion of benevolence, if our goodneſs could extend to Him. If God deſerves to be thanked and praiſed for his goodneſs, He would, for the ſame reaſon, deſerve that we ſhould alſo *requite* his kindneſs, if that were poſſible. *What ſhall I render to the Lord for all his benefits?* is the natural language of thankfulneſs: and ſo far as in us lies, it is our duty to recompenſe God's goodneſs, and *render again according to benefits received.* And that we might have opportunity for ſo natural an expreſſion of our gratitude to God, as beneficence, notwithſtanding his being infinitely above our reach; He has appointed others to be his receivers, and to ſtand in his ſtead, as the objects of our beneficence; ſuch are eſpecially our indigent brethren.

O

## SECTION II.

*The Acts of the Will of the human soul of* JESUS CHRIST necessarily holy, *yet truly virtuous, praise-worthy, rewardable*, &c.

I HAVE already considered how Dr. Whitby insists upon it, that a freedom, not only from coaction, but necessity, is *requisite either to virtue vice, praise or dispraise, reward or punishment.* He also insists on the same freedom as absolutely requisite to a person's being the subject of a *law*, of *precepts* or *prohibitions;* in the book beforementioned, (p. 301, 314, 328, 339, 340, 341, 342, 347, 361, 373, 410.) And of *promises* and *threatenings*, (p. 298, 301, 305, 311, 339, 340, 363.) And as requisite to *a state of trial*, (p. 297, &c.

Now therefore, with an eye to these things, I would enquire into the moral conduct and practices of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he exhibited in his human nature here, in his state of humiliation. And *first*, I would shew, that his holy behaviour was *necessary;* or that it was *impossible* it should be otherwise, than that He should behave himself holily, and that he should be perfectly holy in each individual act of his life. And *secondly*, that his holy behaviour was properly the nature of *virtue* and was *worthy of praise;* and that he was the subject of *law*, *precepts* or *commands*, *promises* and *rewards;* and that he was *in a state of trial.*

I. It was *impossible*, that the acts of the Will of the human soul of Christ should, in any in-

ſtance, degree or circumſtance, be otherwiſe than holy, and agreeable to God's nature and will. The following things make this evident.

1. God had promiſed ſo effectually to preſerve and uphold Him by his Spirit, under all his temptations, that he could not fail of reaching the end for which He came into the world;—which he would have failed of, had he fallen into ſin. We have ſuch a promiſe, Iſai. xliii. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Behold my Servant, whom I uphold; mine Elect, in whom my ſoul delighteth: I have put my Spirit upon him: He ſhall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles: He ſhall not cry, nor lift up, nor cauſe his voice to be heard in the ſtreet.—He ſhall bring forth judgment unto truth. He ſhall not fail nor be diſcouraged, till He have ſet judgment in the earth; and the iſles ſhall wait his law.* This promiſe of Chriſt's having God's Spirit put upon Him, and his not crying and lifting up his voice, *&c.* relates to the time of Chriſt's appearance on earth; as is manifeſt from the nature of the promiſe, and alſo the application of it in the New Teſtament, Matthew xii. 18. And the words imply a promiſe of his being ſo upheld by God's Spirit, that he ſhould be preſerved from ſin; particularly from pride and vain-glory, and from being overcome by any of the temptations, he ſhould be under to effect the glory of this world, the pomp of an earthly prince, or the applauſe and praiſe of men: and that he ſhould be ſo upheld, that he ſhould by no means fail of obtaining the end of his coming into the world, of bringing forth judgment unto victory, and eſtabliſhing his kingdom of grace in the earth.—And in the following verſes, this promiſe is confirmed, with the greateſt imaginable ſolemnity. *Thus ſaith the LORD, HE that created the heavens,*

*and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; He that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the Lord have called Thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand; and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house. I am JEHOVAH, that is my name*, &c.

Very parallel with these promises is that, Isai. xlix. 7, 8, 9. which also has an apparent respect to the time of Christ's humiliation on earth.—*Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a Servant of the rulers; kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship; because of the Lord that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose Thee. Thus saith the Lord, In an acceptable time have I heard Thee; in a day of salvation have I helped Thee; and I will preserve Thee, and give Thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth*, &c.

And in Isai. l. 5—6. we have the Messiah expressing his assurance, that God would help Him, by so opening his ear, or inclining his heart to God's commandments that He should not be rebellious, but should persevere, and not apostatize, or turn his back; that through God's help, He should be immoveable, in a way of obedience, under the great trials of reproach and suffering he should meet with; setting his face like a flint: so that He knew, He should not be ashamed, or frustrated in his design, and finally should be approved and justified, as having done his work faithfully. *The Lord hath opened mine ear;*

*so that I was not rebellious, neither turned away my back: I gave my back to the smiters, and my checks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. He is near that justifieth me: who will contend with me? Let us stand together. Who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me; Behold the Lord God will help me: who is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they shall all wax old as a garment, the moth shall eat them up.*

2. The same thing is evident from all the promises which God made to the Messiah, of his future glory, kingdom and success, in his office and character of a Mediator: which glory could not have been obtained, if his holiness had failed, and he had been guilty of sin. God's absolute promise of any things makes the things promised *necessary*, and their failing to take place absolutely *impossible*: and, in like manner, it makes those things necessary, on which the thing promised depends, and without which it cannot take effect. Therefore it appears, that it was utterly impossible that Christ's holiness should fail, from such absolute promises as those, Psal. cx. 4. *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever, after the order of Melchizedeck.* And from every other promise in that psalm, contained in each verse of it. And Psal. ii. 6, 7. *I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee: Ask of me, and I will give Thee the Heathen for thine inheritance*, &c. Psal. xlv. 3, 4, &c. *Gird thy sword on thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy Glory and thy Majesty; and in thy Majesty ride prosperously.* And so every thing that is said from thence to

the end of the Psalm. And those promises, Isai. iii, 13, 14, 15. and liii. 10, 11, 12. And all those promises which God makes to the Messiah, of success, dominion and glory in the character of a Redeemer, in Isai. chap. xlix.

3. It was often promised to the Church of God of old, for their comfort, that God would give them a righteous, sinless Saviour. Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous Branch; and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days shall Judah be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely. And this is the name whereby He shall be called, The Lord our Righteousness. So,* Jer. xxxiii. 15.—*I will cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.* Isai. ix. 6, 7. *For unto us a Child is born;—upon the throne of David and of his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice, from henceforth, even for ever: the Zeal of the Lord of Hosts will do this.* Chap. xi. at the beginning. *There shall come forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his Roots; and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him,—the Spirit of Knowledge, and the Fear of the Lord:—with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity:—Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.* Chap. lii. 13. *My Servant shall deal prudently.* Chap. liii. 9. *Because He had done no violence, neither was guile found in his mouth.* If it be impossible that these promises should fail, and it be easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one jot or title of these promises of God to pass away, then it was impossible that God should commit any sin. Christ himself signified, that it was impossible but that the things which were spoken

concerning Him, ſhould be fulfilled. Luke xxiv. 44.—*That all things muſt be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moſes, and in the prophets, and in the Pſalms concerning Me.* Matt. xxvi. 53, 54. *But how then ſhall the Scripture be fulfilled, that thus it muſt be?* Mark xiv. 49. *But the Scriptures muſt be fulfilled.* And ſo the apoſtle, Acts i. 16, 17. —*This Scripture muſt needs have been fulfilled.*

4. All the promiſes, which were made to the Church of old, of the Meſſiah as a future Saviour, from that made to our firſt parents in Paradiſe, to that which was delivered by the prophet Malachi, ſhew it to be impoſſible that Chriſt ſhould not have perſevered in perfect holineſs. The antient predictions given to God's Church, of the Meſſiah as a Saviour, were of the nature of promiſes; as is evident by the predictions themſelves, and the manner of delivering them. But they are expreſsly, and very often called *promiſes* in the New Teſtament; as in Luke i. 54, 55, 72, 73. Acts xiii. 32, 33. Rom. i. 1, 2, 3. and chap. xv. 8. Heb. vi. 13, &c. Theſe promiſes were often made with great ſolemnity, and confirmed with an oath; as in Gen. xxii. 16, 17. *By myſelf have I ſworn, ſaith the Lord, that in bleſſing, I will bleſs thee, and in multiplying, I will multiply thy ſeed, as the ſtars of heaven, and as the ſand which is upon the ſea-ſhore;——And in thy ſeed ſhall all the nations of the earth be bleſſed.* Compare Luke i. 72, 73. and Gal. iii. 8, 15, 16. The Apoſtle in Heb. vi. 17, 18. ſpeaking of this promiſe to Abraham, ſays, *Wherein God willing more abundantly to ſhew to the heirs of promiſe the immutability of his counſel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two IMMUTABLE things, in which it was IMPOSSIBLE for God to lie, he might have ſtrong conſolation.*—In which words, the *neceſſity* of the accompliſhment, or (which is the ſame thing) the *impoſſibility* of the contrary, is

fully declared. So God confirmed the promise of the great salvation of the Messiah, made to David, by an oath; Psal. lxxxix. 3, 4. *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant; thy seed will I establish forever, and build up thy throne to all generations.* There is nothing that is so abundantly set forth in Scripture, as sure and irrefragable, as this promise and oath to David. See Psalm lxxxix. 34, 35, 36. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Isai. lv. 4. Acts ii. 29, 30. and xiii. 34. The Scripture expressly speaks of it as utterly *impossible* that this promise and oath to David, concerning the everlasting dominion of the Messiah of his seed, should fail. Jer. xxxiii. 15, &c. *In those days, and at that time, I will cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David.—For thus saith the Lord, David shall never want a Man to sit upon the throne of the House of Israel.*—ver. 20, 21. *If you can break my covenant of the day, and my covenant of the night, and that there should not be day and night in their season; then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that He should not have a son to reign upon his throne.* So in ver. 25, 26.—Thus abundant is the Scripture in representing how *impossible* it was, that the promises made of old concerning the great salvation and kingdom of the Messiah should fail; which implies, that it was impossible that this Messiah, the second Adam, the promised seed of Abraham, and of David, should fall from his integrity, as the first Adam did.

5. All the promises that were made to the Church of God under the Old Testament, of the great enlargement of the Church, and advancement of her glory, in the days of the gospel, after the coming of the Messiah; the increase of her light, liberty, holiness, joy, triumph

over her enemies, *&c.* of which ſo great a part of the Old Teſtament conſiſts; which are repeated ſo often, are ſo variouſly exhibited, ſo frequently introduced with great pomp and ſolemnity, and are ſo abundantly ſealed with typical and ſymbolical repreſentations; I ſay, all theſe promiſes imply, that the Meſſiah ſhould perfect the work of redemption; and this implies, that he ſhould perſevere in the work, which the Father had appointed Him, being in all things conformed to his Will. Theſe promiſes were often confirmed by an oath. (See Iſai. liv. 9. with the context; chap. lxii. 18.) And it is repreſented as utterly impoſſible that theſe promiſes ſhould fail. (Iſa. xlix. 15. with the context, chap. liv. 10. with the context; chap. li. 4—8. chap. xl. 8. with the context.) And therefore it was *impoſſible* that the Meſſiah ſhould fail, or commit ſin.

6. It was *impoſſible* that the Meſſiah ſhould fail of perſevering in integrity and holineſs, as the firſt Adam did, becauſe this would have been inconſiſtent with the promiſes, which God made to the bleſſed Virgin, his mother, and to her huſband; implying, that *He ſhould ſave his people from their ſins*, that *God would give Him the throne of his Father David*, that *He ſhould reign over the houſe of Jacob for ever;* and that *of his kingdom there ſhall be no end.* Theſe promiſes were ſure, and it was *impoſſible* they ſhould fail. And therefore the Virgin Mary, in truſting fully to them, acted reaſonably, having an immoveable foundation of her faith; as Elizabeth obſerves, ver. 45. *And bleſſed is ſhe that believeth; for there ſhall be a performance of thoſe things, which were told her from the Lord.*

7. That it ſhould have been poſſible that Chriſt ſhould ſin, and ſo fail in the work of our re-

demption, does not confift with the eternal purpofe and decree of God, revealed in the Scriptures, that He would provide falvation for fallen man in and by Jefus Chrift, and that falvation fhould be offered to finners through the preaching of the Gofpel. Such an abfolute decree as this *Arminians* do not deny. Thus much at leaft (out of all controverfy) is implied in fuch Scriptures, as 1 Cor. ii. 7. Eph. i. 4, 5. and chap. iii. 9, 10, 11. 1 Pet. i. 19, 20. Such an abfolute decree as this, *Arminians* allow to be fignified in thefe texts. And the *Arminians* election of nations and focieties, and general election of the Chriftian Church, and conditional election of particular perfons, imply this. God could not decree before the foundation of the world, to fave all that fhould believe in, and obey Chrift, unlefs he had abfolutely decreed, that falvation fhould be provided, and effectually wrought out by Chrift. And fince (as the *Arminians* themfelves ftrenuoufly maintain) a decree of God infers *neceffity;* hence it became *neceffary*, that Chrift fhould perfevere, and actually work out falvation for us, and that he fhould not fail by the commiffion of fin.

8. That it fhould have been poffible for Chrift's holinefs to fail, is not confiftent with what God promifed to his Son, before all ages. For, that falvation fhould be offered to men, through Chrift, and beftowed on all his faithful followers, is what is at leaft implied in that certain and infallible promife fpoken of by the Apoftle, Tit. i. 2. *In hope of eternal life; which God, that cannot lie, promifed before the world began.* This does not feem to be controverted by *Arminians*.*

* See Dr. Whitby on the five Points, p. 48, 49, 50.

9. That it should be possible for Christ to fail of doing his Father's Will, is inconsistent with the promise made to the Father by the Son, by the *Logos* that was with the Father from the beginning, before he took the human nature: as may be seen in Psal. xl. 6, 7, 8. (compared with the Apostle's interpretation, Heb. x. 5—9.) *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire: mine ears hast thou opened*, (or bored;) *burnt-offering and sin-offering Thou hast not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy Will, O my God, and thy law is within my heart.* Where is a manifest allusion to the covenant, which the willing servant, who loved his master's service, made with his master, to be his servant for ever, on the day wherein he had his ear bored; which covenant was probably inserted in the public records, called the *Volume of the Book*, by the judges, who were called to take cognizance of the transaction; Exod. xxi. If the *Logos*, who was with the Father before the world, and who made the world, thus engaged in covenant to do the Will of the Father in the human nature, and the promise, was as it were recorded, that it might be made sure, doubtless it was *impossible* that it should fail; and so it was *impossible* that Christ should fail of doing the Will of the Father in the human nature.

10. If it was possible for Christ to have failed of doing the Will of his Father, and so to have failed of effectually working out redemption for sinners, then the salvation of all the saints, who were saved from the beginning of the world, to the death of Christ, was not built on a firm foundation. The Messiah and the redemption, which He was to work out by his obedience unto death, was the foundation of the salva-

tion of all the posterity of fallen man, that ever were saved. Therefore, if when the Old Testament saints had the pardon of their sins, and the favour of God promised them, and salvation bestowed upon them, still it was possible that the Messiah, when he came, might commit sin, then all this was on a foundation that was not firm and stable, but liable to fail; something which it was possible might never be. God did as it were trust to what his Son had engaged and promised to do in future time; and depended so much upon it, that He proceeded actually to save men on the account of it, as though it had been already done. But this trust and dependence of God, on the supposition of Christ's being liable to fail of doing his Will, was leaning on a staff that was weak, and might possibly break. The saints of old trusted on the promises of a future redemption to be wrought out and compleated by the Messiah, and built their comfort upon it; Abraham saw Christ's day, and rejoiced; and he and the other Patriarchs died in the faith of the promise of it. (Heb. xi. 13.) But on this supposition, their faith and their comfort, and their salvation, was built on a moveable fallible foundation; Christ was not to them a tried stone, a sure foundation: as in Isai. xxviii. 16. David entirely rested on the covenant of God with him, concerning the future glorious dominion and salvation of the Messiah, of his seed; says it was *all his salvation, and all his desire:* and comforts himself that this covenant was an *everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure,* 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. But if Christ's virtue might fail, he was mistaken: his great comfort was not built so sure, as he thought it was, being founded entirely on the determinations of the Free-Will of Christ's human Soul; which was subject to no necessity, and might be deter-

mined either one way or the other. Alſo the dependence of thoſe, who looked for redemption in Jeruſalem, and waited for the conſolation of Iſrael, (Luke ii. 25, and 38.) and the confidence of the diſciples of Jeſus, who forſook all and followed Him, that they might enjoy the benefits of his future kingdom, was built on a ſandy foundation.

11. The man Chriſt Jeſus, before he had finiſhed his courſe of obedience, and while in the midſt of temptations and trials, was abundant in poſitively predicting his own future glory in his kingdom, and the enlargement of his church, the ſalvation of the Gentiles through Him, &c. and in promiſes of bleſſings he would beſtow on his true diſciples in his future kingdom; on which promiſes he required the full dependence of his diſciples. (John xiv.) But the diſciples would have no ground for ſuch dependence, if Chriſt had been liable to fail in his work: and Chriſt Himſelf would have been guilty of preſumption, in ſo abounding in peremptory promiſes of great things, which depended on a mere contingence; *viz.* the determinations of his Free-Will, conſiſting in a freedom *ad utrumque*, to either ſin or holineſs, ſtanding in indifference, and incident, in thouſands of future inſtances, to go either one way or the other.

Thus it is evident, that it was *impoſſible* that the Acts of the Will of the human ſoul of Chriſt ſhould be otherwiſe than holy, and conformed to the Will of the Father; or, in other words, they were neceſſarily ſo conformed.

I have been the longer in the proof of this matter, it being a thing denied by ſome of the

greateft *Arminians*, by Epifcopius in particular; and becaufe I look upon it as a point clearly and abfolutely determining the controverfy between *Calvinifts* and *Arminians*, concerning the neceffity of fuch a freedom of will as is infifted on by the latter, in order to moral agency, virtue, command or prohibition, promife or threatening, reward or punifhment, praife or difpraife, merit or demerit. I now therefore proceed,

II. To confider whether CHRIST, in his holy behaviour on earth, was not thus a *moral agent*, fubject to *commands*, *promifes*, &c.

Dr. Whitby very often fpeaks of what he calls a freedom *ad utrumlibet*, without neceffity, as requifite to *law and commands*; and fpeaks of neceffity as entirely inconfiftent with *injunctions and prohibitions*. But yet we read of Chrift's being the fubject of the commands of his Father, Job x. 18. and xv. 10. And Chrift tells us, that every thing that He *faid*, or *did*, was in compliance with *commandments he had received of the Father*; John xii. 49, 50. and xiv. 31. And we often read of Chrift's *obedience* to his Father's commands, Rom. v. 19. Phil. ii. 18. Heb. v. 8.

The forementioned writer reprefents *promifes offered as motives* to perfons to do their duty, or *a being moved and induced by promifes*, as utterly inconfiftent with a ftate wherein perfons have not a liberty *ad utrumlibet*, but are neceffarily determined to one. (See particularly, p. 298, 311.) But the thing which this writer afferts, is demonftrably falfe, if the Chriftian religion be true. If there be any truth in Chriftianity or the holy Scriptures, the man Chrift Jefus had his Will infallibly, unalterably and unfruftrably determined

to good, and that alone; but yet he had promiſes of glorious rewards made to Him, on condition of his perſevering in, and perfecting the work which God had appointed Him; Iſa. liii. 10, 11, 12. Pſal. ii. and cx. Iſai. xlix. 7, 8, 9.— In Luke xxii. 28, 29. Chriſt ſays to his diſciples, *Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.* The word moſt properly ſignifies to appoint by covenant, or promiſe. The plain meaning of Chriſt's words is this; "As you have partook of my temptations and "trials, and have been ſtedfaſt, and have over-"come, I promiſe to make you partakers of "my reward, and to give you a kingdom; as the "Father has promiſed me a kingdom for conti-"nuing ſtedfaſt, and overcoming in thoſe trials." And the words are well explained by thoſe in Rev. iii. 21. *To him that overcometh, will I grant to ſit with me on my throne; even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his throne.* And Chriſt had not only promiſes of glorious ſucceſs and rewards made to his obedience and ſufferings, but the Scriptures plainly repreſents Him as uſing theſe promiſes for motives and inducements to obey and ſuffer; and particularly that promiſe of a kingdom which the Father had appointed Him, or ſitting with the Father on his throne; as in Heb. xii. 1, 2. *Let us lay aſide every weight, and the ſin which doth eaſily beſet us, and let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us, looking unto Jeſus the Author and Finiſher of our faith; who for the joy that was ſet before Him, endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down on the right hand of the throne of God.*

And how ſtrange would it be to hear any Chriſtian aſſert, that the holy and excellent temper

and behaviour of Jefus Chrift, and that obedience, which he performed under fuch great trials, was not *virtuous* or *praife-worthy*; becaufe his Will was not free *ad utrumque*, to either holinefs or fin, but was unalterably determined to one; that upon this account, there is no virtue at all, in all Chrift's humility, meeknefs, patience, charity, forgivenefs of enemies, contempt of the world, heavenly mindednefs, fubmiffion to the will of God, perfect obedience to his commands, (though He was obedient unto death, even the death of the crofs) his great compaffion to the afflicted, his unparalleled love to mankind, his faithfulnefs to God and man, under fuch great trials; his praying for his enemies, even when nailing him to the crofs; that *virtue*, when applied to thefe things, *is but an empty name*; that there was no merit in any of thefe things; that is, that Chrift was *worthy* of nothing at all on the account of them, worthy of no reward, no praife, no honour or refpect from God or Man; becaufe his will was not indifferent, and free either to thefe things, or the contrary; but under fuch a ftrong inclination or bias to the things that were excellent, as made it *impoffible* that he fhould chufe the contrary; that upon this account (to ufe Dr. Whitby's language) *it would be fenfibly unreafonable* that the human nature fhould be rewarded for any of thefe things.

According to this doctrine, that creature who is evidently fet forth in fcripture as the *firft-born* of *every creature*, as having *in all things the preeminence*, and as the higheft of all creatures in virtue, honour, and worthinefs of efteem, praife and glory, on the account of his virtue, is lefs worthy of reward or praife, than the very leaft of faints; yea, no more worthy than a clock or

mere machine, that is purely paſſive, and moved by natural neceſſity.

If we judge by ſcriptural repreſentations of things, we have reaſon to ſuppoſe, that Chriſt took on him our nature, and dwelt with us in this world, in a ſuffering ſtate, not only to ſatisfy for our ſins, but that He, being in our nature and circumſtances, and under our trials, might be our moſt fit and proper example, leader and captain, in the exerciſe of glorious and victorious virtue, and might be a viſible inſtance of the glorious end and reward of it; that we might ſee in Him the beauty, amiableneſs, and true honour and glory, and exceeding benefit, of that virtue, which it is proper for us human beings to practiſe; and might thereby learn, and be animated, to ſeek the like glory and honour, and to obtain the like glorious reward. See Heb. ii. 9,—14, with v. 8, 9. and xii. 1, 2, 3. John xv. 10. Rom. viii. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 11, 12. 1 Pet. ii. 19, 20. and iv. 13. But if there was nothing of any virtue or merit, or worthineſs of any reward, glory, praiſe or commendation at all, in all that He did, becauſe it was all neceſſary, and He could not help it; then how is here any thing ſo proper to animate and incite us, free creatures, by patient continuance in well-doing, to ſeek for honour, glory, and virtue?

God ſpeaks of Himſelf as peculiarly well-pleaſed with the righteouſneſs of this ſervant of his. Iſai. xlii. 21. *the Lord is well-pleaſed for his righteouſneſs ſake.* The ſacrifices of old are ſpoken of as a ſweet ſavour to God, but the obedience of Chriſt as far more acceptable than they. Pſal. xl. 6, 7. *Sacrifice and offering Thou didſt not deſire:--- Mine ear haſt Thou opened* [as thy ſervant per-

forming willing obedience;] *burnt-offering and fin-offering haft thou not required: then faid I, Lo, I come* [as a fervant that chearfully anfwers the calls of his mafter:] *I delight to do thy will, O my God, and thy law is within mine heart.* Matthew xvii. 5. *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleafed.* And Chrift tells us exprefsly, that the Father loves Him for that wonderful inftance of his obedience, his voluntary yielding himfelf to death, in compliance with the Father's command, John x. 17, 18. *Therefore doth my Father love me, becaufe I lay down my life:—No man taketh it from me; but I lay it down of myfelf—This commandment received I of my Father.*

And if there was no merit in Chrift's obedience unto death, if it was not worthy of praife, and of the moft glorious rewards, the heavenly hofts were exceedingly miftaken, by the account that is given of them, in Rev. v. 8,—12.---*The four beafts and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours;---and they fung a new fong, faying, Thou art WORTHY to take the book, and to open the feals thereof; for Thou waft flain.---And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the Throne, and the beafts, and the elders, and the number of them was ten thoufand times ten thoufand, and thoufands of thoufands, faying with a loud voice, WORTHY is the Lamb that was flain, to receive power, and riches, and wifdom, and ftrength, and honour, and glory, and bleffing.*

Chrift fpeaks of the eternal life which He was to receive, as the reward of his obedience to the Father's commandments. John xii. 49, 50. *I have not fpoken of myfelf; but the Father which fent me, He gave me a commandment what I fhould fay,*

*and what I ſhould ſpeak: and I know that his commandment is life everlaſting: whatſoever I ſpeak therefore, even as the Father ſaid unto me, ſo I ſpeak.* ---God promiſes to divide him a portion with the great, &c. for his being his righteous Servant, for his glorious virtue under ſuch great trials and afflictions, Iſai. liii. 11, 12. *He ſhall ſee the travel of his ſoul and be ſatisfied: by his knowledge ſhall my righteous Servant juſtify may; for he ſhall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he ſhall divide the ſpoil with the ſtrong, becauſe he hath poured out his ſoul unto death.*—The Scriptures repreſent God as rewarding Him far above all his other ſervants, Phil. ii. 7, 8, 9. *He took on him the form of a ſervant, and was made in the likeneſs of men: and being found in faſhion as a man, He humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs: wherefore GOD alſo hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name above every Name.* Pſal. xlv. 7. *Thou loveſt righteouſneſs, and hateſt wickedneſs; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladneſs above thy fellows.*

There is no room to pretend, that the glorious benefits beſtowed in conſequence of Chriſt's obedience, are not properly of the nature of a reward. What is a reward, in the moſt proper ſenſe, but a benefit beſtowed in conſequence of ſomething morally excellent in quality or behaviour, in teſtimony of well-pleaſedneſs in that moral excellency, and reſpect and favour on that account? If we conſider the nature of a reward moſt ſtrictly, and make the utmoſt of it, and add to the things contained in this deſcription, proper merit or worthineſs, and the beſtowment of the benefit in conſequence of a promiſe; ſtill it will be found, there is nothing be-

longing to it, but that the Scriptue is moft expref as to its belonging to the glory beftowed on Chrift, after his fufferings; as appears from what has been already obferved: there was a glorious benefit beftowed in confequence of fomething morally excellent, being called *Righteoufnefs* and *Obedience*; there was great favour, love and well-pleafednefs, for this righteoufnefs and obedience, in the beftower; there was proper merit, or worthinefs of the benefit, in the obedience; it was beftowed in fulfilment of promifes, made to that obedience; and was beftowed *therefore*, or *becaufe* he had performed that obedience.

I may add to all thefe things, that Jefus Chrift, while here in the flefh, was manifeftly in a ftate of trial. The laft Adam, as Chrift is called, 1 Cor. xv. 45. Rom. v. 14. taking on Him the human nature, and fo the form of a fervant, and being under the law, to ftand and act for us, was put into a ftate of trial, as the firft Adam was.—Dr. Whitby mentions thefe three things as evidences of perfons being in a ftate of trial (on the five Points p. 298, 299.) namely, their afflictions being fpoken of as their trials or temptations, their being the fubjects of promifes, and their being expofed to Satan's temptations. But Chrift was apparently the fubject of each of thefe. Concerning promifes made to Him, I have fpoken already. The difficulties and *afflictions*, He met with in the courfe of his obedience, are called his *temptations* or *trials*, Luke xxii. 28. *Ye are they which have continued with me in my* temptations, *or* trials. Heb. ii. 18. *For in that he Himfelf hath fuffered, being* tempted [or tried] *He is able to fuccour them that are tempted.* And chap. iv. 15. *We have not an high-prieft, which*

*cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points* tempted *like as we are, yet without sin.* And as to his being tempted by Satan it is what none will dispute.

## SECTION III.

*The Case of such as* are given up of God to Sin, *and of* fallen Man *in general, proves moral Necessity and Inability to be consistent with blameworthiness.*

DR. Whitby asserts freedom, not only from co-action, but Necessity, to be essential to any thing deserving the name of sin, and to an action's being *culpable*: in these words (Discourse on the five Points, edit. 3. p. 348.) "If they be "thus necessitated, then neither their Sins of "omission or commission could deserve that "name; it being essential to the nature of Sin, "according to St. Austin's definition, that it be "an action *a quo liberum est abstinere.* Three "things seem plainly necessary to make an ac-"tion or omission culpable; 1. That it be in "our power to perform or forbear it: for, as "Origen, and all the Fathers say, no man is blame-"worthy for not doing what he could not do." And elsewhere the Doctor insists, that "when any "do evil of Necessity, what they do is no vice, "that they are guilty of no fault, * are worthy "of no blame, dispraise, † or dishonour, ‡ but "are unblameable." §

* Discourse on five Points, p. 347, 360, 361, 377, ‡ 303. 326, 329, and many other places. † 371. § 304, 361.

If theſe things are true, in Dr. Whitby's ſenſe of Neceſſity, they will prove all ſuch to be blameleſs, who are given up of God to Sin, in what they commit after they are thus given up.—That there is ſuch a thing as men's being judicially given up to Sin, is certain, if the Scripture rightly informs us; ſuch a thing being often there ſpoken of; as in Pſal. lxxxi. 12. *So I gave them up to their own hearts luſts, and they walked in their own counſels.* Acts vii. 42. *Then God turned, and gave them up to worſhip the hoſt of heaven.* Rom. i. 24. *Wherefore, God alſo gave them up to uncleanneſs, through the luſts of their own hearts, to diſhonour their own bodies between themſelves.* Ver. 26. *For this cauſe God gave them up to vile affections.* Ver. 28. *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do thoſe things that are not convenient.*

It is needleſs to ſtand particularly to enquire, what God's *giving men up to their own hearts luſts* ſignifies: it is ſufficient to obſerve, that hereby is certainly meant God's ſo ordering or diſpoſing things, in ſome reſpect or other, either by doing or forbearing to do, as that the conſequence ſhould be men's continuing in their Sins. So much as men are given up *to*, ſo much is the conſequence of their being given up, whether that be leſs or more. If God does not order things ſo, by action or permiſſion, that Sin will be the conſequence, then the event proves that they are not given up to that conſequence. If good be the conſequence, in ſtead of evil, then God's mercy is to be acknowledged in that good; which mercy muſt be contrary to God's judgment in giving up to evil. If the event muſt prove, that they are given up to evil as the conſequence, then the perſons, who are the ſubjects of this judgment,

muſt be the ſubjects of ſuch an event, and ſo the event is neceſſary.

If not only *co-action*, but all *Neceſſity*, will prove men blameleſs, then Judas was blameleſs, after Chriſt had given him over, and had already declared his certain damnation, and that he ſhould *verily* betray Him. He was guilty of no Sin in betraying his Maſter, on this ſuppoſition; though his ſo doing is ſpoken of by Chriſt as the moſt aggravated Sin, more heinous than the Sin of Pilate in crucifying Him. And the Jews in Egypt, in Jeremiah's time, were guilty of no ſin, in their not worſhipping the true God, after God had *ſworn by his great Name, that his Name ſhould be no more named in the mouth of any man of Judah, in all the land of Egypt.* Jer. xliv. 26.

Dr. Whitby (Diſc. on five Points, p. 302, 303.) denies, that men, in this world, are ever ſo given up by God to ſin, that their wills ſhould be neceſſarily determined to evil; though He owns, that hereby it may become *exceeding difficult* for men to do good, having a ſtrong bent, and powerful inclination, to what is evil.—But if we ſhould allow the caſe to be juſt as he repreſents, the judgment of giving up to ſin will no better agree with his notions of that liberty, which is eſſential to praiſe or blame, than if we ſhould ſuppoſe it to render the avoiding of ſin *impoſſible.* For if an *impoſſibility* of avoiding ſin wholly excuſes a man; then, for the ſame reaſon, its being difficult to avoid it, excuſes him in part; and this juſt in proportion to the degree of difficulty. —If the influence of *moral* impoſſibility or Inability be the ſame, to excuſe perſons in not doing, or not avoiding any thing, as that of *natural* Inability, (which is ſuppoſed) then undoubt-

edly, in like manner, *moral difficulty* has the ſame influence to excuſe with *natural difficulty*. But all allow, that natural impoſſibility wholly excuſes, and alſo that *natural difficulty* excuſes in part, and makes the act or omiſſion leſs blameable in proportion to the difficulty. All *natural difficulty*, according to the plaineſt dictates of the light of nature, excuſes in ſome degree, ſo that the neglect is not ſo blameable, as if there had been no difficulty in the caſe: and ſo the greater the difficulty is, ſtill the more excuſeable, in proportion to the increaſe of the difficulty. And as *natural* impoſſibility wholly excuſes and excludes all blame, ſo the nearer the difficulty approaches to impoſſibility, ſtill the nearer a perſon is to blameleſſneſs in proportion to that approach. And if the caſe of moral impoſſibility or Neceſſity, be juſt the ſame with natural Neceſſity or co-action, as to influence to excuſe a neglect, then alſo, for the ſame reaſon, the caſe of natural difficulty, does not differ in influence, to excuſe a neglect, from moral difficulty, ariſing from a ſtrong bias or bent to evil, ſuch as Dr. Whitby owns in the caſe of thoſe that are given up to their own hearts luſts. So that the fault of ſuch perſons muſt be leſſened, in proportion to the difficulty, and approach to impoſſibility. If ten degrees of moral difficulty make the action quite impoſſible, and ſo wholly excuſe, then if there be nine degrees of difficulty the perſon is in great part excuſed, and is nine degrees in ten, leſs blame-worthy, than if there had been no difficulty at all; and he has but one degree of blame-worthineſs. The reaſon is plain, on *Arminian* principles; *viz.* becauſe as difficulty, by antecedent bent and bias on the will, is increaſed, liberty of indifference, and ſelf-determination in the will, is diminiſhed: ſo much hindrance and impediment is there, in

the way of the will's acting freely, by mere self-determination. And if ten degrees of such hindrance take away all such liberty, then nine degrees take away nine parts in ten, and leave but one degree of liberty. And therefore there is but one degree of blameableness, *cæteris paribus*, in the neglect; the man being no further blameable in what he does, or neglects, than he has liberty in that affair: for blame or praise (say they) arises wholly from a good use or abuse of liberty.

From all which it follows, that a strong bent and bias one way, and difficulty of going the contrary, never causes a person to be at all more exposed to Sin, or any thing blameable: because, as the difficulty is increased, so much the less is required and expected. Though in one respect, exposedness to Sin or fault is increased, *viz.* by an increase of exposedness to the evil action or omission; yet it is diminished in another respect, to balance it; namely, as the sinfulness or blameableness of the action or omission is diminished in the same proportion. So that, on the whole, the affair, as to exposedness to guilt or blame, is left just as it was.

To illustrate this, let us suppose a scale of a balance to be intelligent, and a free agent, and indued with a self-moving power, by virtue of which it could act and produce effects to a certain degree, *ex. gr.* to move itself up or down with a force equal to a weight of ten pounds; and that it might therefore be required of it, in ordinary circumstances, to move itself down with that force; for which it has power and full liberty, and therefore would be blame-worthy if it failed of it. But then let us suppose a weight of

ten pounds to be put in the oppofite fcale, which in force entirely counter-balances its felf-moving power, and fo renders it impoffible for it to move down at all; and therefore wholly excufes it from any fuch motion. But if we fuppofe there to be only nine pounds in the oppofite fcale, this renders its motion not impoffible, but yet more difficult; fo that it can now only move down with the force of one pound: but however, this is all that is required of it under thefe circumftances; it is wholly excufed from nine parts of its motion: and if the fcale, under thefe circumftances, neglects to move, and remains at reft, all that it will be blamed for, will be its neglect of that one tenth part of its motion; which it had as much liberty and advantage for, as in ufual circumftances, it has for the greater motion, which in fuch a cafe would be required. So that this new difficulty, does not at all increafe its expofednefs to any thing blame-worthy.

And thus the very fuppofition of difficulty in the way of a man's *duty*, or proclivity to Sin, through a being given up to hardnefs of heart, or indeed by any other means whatfoever, is an inconfiftence, according to Dr. Whitby's notions of liberty, virtue and vice, blame and praife. The avoiding Sin and blame, and the doing what is virtuous and praife-worthy, muft be always equally eafy.

Dr. Whitby's notions of liberty, obligation, virtue, Sin, *&c.* led him into another great inconfiftence. He abundantly infifts, that neceffity is inconfiftent with the nature of Sin or fault. He fays, in the forementioned treatife, p. 14. *Who can blame a perfon for doing what he could not help ?* and p. 15. *It being fenfibly unjuft,*

*to punish any man for doing that which was never in his power to avoid.* And in p. 341, to confirm his opinion, he quotes one of the Fathers, saying, *Why doth God command, if man hath not free-will and power to obey?* And again in the same and the next page, *Who will not cry out, that it is folly to command him, that hath not liberty to do what is commanded; and that it is unjust to condemn him, that has it not in his power to do what is required?* And in p. 373, he cites another saying, *A law is given to him that can turn to both parts;* i. e. *obey or transgress it: but no law can be against him who is bound by nature.*

And yet the same Dr. Whitby asserts, that fallen Man is not able to perform perfect obedience. in p. 165, he has these words: " The nature of " Adam had power to continue innocent, and " without Sin; whereas, it is certain our nature " never had so." But if we have not power to continue innocent and without Sin, then Sin is inconsistent with Necessity, and we may be sinful in that which we have not power to avoid; and those things cannot be true which he asserts elsewhere, namely, " That if we be necessitated, " neither Sins of omission nor commission, " would deserve that name," (p. 348.) If we have it not in our power to be innocent, then we have it not in our power to be blameless: and if so, we are under a Necessity of being blame-worthy. And how does this consist with what he so often asserts, that Necessity is inconsistent with blame or praise? If we have it not in our power to perform perfect obedience to all the commands of God, then we are under a Necessity of breaking some commands, in some degree; having no power to perform so much as is commanded. And if so, why does he cry out of the unreason-

ableneſs and folly of commanding beyond what men have power to do?

And *Arminians* in general are very inconſiſtent with themſelves in what they ſay of the Inability of fallen Man in this reſpect. They ſtrenuouſly maintain, that it would be unjuſt in God, to require any thing of us beyond our preſent power and ability to perform; and alſo hold, that we are now unable to perform perfect obedience, and that Chriſt died to ſatisfy for the *imperfections of our obedience*, and has made way, that our imperfect obedience might be accepted inſtead of perfect: wherein they ſeem inſenſibly to run themſelves into the groſſeſt inconſiſtence. For, (as I have obſerved elſewhere) "they hold, that God, "in mercy to mankind, has aboliſhed that rigor-"ous conſtitution or law, that they were under "originally; and in ſtead of it, has introduced a "more mild conſtitution, and put us under a "new law, which requires no more than imper-"fect ſincere obedience, in compliance with our "poor infirm impotent circumſtances ſince the "fall."

Now, how can theſe things be made conſiſtent? I would aſk, what law theſe imperfections of our obedience are a breach of? If they are a breach of no law, that we were ever under, then they are not Sins. And if they be not Sins, what need of Chriſt's dying to ſatisfy for them? But if they are Sins, and the breach of ſome law, what law is it? they cannot be a breach of their new law; for that requires no other than imperfect obedience, or obedience with imperfections: and therefore to have obedience attended with imperfections, is no breach of it; for it is as much as it requires. And they cannot be a

breach of their old law; for that, they ſay, is entirely aboliſhed; and we never were under it.—They ſay, it would not be juſt in God to require of us perfect obedience, becauſe it would not be juſt to require more than we can perform, or to puniſh us for failing of it. And therefore, by their own ſcheme, the imperfections of our obedience do not deſerve to be puniſhed. What need therefore of Chriſt's dying, to ſatisfy for them? What need of his *ſuffering*, to ſatisfy for that which is no fault, and in its own nature deſerves no *ſuffering?* What need of Chriſt's dying, to purchaſe, that our *imperfect* obedience ſhould be accepted, when, according to their ſcheme, it would be unjuſt in itſelf, that any other obedience, than *imperfect* ſhould be required? What need of Chriſt's dying to make way for God's accepting ſuch an obedience, as it would be unjuſt in Him not to accept? Is there any need of Chriſt's dying, to prevail with God not to do unrighteouſly?—If it be ſaid, that Chriſt died to ſatisfy that old law for us, that ſo we might not be under it, but that there might be room for our being under a more mild law; ſtill I would inquire, what need of Chriſt's dying, that we might not be under a law, which (by their principles) it would be in itſelf unjuſt that we ſhould be under, whether Chriſt had died or no, becauſe, in our preſent ſtate, we are not able to keep it?

So the *Arminians* are inconſiſtent with themſelves, not only in what they ſay of the need of Chriſt's ſatisfaction to atone for thoſe imperfections, which we cannot avoid, but alſo in what they ſay of the grace of God, granted to enable men to perform the ſincere obedience of the new

law. "I grant (ſays Dr. Stebbing*) indeed, that "by reaſon of original Sin, we are utterly dif- "abled for the performance of the condition, "without new grace from God. But I ſay then, "that he gives ſuch a grace to all of us, by "which the performance of the condition is "truly poſſible: and upon this ground he may, "and doth moſt righteouſly require it." If Dr. Stebbing intends to ſpeak properly, by *grace* he muſt mean, that aſſiſtance which is of grace, or of free favour and kindneſs. But yet in the ſame place he ſpeaks of it as very *unreaſonable*, *unjuſt* and *cruel*, for God to require that, as the condition of pardon, that is become impoſſible by original Sin. If it be ſo, what *grace* is there in giving aſſiſtance and ability to perform the condition of pardon? Or why is that called by the name of grace, that is an abſolute debt, which God is bound to beſtow, and which it would be unjuſt and cruel in Him to with-hold, ſeeing he requires that, *as the condition of pardon*, which he cannot perform without it?

## SECTION IV.

### Command *and* Obligation *to* Obedience, *conſiſtent with moral Inability to obey.*

IT being ſo much inſiſted on by *Arminian* writers, that neceſſity is inconſiſtent with Law or Command, and particularly, that it is abſurd to ſuppoſe God by his Command ſhould require that of men which they are unable to do; not allowing in this caſe for any difference that there is

* Treatiſe of the Operations of the Spirit. 2 edit. P. 112, 113.

between natural and moral Inability; I would therefore now particularly consider this matter.

And, for the greater clearness, I would distinctly lay down the following things.

I. The will itself, and not only those actions which are the effects of the will, is the proper object of Precept or Command. This is, such or such a state or acts of men's wills, is in many cases, properly required of them by Commands; and not only those alterations in the state of their bodies or minds that are the consequences of volition. This is most manifest; for it is the soul only that is properly and directly the subject of Precepts or Commands; that only being capable of receiving or perceiving Commands. The motions or state of the body are matter of Command, only as they are subject to the soul, and connected with its acts. But now the soul has no other faculty whereby it can, in the most direct and proper sense, consent, yield to, or comply with any Command, but the faculty of the will; and it is by this faculty only, that the soul can directly disobey, or refuse compliance: for the very notions of *consenting*, *yielding*, *accepting*, *complying*, *refusing*, *rejecting*, &c. are, according to the meaning of the terms, nothing but certain acts of the will. Obedience, in the primary nature of it, is the submitting and yielding of the will of one to the will of another. Disobedience is the not consenting, not complying of the will of the commanded to the manifested will of the commander. Other acts that are not the acts of the will, as certain motions of the body and alterations in the soul, are Obedience or Disobedience only indirectly, as they are connected with the state or actions of the will,

according to an eſtabliſhed law of nature. So that it is manifeſt, the will itſelf may be required: and the being of a good will is the moſt proper, direct and immediate ſubject of command; and if this cannot be preſcribed or required by Command or Precept, nothing can; for other things can be required no otherwiſe than as they depend upon, and are the fruits of a good will.

*Corol.* 1. If there be ſeveral acts of the will, or a ſeries of acts, one following another, and one the effect of another, the *firſt and determining act* is properly the ſubject of command, and not only the conſequent acts, which are dependent upon it. Yea, it is this more eſpecially, which is that, which Command or precept has a proper reſpect to; becauſe it is this act that determines the whole affair: in this act the Obedience or Diſobedience lies, in a peculiar manner; the conſequent acts being all ſubject to it, and governed and determined by it. This determining governing act muſt be the proper object of Precept, or none.

*Corol.* 2. It alſo follows, from what has been obſerved, that if there be any ſort of act, or exertion of the ſoul, prior to all free acts of the will or acts of choice in the caſe, directing and determining, what the acts of the will ſhall be; that act or exertion of the ſoul cannot properly be ſubject to any Command or Precept, in any reſpect whatſoever, either directly or indirectly, immediately or remotely. Such acts cannot be ſubject to Commands *directly*, becauſe they are no acts of the will; being by the ſuppoſition prior to all acts of the will, determining and giving riſe to all its acts: they not being acts of the

will, there can be in them no consent to, or compliance with any command. Neither can they be subject to Command or Precept *indirectly* or *remotely*; for they are not so much as the *effects* or *consequences* of the will, being prior to all its acts. So that if there be any Obedience in that original act of the soul, determining all volitions, it is an act of Obedience wherein the will has no concern at all; it preceding every act of will. And therefore, if the soul either obeys or disobeys in this act, it is wholly involuntarily; there is no willing Obedience or rebellion, no compliance or opposition of the will in the affair: and what sort of Obedience or rebellion is this?

And thus the *Arminian* notion of the freedom of the will consisting in the soul's determining its own acts of will, instead of being essential to moral agency, and to men's being the subjects of moral government, is utterly inconsistent with it. For if the soul determines *all* its acts of will, it is therein subject to no Command or moral government, as has been now observed; because its original determining act is no act of will or choice, it being prior, by the supposition, to *every act* of will. And the soul cannot be the subject of Command in the act of the will itself, which depends on the foregoing determining act, and is determined by it; in as much as this is necessary, being the necessary consequence and effect of that prior determining act, which is not voluntary. Nor can the man be the subject of Command or government in his external actions; because these are all necessary, being the necessary effects of the acts of the will themselves. So that mankind, according to this scheme, are subjects of Command or

moral government in nothing at all; and all their moral agency is entirely excluded, and no room for virtue or vice in the world.

So that it is the *Arminian* scheme, and not the scheme of the *Calvinists*, that is utterly inconsistent with moral government, and with all use of laws, precepts, prohibitions, promises or threatenings. Neither is there any way whatsoever to make their principles consist with these things. For if it be said, that there is no prior determining act of the soul, preceding the acts of the will, but that volitions are events that come to pass by pure accident, without any determining cause, this is most palpably inconsistent with all use of laws and precepts; for nothing is more plain than that laws can be of no use to direct and regulate perfect accident: which, by the supposition of its being pure accident, is in no case regulated by any thing preceding; but happens, this way or that, perfectly by chance, without any cause or rule. The perfect uselessness of laws and precepts also follows from the *Arminian* notion of indifference, as essential to that liberty, which is requisite to virtue or vice. For the end of laws is to *bind to one side;* and the end of Commands is to turn the will one way: and therefore they are of no use, unless they turn or bias the will that way. But if liberty consists in indifference, then their biassing the will one way only, destroys liberty; as it puts the will out of equilibrium. So that the will, having a bias, through the influence of binding law, laid upon it, is not wholly left to itself, to determine itself which way it will, without influence from without.

II. Having ſhewn that the will itſelf, eſpecially in thoſe acts, which are original, leading and determining in any caſe, is the proper ſubject of Precept and Command, and not only thoſe alterations in the body, *&c.* which are the effects of the will; I now proceed, in the *ſecond* place, to obſerve that the very oppoſition or defect of the will itſelf, in that act, which is its *original and determining act* in the caſe; I ſay, the will's oppoſition *in this act* to a thing propoſed or commanded, or its failing of compliance, implies a moral Inability to that thing: or, in other words, whenever a Command requires a certain ſtate or act of the will, and the perſon commanded, notwithſtanding the Command and the circumſtances under which it is exhibited, ſtill finds his will oppoſite or wanting, in *that*, belonging to its ſtate or acts, *which is original and determining in the affair*, that man is morally unable to obey that Command.

This is manifeſt from what was obſerved in the firſt part, concerning the nature of *moral* Inability, as diſtinguiſhed from *natural*: where it was obſerved, that a man may then be ſaid to be morally unable to do a thing, when he is under the influence or prevalence of a contrary inclination, or has a want of inclination, under ſuch circumſtances and views. It is alſo evident, from what has been before proved, that the will is always, and in every individual act, neceſſarily determined by the ſtrongeſt motive; and ſo is always unable to go againſt the motive, which, all things conſidered, has now the greateſt ſtrength and advantage to move the will.---But not further to inſiſt on theſe things, the truth of the poſition now laid down, *viz.* that when the will is oppoſite *to*, or failing of a compliance with a

thing *in its original determining inclination or act*, it is not able to comply, appears by the consideration of these two things.

1. The will in the time of that diverse or opposite leading act or inclination, and when actually under the influence of it, is not able to exert itself to the contrary, to make an alteration, in order to a compliance. The inclination is unable to change itself; and that for this plain reason, that it is unable to incline to change itself. Present choice cannot at present chuse to be otherwise: for that would be *at present* to chuse something diverse from what is *at present* chosen. If the will, all things now considered, inclines or chuses to go that way, then it cannot chuse, all things now considered, to go the other way, and so cannot chuse to be made to go the other way. To suppose that the mind is now sincerely inclined to change itself to a different inclination, is to suppose the mind is now truly inclined otherwise than it is now inclined. The will may oppose some future remote act that it is exposed to, but not its own present act.

2. As it is impossible that the will should comply with the thing commanded, with respect to its *leading act*, by any act of its own, in the time of that diverse or opposite *leading and original act*, or after it has actually come under the influence of that *determining choice or inclination*; so it is impossible it should be determined to a compliance by any foregoing act; for, by the very supposition, there is no foregoing act; the opposite or non-complying act being that act which is *original* and *determining* in the case. Therefore it must be so, that if this *first determining act* be

found non-complying, on the propofal of the Command, the mind is morally unable to obey. For to fuppofe it to be able to obey, is to fuppofe it to be able to determine and caufe its *firft determining act* to be otherwife, and that it has power better to govern and regulate its *firft governing and regulating act*, which is abfurd; for it is to fuppofe a prior act of the will, determining its firft determining act; that is, an act prior to the firft, and leading and governing the original and governing act of all; which is a contradiction.

Here if it fhould be faid, that although the mind has not any ability to will contrary to what it does will, in the original and leading act of the will, becaufe there is fuppofed to be no prior act to determine and order it otherwife, and the will cannot immediately change itfelf, becaufe it cannot at prefent incline to a change; yet the mind has an ability for the prefent to *forbear* to proceed to action, and taking time for deliberation; which may be an occafion of the change of the inclination.

I anfwer, (1.) In this objection that feems to be forgotten which was obferved before, *viz.* that the determining to take the matter into confideration, is itfelf an act of the will; and if this be all the act wherein the mind exercifes ability and freedom, then this, by the fuppofition, muft be all that can be commanded or required by Precept. And if this act be the commanding act, then all that has been obferved concerning the commanding act of the will remains true, that the very want of it is a moral Inability to exert it, *&c.* (2.) We are fpeaking concerning the firft and leading act of the will in the cafe, or about the affair; and if a determining

to deliberate, or, on the contrary, to proceed immediately without deliberating, be the first and leading act; or whether it be or no, if there be another act before it, which determines that; or whatever be the original and leading act; still the foregoing proof stands good, that the non-compliance of the leading act implies moral Inability to comply.

If it should be objected, that these things make all moral Inability equal, and suppose men morally unable to will otherwise than they actually do will, in all cases, and equally so in every Instance.

In answer to this objection, I desire two things may be observed. *First*, That if by being *equally* unable be meant as *really* unable; then, so far as the Inability is merely moral, it is true, the will, in every instance, acts by moral necessity, and is morally unable to act otherwise, as truly and properly in one case as another; as I humbly conceive has been perfectly and abundantly demonstrated by what has been said in the preceding part of this Essay. But yet, in some respect, the Inability may be said to be greater in some instances than others: though the man may be truly unable, (if moral Inability can truly be called Inability,) yet he may be further from being able to do some things than others. As it is in things, which men are naturally unable to do. A person, whose strength is no more than sufficient to lift the weight of one hundred pounds, is as truly and really unable to lift one hundred and one pounds, as ten thousand pounds; but yet he is further from being able to lift the latter weight than the former; and so, according to common use of speech, has a greater Inability

for it. So it is in moral Inability. A man is truly morally unable to chuſe contrary to a preſent inclination, which in the leaſt degree prevails; or, contrary to that motive, which, all things conſidered, has ſtrength and advantage now to move the will, in the leaſt degree, ſuperior to all other motives in view: but yet he is further from ability to reſiſt a very ſtrong habit, and a violent and deeply rooted inclination, or a motive vaſtly exceeding all others in ſtrength. And again, the Inability may, in ſome reſpects, be called greater in ſome inſtances than others, as it may be *more general* and *extenſive to all acts of that kind.* So men may be ſaid to be unable in a different ſenſe, and to be further from moral ability, who have that moral Inability which is *general* and *habitual*, than they who have only that Inability which is *occaſional* and *particular**. Thus in caſes of natural Inability; he that is born blind may be ſaid to be unable to ſee, in a different manner, and is, in ſome reſpects, further from being able to ſee, than he whoſe ſight is hindred by a tranſient cloud or miſt.

And beſides, that which was obſerved in the firſt part of this diſcourſe, concerning the Inability which attends a *ſtrong and ſettled habit*, ſhould be here remembered; *viz.* that fixed habit is attended with this peculiar moral Inability, by which it is diſtinguiſhed from *occaſional volition*, namely, that endeavours to avoid future volitions of that kind, which are agreeable to ſuch a habit, much more frequently and commonly prove vain and inſufficient. For tho' it is impoſſible there ſhould be any true ſincere deſires and endeavours a-



* See this diſtinction of moral Inability explained in PART I. *Sect.* IV.

against a present volition or choice, yet there may be against volitions of that kind, when viewed at a distance. A person may desire and use means to prevent future exercises of a certain inclination; and, in order to it, may wish the habit might be removed; but his desires and endeavours may be ineffectual. The man may be said in some sense to be unable; yea, even as the word *unable* is a *relative term*, and has relation to ineffectual endeavours; yet not with regard to present, but remote endeavours.

*Secondly*, It must be borne in mind, according to what was observed before, that indeed no inability whatsoever, which is merely moral, is properly called by the name of *Inability;* and that in the strictest propriety of speech, a man may be said to have a thing in his power, if he has it at his election; and he cannot be said to be unable to do a thing, when he can, if he now pleases, or whenever he has a proper, direct and immediate desire for it. As to those desires and endeavours, that may be against the exercises of a strong habit, with regard to which men may be said to be unable to avoid those exercises, they are remote desires and endeavours in two respects. *First*, as to *time;* they are never against present volitions, but only against volitions of such a kind, when viewed at a distance. *Secondly*, as to their *nature;* these opposite desires are not directly and properly against the habit and inclination itself, or the volitions in which it is exercised; for these, in themselves considered, are agreeable; but against something else, that attends them, or is their consequence; the opposition of the mind is levelled entirely against this; the inclination or volitions themselves are not at all opposed directly, and for their own sake; but only

indirectly and remotely on the account of something alien and foreign.

III. Though the opposition of the will itself, or the very want of will to a thing commanded, implies a moral Inability to that thing; yet, if it be, as has been already shewn, that the being of a good state or act of will, is a thing most properly required by Command; then, in some cases, such a state or act of will may properly be required, which at present is not, and which may also be wanting after it is commanded. And therefore those things may properly be commanded, which men have a moral Inability for.

Such a state, or act of the will, may be required by Command, as does not already exist. For if that volition only may be commanded to be which already is, there could be no use of Precept; Commands in all cases would be perfectly vain and impertinent. And not only may such a will be required, as is wanting before the Command is given, but also such as may possibly be wanting afterwards; such as the exhibition of the Command may not be effectual to produce or excite. Otherwise, no such thing as disobedience to a proper and rightful Command is possible in any case; and there is no case supposable or possible, wherein there can be an inexcusable or faulty disobedience. Which *Arminians* cannot affirm consistently with their principles: for this makes Obedience to just and proper Commands always *necessary*, and disobedience impossible. And so the *Arminian* would overthrow himself, yielding the very point we are upon, which he so strenuously denies, *viz.* that Law and Command are consistent with necessity.

If merely that Inability will excuſe diſobedience, which is implied in the oppoſition or defect of inclination, remaining after the Command is exhibited, then wickedneſs always carries that in it which excuſes it. It is evermore ſo, that by how much the more wickedneſs there is in a man's heart, by ſo much is his inclination to evil the ſtronger, and by ſo much the more, therefore, has he of moral Inability to the good required. His moral Inability, conſiſting in the ſtrength of his evil inclination, is the very thing wherein his wickedneſs conſiſts; and yet, according to *Arminian* principles, it muſt be a thing inconſiſtent with wickedneſs; and by how much the more he has of it, by ſo much is he the further from wickedneſs.

Therefore, on the whole, it is manifeſt, that moral Inability alone (which conſiſts in diſinclination) never renders any thing improperly the ſubject matter of Precept or Command, and never can excuſe any perſon in diſobedience, or want of conformity to a command.

Natural Inability, ariſing from the want of natural capacity, or external hindrance (which alone is properly called Inability) without doubt wholly excuſes, or makes a thing improperly the matter of Command. If men are excuſed from doing or acting any good thing, ſuppoſed to be commanded, it muſt be through ſome defect or obſtacle that is not in the will itſelf, but intrinſic to it; either in the capacity of underſtanding, or body, or outward circumſtances.

Here two or three things may be obſerved,

1. As to spiritual duties or acts, or any good thing in the state or imminent acts of the will itself, or of the affections (which are only certain modes of the exercise of the will) if persons are justly excused, it must be through want of capacity in the natural faculty of understanding. Thus the same spiritual duties, or holy affections and exercises of heart, cannot be required of men, as may be of angels; the capacity of understanding being so much inferior. So men cannot be required to love those amiable persons, whom they have had no opportunity to see, or hear of, or come to the knowledge of, in any way agreeable to the natural state and capacity of the human understanding. But the insufficiency of motives will not excuse; unless their being insufficient arises not from the moral state of the will or inclination itself, but from the state of the natural understanding. The great kindness and generosity of another may be a motive insufficient to excite gratitude in the person, that receives the kindness, through his vile and ungrateful temper: in this case, the insufficiency of the motive arises from the state of the will or inclination of heart, and does not at all excuse. But if this generosity is not sufficient to excite gratitude, being unknown, there being no means of information adequate to the state and measure of the person's faculties, this insufficiency is attended with a natural Inability which entirely excuses.

2. As to such motions of body, or exercises and alterations of mind, which does not consist in the imminent acts or state of the will itself, but are supposed to be required as effects of the will; I say, in such supposed effects of the will, in cases wherein there is no want of a capacity of understanding; that Inability, and that only ex-

cuſes, which conſiſts in want of connection between them and the will. If the will fully complies, and the propoſed effect does not prove, according to the laws of nature, to be connected with his volition, the man is perfectly excuſed; he has a natural Inability to the thing required. For the will itſelf, as has been obſerved, is all that can be directly and immediately required by command; and other things only indirectly, as connected with the will. If therefore, there be a full compliance of will, the perſon has done his duty; and if other things do not prove to be connected with his volition, that is not owing to him.

3. Both theſe kinds of natural Inability that have been mentioned, and ſo all Inability that excuſes, may be reſolved into one thing; namely, want of natural capacity or ſtrength; either capacity of underſtanding, or external ſtrength. For when there are external defects and obſtacles, they would be no obſtacles, were it not for the imperfection and limitations of underſtanding and ſtrength.

*Corol.* If things for which men have a moral Inability, may properly be the matter of Precept or Command, then they may alſo of invitation and counſel. Commands and invitations come very much to the ſame thing; the difference is only circumſtantial: Commands are as much a manifeſtation of the will of him that ſpeaks, as invitations, and as much teſtimonies of expectation of compliance. The difference between them lies in nothing that touches the affair in hand. The main difference between Command and invitation conſiſts in the enforcement of the will of him who commands or invites. In the latter it is his *kindneſs*; the goodneſs which his will ariſes from:

in the former it is his *authority*. But whatever be the ground of the will of him that speaks, or the enforcement of what he says, yet seeing neither his will nor expectation is any more testified in the one case than the other; therefore a person's being directed *by invitation*, is no more an evidence of insincerity in him that directs in manifesting either a will, or expectation which he has not, than his being known to be morally unable to do what he is directed to *by command*.— So that all this grand objection of *Arminians* against the Inability of fallen men to exert faith in Christ, or to perform other spiritual gospel-duties, from the sincerity of God's counsels and invitations, must be without force.

## SECTION V.

*That* Sincerity of desires and Endeavours, *which is supposed to* excuse *in the Non-performance of Things in themselves good, particularly considered.*

IT is what is much insisted on by many, that some men, though they are not able to perform spiritual duties, such as repentance of sin, love to God, a cordial acceptance of Christ as exhibited and offered in the gospel, &c. yet they may sincerely desire and endeavour these things; and therefore must be excused; it being unreasonable to blame them for the omission of those things, which they sincerely desire and endeavour to do, but cannot do.

Concerning this matter, the following things may be observed.

1. What is here ſuppoſed, is a great miſtake, and groſs abſurdity; even that men may ſincerely chuſe and deſire thoſe ſpiritual duties of love, acceptance, choice, rejection, &c. conſiſting in the exerciſe of the will itſelf, or in the diſpoſition and inclination of the heart; and yet not be able to perform or exert them. This is abſurd, becauſe it is abſurd to ſuppoſe that a man ſhould directly, properly and ſincerely incline to have an inclination, which at the ſame time is contrary to his inclination: for that is to ſuppoſe him not to be inclined to that, which he is inclined to. If a man, in the ſtate and acts of his will and inclination, does properly and directly fall in with thoſe duties, he therein performs them: for the duties themſelves conſiſt in that very thing; they conſiſt in the ſtate and acts of the will being ſo formed and directed. If the ſoul properly and ſincerely falls in with a certain propoſed act of will or choice, the ſoul therein makes that choice its own. Even as when a moving body falls in with a propoſed direction of its motion, that is the ſame thing as to move in that direction.

2. That which is called a *deſire* and *willingneſs* for thoſe inward duties, in ſuch as do not perform, has reſpect to theſe duties only indirectly and remotely, and is improperly repreſented as a willingneſs for them; not only becauſe (as was obſerved before) it reſpects thoſe good volitions only in a diſtant view, and with reſpect to future time; but alſo becauſe evermore, not theſe things themſelves, but ſomething elſe, that is alien and foreign, is the object that terminates theſe volitions and deſires.

A drunkard, who continues in his drunkenneſs, being under the power of a love, and vio-

lent appetite to ſtrong drink, and without any love to virtue; but being alſo extremely covetous and cloſe, and very much exerciſed and grieved at the diminution of his eſtate, and proſpect of poverty, may in a ſort *deſire* the virtue of temperance; and though his preſent will is to gratify his extravagant appetite, yet he may wiſh, he had a heart to forbear future acts of intemperance, and forſake his exceſſes, through an unwillingneſs to part with his money: but ſtill he goes on with his drunkenneſs; his wiſhes and endeavours are inſufficient and ineffectual: ſuch a man has no proper, direct, ſincere willingneſs to forſake this vice, and the vicious deeds which belong to it: for he acts voluntarily in continuing to drink to exceſs: his deſire is very improperly called a willingneſs to be temperate; it is no true deſire of that virtue; for it is not that virtue, that terminates his wiſhes; nor have they any direct reſpect at all to it. It is only *the ſaving his money*, and avoiding poverty, that terminates, and exhauſts the whole ſtrength of his deſire. The virtue of temperance is regarded only very indirectly and improperly, even as a neceſſary means of gratifying the vice of covetouſneſs.

So, a man of an exceeding corrupt and wicked heart, who has no love to God and Jeſus Chriſt, but, on the contrary, being very profanely and carnally inclined, has the greateſt diſtaſte of the things of religion, and enmity againſt them; yet being of a family, that from one generation to another, have moſt of them died, in youth, of an hereditary conſumption; and ſo having little hope of living long; and having been inſtructed in the neceſſity of a ſupreme love to Chriſt, and gratitude for his death and ſufferings, in order

to his ſalvation from eternal miſery; if under theſe circumſtances he ſhould, through fear of eternal torments, wiſh he had ſuch a diſpoſition: but his profane and carnal heart remaining, he continues ſtill in his habitual diſtaſte *of*, and enmity *to* God and religion, and wholly without any exerciſe of that love and gratitude, (as doubtleſs the very devils themſelves, notwithſtanding all the deviliſhneſs of their temper, would wiſh for a holy heart, if by that means they could get out of hell:) in this caſe, there is no ſincere Willingneſs to love Chriſt and chuſe him as his chief good: theſe holy diſpoſitions and exerciſes are not at all the direct object of the will: they truly ſhare no part of the inclination or deſire of the ſoul; but all is terminated on deliverance from torment: and theſe graces and pious volitions, notwithſtanding this forced conſent, are looked upon undeſirable; as when a ſick man deſires a doſe he greatly abhors, to ſave his life.—From theſe things it appears,

3. That this indirect Willingneſs which has been ſpoken of, is not that exerciſe of the will which the command requires; but is entirely a different one; being a volition of a different nature, and terminated altogether on different objects; wholly falling ſhort of that virtue of will, which the command has reſpect to.

4. This other volition, which has only ſome indirect concern with the duty required, cannot excuſe for the want of that good will itſelf, which is commanded; being not the thing which anſwers and fulfils the command, and being wholly deſtitute of the virtue which the command ſeeks.

Further to illustrate this matter.—If a child has a most excellent father, that has ever treated him with fatherly kindness and tenderness, and has every way, in the highest degree, merited his love and dutiful regard, being with all very wealthy; but the son is of so vile a disposition, that he inveterately hates his father; and yet, apprehending that his hatred of him is like to prove his ruin, by bringing him finally to poverty and abject circumstances, through his father's disinheriting him, or otherwise; which is exceeding cross to his avarice and ambition; he, therefore, wishes it were otherwise: but yet remaining under the invincible power of his vile and malignant disposition, he continues still in his settled hatred of his father. Now, if such a son's indirect willingness to have love and honour towards his father, at all acquits or excuses before God, for his failing of actually exercising these dispositions towards him, which God requires, it must be on one of these accounts. (1.) Either that it answers and fulfils the command. But this it does not by the supposition; because the thing commanded is love and honour to his worthy parent. If the command be proper and just as is supposed, then it obliges to the thing commanded; and so nothing else but that can answer the obligation. Or, (2.) It must be at least, because there is that virtue or goodness in his indirect willingness, that is equivalent to the virtue required; and so balances or countervails it, and makes up for the want of it. But that also is contrary to the supposition. The willingness the son has merely from a regard to money and honour, has no goodness in it, to countervail the want of the pious filial respect required.

Sincerity and reality, in that indirect willingness, which has been spoken of, does not make it the better. That which is real and hearty is often called sincere; whether it be in virtue or vice. Some persons are sincerely *bad;* others are sincerely *good;* and others may be sincere and hearty in things, which are in their own nature *indifferent;* as a man may be sincerely desirous of eating when he is hungry. But a being sincere, hearty and in good earnest, is no virtue, unless it be in a thing that is virtuous. A man may be sincere and hearty in joining a crew of pirates, or a gang of robbers. When the devils cried out, and besought Christ not to torment them, it was no mere pretence; they were very hearty in their desires not to be tormented: but this did not make their will or desires virtuous. And if men have sincere desires, which are in their kind and nature no better, it can be no excuse for the want of any required virtue.

And as a man's being sincere in such an indirect desire or *willingness* to do his duty, as has been mentioned, cannot excuse for the want of performance; so it is with *Endeavours* arising from such a willingness. The Endeavours can have no more goodness in them, than the will which they are the effect and expression of. And, therefore, however sincere and real, and however great a person's Endeavours are; yea though they should be to the utmost of his ability; unless the will which they proceed from be truly good and virtuous, they can be of no avail, influence or weight to any purpose whatsoever, in a moral sense or respect. That which is not truly virtuous, in God's sight, is looked upon, by Him, as good for nothing: and so can be of no value, weight or influence in his account, to recom-

mend, satisfy excuse or make up for any moral defect. For nothing can acounter-balance evil, but good. If evil be in one scale, and we put a great deal into the other, sincere and earnest Desires, and many and great Endeavours; yet, if there be no real goodness in all, there is no weight in it; and so it does nothing towards balancing the real weight, which is in the opposite scale. It is only like the substracting a thousand noughts from before a real number, which leaves the sum just as it was.

Indeed such Endeavours may have a *negatively* good influence. Those things, which have no positive virtue have no positive moral influence; yet they may be an occasion of persons avoiding some positive evils. As if a man were in the water with a neighbour, that he had ill-will to, who could not swim, holding him by his hand; which neighbour was much in debt to him; and should be tempted to let him sink and drown; but should refuse to comply with the temptation; not from love to his neighbour. but from the love of money, and because by his drowning he should lose his debt; that which he does in preserving his neighbour from drowning, is nothing good in the sight of God: yet hereby he avoids the greater guilt that would have been contracted, if he had designedly let his neighbour sink and perish. But when *Arminians*, in their disputes with *Calvinists*, insist so much on sincere Desires and Endeavours, as what must excuse men, must be accepted of God, &c. it is manifest they have respect to some positive moral weight or influence of those Desires and Endeavours. Accepting, justifying or excusing on the account of sincere honest Endeavours (as they are called) and men's doing what they can, &c. has relation

to ſome moral value, ſomething that is accepted as good, and as ſuch, countervailing ſome defect.

But there is a great and unknown deceit ariſing from the ambiguity of the phraſe, *ſincere Endeavours*. Indeed there is a vaſt indiſtinctneſs and unfixedneſs in moſt, or at leaſt very many of the terms uſed to expreſs things pertaining to moral and ſpiritual matters. Whence ariſe innumerable miſtakes, ſtrong prejudices, inextricable confuſion, and endleſs controverſy.

The word *ſincere* is moſt commonly uſed to ſignify ſomething that is good: men are habituated to underſtand by it the ſame as *honeſt* and *upright*; which terms excite an idea of ſomething good in the ſtricteſt and higheſt ſenſe; good in the ſight of Him, who ſees not only the outward appearance, but the heart. And, therefore, men think that if a perſon be *ſincere*, he will certainly be accepted. If it be ſaid that any one is ſincere in his Endeavours, this ſuggeſts to men's minds as much, as that his heart and will is good, that there is no defect of duty, as to virtuous inclination; he *honeſtly* and *uprightly* deſires and endeavours to do as he is required; and this leads them to ſuppoſe, that it would be very hard and unreaſonable to puniſh him, only becauſe he is unſucceſsful in his Endeavours, the thing endeavoured being beyond his power.—Whereas it ought to be obſerved, that the word *ſincere* has theſe different ſignifications.

1. *Sincerity*, as the word is ſometimes uſed, ſignifies no more than *reality of Will and Endeavour*, with reſpect to any thing that is profeſſed or pretended; without any conſideration of the

nature of the principle or aim, whence this real Will and true Endeavour arises. If a man has some real desire to obtain a thing, either direct or indirect, or does really endeavour after a thing, he is said sincerely to desire or endeavour it; without any consideration of the goodness or virtuousness of the principle he acts from, or any excellency or worthiness of the end he acts for. Thus a man, who is kind to his neighbour's wife, who is sick and languishing, and very helpful in her case, makes a shew of desiring and endeavouring her restoration to health and vigour; and not only makes such a shew, but there is a reality in his pretence, he does heartily and earnestly desire to have her health restored, and uses his true and utmost Endeavours for it; he is said sincerely to desire and endeavour it, because he does so truly or really; though perhaps the principle he acts from, is no other than a vile and scandalous passion; having lived in adultery with her, he earnestly desires to have her health and vigour restored, that he may return to his criminal pleasures with her. Or,

2. By *sincerity* is meant, not merely a *reality* of Will and Endeavour of some sort or other, and from some consideration or other, but a *virtuous sincerity.* That is, that in the performance of those particular acts, that are the matter of virtue or duty, there be not only the matter, but the form and essence of virtue, consisting in the aim that governs the act, and the principle exercised in it. There is not only the reality of the act, that is as it were the *body* of the duty; but also the *soul*, which should properly belong to such a body. In this sense, a man is said to be sincere, when he acts with a *pure intention;* not from sinister views, or bye-ends: he not only

in reality deſires and ſeeks the thing to be done, or qualification to be obtained, for ſome end or other; but he wills the thing directly and properly, as neither forced nor bribed; the virtue of the thing is properly the object of the will.

In the former ſenſe, a man is ſaid to be ſincere, in oppoſition to a mere pretence, and *ſhew of the particular thing to be done or exhibited*, without any real deſire or Endeavour at all. In the latter ſenſe, a man is ſaid to be ſincere, in oppoſition to that *ſhew of virtue there is in merely doing the matter of duty*, without the reality of the virtue itſelf in the ſoul, and the eſſence of it, which there is a ſhew of. A man may be ſincere in the former ſenſe, and yet in the latter be in the ſight of God, who ſearches the heart, a vile hypocrite.

In the latter kind of ſincerity, only, is there any thing truly valuable or acceptable in the ſight of God. And this is the thing, which in Scripture is called *ſincerity. uprightneſs*, *integrity*, *truth in the inward parts*, and a *being of a perfect heart*. And if there be ſuch a ſincerity, and ſuch a degree of it as there ought to be. and there be any thing further that the man is not able to perform, or which does not prove to be connected with his ſincere Deſires and Endeavours, the man is wholly excuſed and acquitted in the ſight of God; his will ſhall ſurely be accepted for his deed: and ſuch a ſincere Will and Endeavour is all that in ſtrictneſs is required of him, by any command of God. But as to the other kind of ſincerity of Deſires and Endeavours, it having no virtue in it, (as was obſerved before) can be of no avail before God, in any caſe, to recommend,

satisfy, or excuse, and has no positive moral weight or influence whatsoever.

*Corol.* 1. Hence it may be inferred, that nothing in the reason and nature of things appears, from the consideration of any moral weight of that former kind of sincerity, which has been spoken of, at all obliging us to believe, or leading us to suppose, that God has made any positive Promises of salvation, or grace, or any saving assistance, or any spiritual benefit whatsoever, to any Desires, Prayers, Endeavours, Striving, or Obedience of those, who hitherto have no true virtue or holiness in their hearts; though we should suppose all the Sincerity, and the utmost degree of Endeavour, that is possible to be in a person without holiness.

Some object against God's requiring, as the condition of salvation, those holy exercises, which are the result of a supernatural renovation: such as a supreme respect to Christ, love to God, loving holiness for its own sake, &c. that these inward dispositions and exercises are above men's power, as they are by nature; and therefore that we may conclude, that when men are brought to be sincere in their Endeavours, and do as well as they can, they are accepted; and that this must be all that God requires, in order to men's being received as the objects of his favour, and must be what God has appointed as the condition of salvation. Concerning which, I would observe, that in such a manner of speaking of *men's being accepted, because they are sincere, and do as well as they can*, there is evidently a supposition of some virtue, some degree of that which is truly good; though it does not go so far as were to be wished. For if

men *do what they can*, unless their so doing be from some good principle, disposition, or exercise of heart, some virtuous inclination or act of the will; their so doing what they can, is in some respects not a whit better than if they did nothing at all. In such a case, there is no more positive moral goodness in a man's doing what he can, than in a wind-mill's doing what it can; because the action does no more proceed from virtue; and there is nothing in such sincerity of Endeavour, or doing what we can, that should render it any more a proper or fit recommendation to positive favour and acceptance, or the condition of any reward or actual benefit, than doing nothing; for both the one and the other are alike nothing, as to any true moral weight or value.

*Corol.* 2. Hence also it follows, there is nothing that appears in the reason and nature of things, which can justly lead us to determine, that God will certainly give the necessary means of salvation, or some way or other bestow true holiness and eternal life on those *Heathen*, who are sincere, (in the sense above explained) in their Endeavours to find out the will of the Deity, and to please him, according to their light, that they may escape his future displeasure and wrath, and obtain happiness in the future state, through his favour.

## SECTION VI.

*Liberty of* Indifference, *not only not necessary to* Virtue, *but utterly inconsistent with it; and all, either virtuous or vicious* Habits or Inclinations, *inconsistent with* Arminian *Notions of Liberty and moral Agency.*

TO suppose such a freedom of will, as *Arminians* talk of, to be requisite to Virtue and Vice, is many ways contrary to common sense.

If Indifference belongs to Liberty of Will, as *Arminians* suppose, and it be essential to a virtuous action, that it be performed in a state of Liberty, as they also suppose; it will follow, that it is essential to a virtuous action, that it be performed in a state of Indifference: and if it be performed in a *state* of Indifference, then doubtless it must be performed in the *time* of Indifference. And so it will follow, that in order to the virtuousness of an act, the heart must be indifferent in the time of the performance of that act, and the more indifferent and cold the heart is with relation to the act, which is performed, so much the better; because the act is performed with so much the greater Liberty. But is this agreeable to the light of nature? Is it agreeable to the notions, which mankind, in all ages, have of Virtue, that it lies in that, which is contrary to Indifference, even in the *Tendency* and *Inclination* of the heart to virtuous action; and that the stronger the Inclination, and so the further from Indifference, the more virtuous the *heart*, and so

much the more praiſe-worthy the *act* which proceeds from it?

If we ſhould ſuppoſe (contrary to what has been before demonſtrated) that there may be an act of will in a ſtate of Indifference; for inſtance, this act, *viz.* The will's determining to put itſelf out of a ſtate of Indifference, and give itſelf a preponderation one way, then it would follow, on *Arminian* principles, that this act or determination of the will is that alone wherein Virtue conſiſts, becauſe this only is performed, while the mind remains in a ſtate of Indifference, and ſo in a ſtate of Liberty: for when once the mind is put out of its equilibrium, it is no longer in ſuch a ſtate; and therefore all the acts, which follow afterwards, proceeding from bias, can have the nature neither of Virtue nor Vice. Or if the thing, which the will can do, while yet in a ſtate of Indifference, and ſo of Liberty, be only to ſuſpend acting, and determine to take the matter into conſideration, then this determination is that alone wherein Virtue conſiſts, and not proceeding to action after the ſcale is turned by conſideration. So that it will follow, from theſe principles, all that is done after the mind, by any means, is once out of its equilibrium and already poſſeſſed by an Inclination, and ariſing from that Inclination, has nothing of the nature of Virtue or Vice, and is worthy of neither blame nor praiſe. But how plainly contrary is this to the univerſal ſenſe of mankind, and to the notion they have of ſincerely virtuous actions? Which is, that they are actions, which proceed from a heart *well diſpoſed* and *inclined;* and the *ſtronger*, and the more *fixed* and *determined* the good diſpoſion of the heart, the greater the ſincerity of Virtue, and ſo the more of the truth and reality

of it. But if there be any acts, which are done in a ſtate of equilibrium, or ſpring immediately from perfect Indifference and coldneſs of heart, they cannot ariſe from any good principle or diſpoſition in the heart; and, conſequently, according to common ſenſe, have no ſincere goodneſs in them, having no virtue of heart in them. To have a virtuous heart, is to have a heart that favours Virtue, and is friendly to it, and not one perfectly cold and indifferent about it.

And beſides, the actions that are done in a ſtate of Indifference, or that ariſe immediately out of ſuch a ſtate, cannot be virtuous, becauſe, by the ſuppoſition, they are not determined by any preceding choice. For if there be preceding choice, then choice intervenes between the act and the ſtate of Indifference; which is contrary to the ſuppoſition of the act's ariſing immediately out of Indifference. But thoſe acts, which are not determined by preceding choice, cannot be virtuous or vicious by *Arminian* principles, becauſe they are not determined by the will. So that neither one way, nor the other, can any actions be virtuous or vicious, according to *Arminian* principles. If the action *be determined* by a preceding act of choice, it cannot be virtuous; becauſe the action is not done in a ſtate of Indifference, nor does immediately ariſe from ſuch a ſtate; and ſo is not done in a ſtate of Liberty. If the action be *not determined* by a preceding act of choice, then it cannot be virtuous; becauſe then the will is not ſelf-determined in it. So that it is made certain, that neither Virtue nor Vice can ever find any place in the univerſe.

Moreover, that it is neceſſary to a virtuous action that it be performed in a ſtate of Indif-

ference, under a notion of that being a ſtate of Liberty, is contrary to common ſenſe; as it is a dictate of common ſenſe, that Indifference itſelf, in many caſes, is vicious, and ſo to a high degree. As if when I ſee my neighbour or near friend, and one who has in the higheſt degree merited of me, in extreme diſtreſs, and ready to periſh, I find an Indifference in my heart with reſpect to any thing propoſed to be done, which I can eaſily do, for his relief. So if it ſhould be propoſed to me to blaſpheme God, or kill my father, or do numberleſs other things, which might be mentioned: the being indifferent, for a moment, would be highly vicious and vile.

And it may be further obſerved, that to ſuppoſe this Liberty of Indifference is eſſential to Virtue and Vice, deſtroys the great difference of degrees of the guilt of different crimes, and takes away the heinouſneſs of the moſt flagitious horrid iniquities; ſuch as adultery, beſtiality, murder, perjury, blaſphemy, &c. For, according to theſe principles, there is no harm at all in having the mind in a ſtate of perfect Indifference with reſpect to theſe crimes: nay, it is abſolutely neceſſary in order to any Virtue in avoiding them, or Vice in doing them. But for the mind to be in a ſtate of Indifference with reſpect to them, is to be next door to doing them: it is then infinitely near to chuſing, and ſo committing the fact: for equilibrium is the next ſtep to a degree of preponderation; and one, even the leaſt degree of preponderation (all things conſidered) is choice. And not only ſo, but for the will to be in a ſtate of perfect equilibrium with reſpect to ſuch crimes, is for the mind to be in ſuch a ſtate, as to be full as likely to chuſe them as to refuſe them, to do them as to omit them. And

if our minds muſt be in ſuch a ſtate, wherein it is as near to chuſing as refuſing, and wherein it muſt of neceſſity, according to the nature of things, be as likely to commit them, as to refrain from them; where is the exceeding heinouſneſs of chuſing and committing them? If there be no harm in often being in ſuch a ſtate, wherein the probability of doing and forbearing are exactly equal, there being an equilibrium, and no more tendency to one than the other; then, according to the nature and laws of ſuch a contingence, it may be expected, as an *inevitable* conſequence of ſuch a diſpoſition of things, that we ſhould chuſe them as often as reject them: that it ſhould generally ſo fall out is neceſſary, as equality in the effect is the natural conſequence of the equal tendency of the cauſe. or of the antecedent ſtate of things from which the effect ariſes. Why then ſhould we be ſo exceedingly to blame, if it does ſo fall out?

It is many ways apparent, that the *Arminian* ſcheme of Liberty is utterly inconſiſtent with the being of any ſuch things as either virtuous or vicious Habits or Diſpoſitions. If Liberty of *Indifference* be eſſential to moral agency, then there can be no Virtue in any habitual Inclinations of the heart; which are contrary to Indifference, and imply in their nature the very deſtruction and excluſion of it. They ſuppoſe nothing can be virtuous, in which no Liberty is exerciſed; but how abſurd is it to talk of exerciſing Indifference under bias and preponderation!

And if *ſelf-determining power* in the will be neceſſary to moral agency, praiſe, blame, &c. then nothing done by the will can be any further praiſe or blame-worthy, than ſo far as the

will is moved, ſwayed and determined by itſelf, and the ſcales turned by the ſovereign power the will has over itſelf. And therefore the will muſt not be put out of its balance already, the preponderation muſt not be determined and effected before-hand; and ſo the ſelf-determining act anticipated. Thus it appears another way, that habitual bias is inconſiſtent with that Liberty, which *Arminians* ſuppoſe to be neceſſary to Virtue or Vice; and ſo it follows, that habitual bias itſelf cannot be either virtuous or vicious.

The ſame thing follows from their doctrine concerning the Inconſiſtence of *Neceſſity* with Liberty, Praiſe, Diſpraiſe, &c. None will deny, that Bias and Inclination may be ſo ſtrong as to be invincible, and leave no poſſibility of the will's determining contrary to it; and ſo be attended with Neceſſity. This Dr. Whitby allows concerning the will of God, Angels, and glorified Saints, with reſpect to good; and the will of Devils, with reſpect to evil. Therefore, if Neceſſity be inconſiſtent with Liberty; then, when fixed Inclination is to ſuch a degree of ſtrength, it utterly excludes all Virtue, Vice, Praiſe or Blame. And, if ſo, then the nearer Habits are to this ſtrength, the more do they impede Liberty, and ſo diminiſh Praiſe and Blame. If very ſtrong Habits deſtroy Liberty, the leſſer ones proportionably hinder it, according to their degree of ſtrength. And therefore it will follow, that then is the act moſt virtuous or vicious, when performed without any Inclination or habitual Bias at all; becauſe it is then performed with moſt Liberty.

Every prepoſſeſſing fixed Bias on the mind brings a degree of moral Inability for the con-

trary; becauſe ſo far as the mind is biaſſed and prepoſſeſſed, ſo much *hinderance* is there of the contrary. And therefore if moral Inability be inconſiſtent with moral agency, or the nature of Virtue and Vice, then, ſo far as there is any ſuch thing as evil diſpoſition of heart, or habitual depravity of Inclination; whether covetouſneſs, pride, malice, cruelty, or whatever elſe; ſo much the more excuſeable perſons are; ſo much the leſs have their evil acts of this kind the nature of Vice. And, on the contrary, whatever excellent diſpoſitions and Inclinations they have, ſo much are they the leſs virtuous.

It is evident, that no habitual diſpoſition of heart, whether it be to a greater or leſs degree, can be in *any degree* virtuous or vicious; or the actions which proceed from them *at all* praiſe or blame-worthy. Becauſe, though we ſhould ſuppoſe the Habit not to be of ſuch ſtrength, as wholly to take away all moral ability and ſelf-determining power; or hinder but that, although the act be partly from Bias, yet it may be in part from ſelf-determination; yet in this caſe, all that is from antecedent Bias muſt be ſet aſide, as of no conſideration; and in eſtimating the degree of Virtue or Vice, no more muſt be conſidered than what ariſes from ſelf-determining power, without any influence of that Bias, becauſe Liberty is exerciſed in no more: ſo that all that is the exerciſe of habitual Inclination, is thrown away, as not belonging to the morality of the action. By which it appears, that no exerciſe of theſe Habits, let them be ſtronger or weaker, can ever have any thing of the nature of either Virtue or Vice.

Here if any one ſhould ſay, that notwithſtanding all theſe things, there may be the nature of Virtue and Vice in the habits of the mind; becauſe theſe Habits may be the effects of thoſe acts, wherein the mind exerciſed Liberty; that however the forementioned reaſons will prove that no Habits, which are natural, or that are born or created with us, can be either virtuous or vicious; yet they will not prove this of Habits, which have been acquired and eſtabliſhed by repeated free acts.

To ſuch an objector I would ſay, that this evaſion will not at all help the matter. For if freedom of will be eſſential to the very *nature* of Virtue and Vice, then there is no Virtue or Vice but only in that very thing, wherein this Liberty is exerciſed. If a man in one or more things, that he does, exerciſes Liberty, and then by thoſe acts is brought into ſuch circumſtances, that his Liberty ceaſes, and there follows a long ſeries of acts or events that come to paſs neceſſarily; thoſe conſequent acts are not virtuous or vicious, rewardable or puniſhable; but only the free acts that eſtabliſhed this neceſſity; for in them alone was the man free. The following effects, that are neceſſary, have no more of the nature of Virtue or Vice, than health or ſickneſs of body have properly the nature of Virtue or Vice, being the effects of a courſe of free acts of temperance or intemperance; or than the good qualities of a clock are of the nature of Virtue, which are the effects of free acts of the artificer; or the goodneſs and ſweetneſs of the fruits of a garden are moral Virtues being the effects of the free and faithful acts of the gardener. If Liberty be abſolutely requiſite to the morality of actions, and neceſſity wholly inconſiſtent with it,

as *Arminians* greatly insist; then no *necessary effects* whatsoever, let the cause be never so good or bad, can be virtuous or vicious; but the virtue or vice must be only in the *free cause*. Agreeably to this, Dr. Whitby supposes, the necessity that attends the good and evil Habits of the saints in heaven, and damned in hell, which are the consequence of their free acts in their state of probation, are not rewardable or punishable.

On the whole, it appears, that if the notions of *Arminians* concerning liberty and moral agency be true, it will follow, that there is no virtue in any such Habits or qualities as humility, meekness, patience, mercy, gratitude, generosity, heavenly-mindedness; nothing at all praiseworthy in loving Christ above father and mother, wife and children, or our own lives; or in delight in holiness, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, love to enemies, universal benevolence to mankind: and, on the other hand, there is nothing at all vicious, or worthy of dispraise, in the most sordid, beastly, malignant, devilish dispositions; in being ungrateful, profane, habitually hating God, and things sacred and holy; or in being most treacherous, envious, and cruel towards men. For all these things are *Dispositions* and *Inclinations* of the heart. And in short, there is no such thing as any virtuous or vicious *quality of mind*; no such thing as inherent virtue and holiness, or vice and sin: and the stronger those Habits or Dispositions are, which used to be called virtuous and vicious, the further they are from being so indeed; the more violent men's lusts are, the more fixed their pride, envy, ingratitude and maliciousness, still the further are they from being blame-worthy. If there be a man that by his own repeated acts, or

by any other means, is come to be of the moſt helliſh Diſpoſition, deſperately inclined to treat his neighbours with injurioufneſs, contempt and malignity; the further they ſhould be from any Diſpoſition to be angry with him, or in the leaſt to blame him. So, on the other hand, if there be a perſon, who is of a moſt excellent ſpirit, ſtrongly inclining him to the moſt amiable actions, admirably meek, benevolent, &c. ſo much is he further from any thing rewardable or commendable. On which principles, the man Jeſus Chriſt was very far from being praiſe-worthy for thoſe acts of holineſs and kindneſs, which He performed, theſe propenſities being ſtrong in his heart. And above all, the infinitely holy and gracious God is infinitely remote from any thing commendable, his good Inclinations being infinitely ſtrong, and He, therefore, at the utmoſt poſſible diſtance from being at liberty. And in all caſes, the ſtronger the Inclinations of any are to virtue, and the more they love it, the leſs virtuous they are; and the more they love wickedneſs, the leſs vicious.——Whether theſe things are agreeable to Scripture, let every Chriſtian, and every man who has read the Bible, judge: and whether they are agreeable to common ſenſe, let every one judge, that has human underſtanding in exerciſe.

And, if we purſue theſe principles, we ſhall find that virtue and vice are wholly excluded out of the world; and that there never was, nor ever can be any ſuch thing as one or the other; either in God, angels or men. No propenſity, Diſpoſition or Habit can be virtuous or vicious, as has been ſhewn; becauſe they, ſo far as they take place, deſtroy the freedom of the will, the foundation of all moral agency, and exclude all

capacity of either Virtue or Vice.—And if Habits and Dispositions themselves be not virtuous nor vicious, neither can the exercise of these Dispositions be so: for the exercise of *Bias* is not the exercise of *free self-determining will*, and so there is no exercise of liberty in it. Consequently, no man is virtuous or vicious, either in being well or ill-disposed, nor in acting from a good or bad Disposition. And whether this Bias or Disposition, be habitual or not, if it exists but a moment before the act of will, which is the effect of it, it alters not the case, as to the necessity of the effect. Or if there be no previous Disposition at all, either habitual or occasional, that determines the act, then it is not choice that determines it: it is therefore a contingence, that happens to the man, arising from nothing in him; and is necessary, as to any Inclination or Choice of his; and, therefore, cannot make him either the better or worse, any more than a tree is better than other trees, because it oftener happens to be lit upon by a swan or nightingale: or a rock more vicious than other rocks, because rattle-snakes have happened oftener to crawl over it. So that there is no Virtue nor Vice in good or bad Dispositions, either fixed or transient; nor any Virtue or Vice in acting from any good or bad previous Inclination; nor yet any virtue or vice, in acting wholly without any previous Inclination. Where then shall we find room for Virtue or Vice?

## SECTION VII.

### Arminian *Notions of moral Agency inconsistent with all influence of* Motive *and* Inducement, *in either virtuous or vicious Actions.*

AS *Arminian* notions of that liberty, which is essential to virtue or vice, are inconsistent with common sense, in their being inconsistent with all virtuous or vicious habits and dispositions; so they are no less so in their inconsistency with all influence of Motives in moral actions.

It is equally against those notions of liberty of will, whether there be, previous to the act of choice, a preponderancy of the inclination, or a preponderancy of those circumstances, which have a tendency to move the inclination. And, indeed, it comes to just the same thing; to say, the circumstances of the mind are such as tend to sway and turn its inclination one way, is the same thing as to say, the inclination of the mind, as under such circumstances, tends that way.

Or if any think it most proper to say, that Motives do alter the inclination, and give a new bias to the mind, it will not alter the case, as to the present argument. For if Motives operate by giving the mind an inclination, then they operate by destroying the mind's indifference, and laying it under a bias. But to do this, is to destroy the *Arminian* freedom: it is not to leave the will to its own self-determination, but to bring it into subjection to the power of something ex-

trinſic, which operates upon it, ſways and determines it, previous to its own determination. So that what is done from Motive, cannot be either virtuous or vicious.—And beſides, if the acts of the will are excited by Motives, thoſe Motives are the *cauſes* of thoſe acts of the will; which makes the acts of the will neceſſary; as effects neceſſarily follow the efficiency of the cauſe. And if the influence and power of the Motive cauſes the volition, then the influence of the Motive determines volition, and volition does not determine itſelf; and ſo is not free, in the ſenſe of *Arminians* (as has been largely ſhewn already) and conſequently can be neither virtuous nor vicious.

The ſuppoſition, which has already been taken notice of as an inſufficient evaſion in other caſes, would be, in like manner, impertinently alledged in this caſe; namely, the ſuppoſition that liberty conſiſts in a power of ſuſpending action for the preſent, in order to deliberation. If it ſhould be ſaid, Though it be true, that the will is under a neceſſity of finally following the ſtrongeſt Motive; yet it may, for the preſent, forbear to act upon the Motive preſented, till there has been opportunity thoroughly to conſider it, and compare its real weight with the merit of other Motives. I anſwer as follows;

Here again, it muſt be remembered, that if determining thus to ſuſpend and conſider, be that act of the will, wherein alone liberty is exerciſed, then in this all virtue and vice muſt conſiſt; and the acts that follow this conſideration, and are the effects of it, being neceſſary, are no more virtuous or vicious than ſome good or bad events, which happen when they are faſt aſleep,

and are the consequences of what they did when they were awake. Therefore, I would here observe two things:

1. To suppose, that all virtue and vice, in every case, consists in determining, whether to take time for consideration or not, is not agreeable to common sense. For, according to such a supposition, the most horrid crimes, adultery, murder, sodomy, blasphemy, *&c.* do not at all consist in the horrid nature of the things themselves, but only in the neglect of thorough consideration before they were perpetrated, which brings their viciousness to a small matter, and makes all crimes equal. If it be said, that neglect of consideration, when such heinous evils are proposed to choice, is worse than in other cases: I answer, this is inconsistent, as it supposes the very thing to be, which, at the same time, is supposed not to be; it supposes all moral evil, all viciousness and heinousness, does not consist merely in the want of consideration. It supposes some crimes *in themselves*, in their *own nature*, to be more heinous than others, antecedent to consideration or inconsideration, which lays the person under a previous obligation to consider in some cases more than others.

2. If it were so, that all virtue and vice, in every case, consisted only in the act of the will, whereby it determines whether to consider or no, it would not alter the case in the least, as to the present argument. For still in this act of the will on this determination, it is induced by some Motive, and necessarily follows the strongest Motive; and so is necessarily, even in that act wherein alone it is either virtuous or vicious.

One thing more I would obſerve, concerning the inconſiſtence of *Arminian* notions of moral agency with the influence of Motives.—I ſuppoſe none will deny, that it is poſſible for Motives to be ſet before the mind ſo powerful, and exhibited in ſo ſtrong a light, and under ſo advantageous circumſtances, as to be invincible; and ſuch as the mind cannot but yield to. In this caſe, *Arminians* will doubtleſs ſay, liberty is deſtroyed. And if ſo, then if Motives are exhibited with half ſo much power, they hinder liberty in proportion to their ſtrength, and go half-way towards deſtroying it. If a thouſand degrees of Motive aboliſh all liberty, then five hundred take it half away. If one degree of the influence of Motive does not at all infringe or diminiſh liberty then no more do two degrees; for nothing doubled, is ſtill nothing. And if two degrees do not diminiſh the will's liberty, no more do four, eight, ſixteen, or ſix thouſand. For nothing multiplied never ſo much comes to but nothing. If there be nothing in the nature of motive or moral ſuaſion, that is at all oppoſite to liberty, then the greateſt degree of it cannot hurt liberty. But if there be any thing in the nature of the thing, that is againſt liberty, then the leaſt degree of it hurts it in ſome degree; and conſequently hurts and diminiſhes virtue. If invincible motives, to that action which is good, take away all the freedom of the act, and ſo all the virtue of it; then the more forceable the Motives are, ſo much the worſe, ſo much the leſs virtue; and the weaker the motives are, the better for the cauſe of virtue; and none is beſt of all.

Now let it be conſidered, whether theſe things are agreeable to common ſenſe. If it ſhould be

allowed, that there are ſome inſtances wherein the ſoul chuſes without any motive, what virtue can there be in ſuch a choice? I am ſure, there is no prudence or wiſdom in it. Such a choice is made for no good end; for it is for no end at all. If it were for any end, the view of the end would be the motive exciting to the act; and if the act be for no good end, and ſo from no good aim, then there is no good intention in it; and, therefore, according to all our natural notions of virtue, no more virtue in it than in the motion of the ſmoke, which is driven to and fro by the wind, without any aim or end in the thing moved, and which knows not whither, nor why and wherefore, it is moved.

*Corol.* 1. By theſe things it appears, that the argument againſt the *Calviniſts*, taken from the uſe of counſels, exhortations, invitations, expoſtulations, *&c.* ſo much inſiſted on by *Arminians*, is truly againſt themſelves. For theſe things can operate no other way to any good effect, than as in them is exhibited Motive and Inducement, tending to excite and determine the acts of the will. But it follows, on their principles, that the acts of will excited by ſuch cauſes, cannot be virtuous; becauſe, ſo far as they are from theſe, they are not from the will's ſelf-determining power. Hence it will follow, that it is not worth the while to offer any arguments to perſuade men to any virtuous volition or voluntary action; it is in vain to ſet before them the wiſdom and amiableneſs of ways of virtue, or the odiouſneſs and folly of ways of vice. This notion of liberty and moral agency fruſtrates all endeavours to draw men to virtue by inſtruction or perſuaſion, precept or example: for though theſe things may induce men to what is

*materially* virtuous, yet at the ſame time they take away the *form* of Virtue, becauſe they deſtroy Liberty; as they, by their own power, put the will out of its equilibrium, determine and turn the ſcale, and take the work of ſelf-determining power out of its hands. And the clearer the inſtructions that are given, the more powerful the arguments that are uſed, and the more moving the perſuaſions or examples, the more likely they are to fruſtrate their own deſign; becauſe they have ſo much the greater tendency to put the will out of its balance, to hinder its freedom of ſelf-determination; and ſo to exclude the very form of virtue, and the eſſence of whatſoever is praiſe-worthy.

So it clearly follows, from theſe principles, that God has no hand in any man's virtue, nor does at all promote it, either by a phyſical or moral influence; that none of the moral methods, He uſes with men to promote virtue in the world, have tendency to the attainment of that end; that all the inſtructions, which He has given to men, from the beginning of the world to this day, by Prophets or Apoſtles, or by His Son Jeſus Chriſt; that all his counſels, invitations, promiſes, threatenings, warnings and expoſtulations; that all means, He has uſed with men, in ordinances, or providences; yea, all influences of his Spirit, ordinary and extraordinary, have had no tendency at all to excite any one virtuous act of the mind, or to promote any thing morally good and commendable, in any reſpect.—For there is no way that theſe or any other means can promote virtue, but one of theſe three. Either (1.) By a phyſical operation on the heart. But all effects that are wrought in men in this way, have no virtue in them, by

the concurring voice of all *Arminians*. Or, (2.) Morally, by exhibiting Motives to the underſtanding, to excite good acts in the will. But it has been demonſtrated, that volitions, which are excited by Motives, are neceſſary, and not excited by a ſelf-moving power; and therefore, by their principles, there is no virtue in them. Or, (3.) By merely giving the will an opportunity to determine itſelf concerning the objects propoſed, either to chuſe or reject, by its own uncauſed, unmoved, uninfluenced ſelf-determination. And if this be all, then all thoſe means do no more to promote virtue than vice: for they do nothing but give the will opportunity to determine itſelf *either way*, either to good or bad, without laying it under any bias to either: and ſo there is really as much of an opportunity given to determine in favour of evil, as of good.

Thus that horrid blaſphemous conſequence will certainly follow from the *Arminian* doctrine, which they charge on others; namely, that God acts an inconſiſtent part in uſing ſo many counſels, warnings, invitations, intreaties, *&c.* with ſinners, to induce them to forſake ſin, and turn to the ways of virtue; and that all are inſincere and fallacious. It will follow, from their doctrine, that God does theſe things when he knows, at the ſame time, that they have no manner of tendency to promote the effect, He ſeems to aim at; yea, knows that if they have any influence, this very influence will be inconſiſtent with ſuch an effect, and will prevent it. But what an imputation of inſincerity would this fix on Him, who is infinitely holy and true!—So that their's is the doctrine which, if purſued in its conſequences, does horribly reflect on the moſt High,

and fix on Him the charge of hypocrify; and not the doctrine of the *Calvinift;* according to their frequent, and vehement exclamations and invectives.

*Corol.* 2. From what has been obferved in this fection, it again appears, that *Arminian* principles and notions, when fairly examined and purfued in their demonftrable confequences, do evidently fhut all virtue out of the world, and make it impoffible that there fhould ever be any fuch thing, in any cafe; or that any fuch thing fhould ever be conceived of. For, by thefe principles, the very notion of virtue or vice implies abfurdity and contradiction. For it is abfurd in itfelf, and contrary to common fenfe, to fuppofe a virtuous act of mind without any good intention or aim; and, by their principles, it is abfurd to fuppofe a virtuous act with a good intention or aim; for to act for an end, is to act from a Motive. So that if we rely on thefe principles, there can be no virtuous act with a good defign and end; and it is felf-evident, there can be none without: confequently there can be no virtuous act at all.

*Corol.* 3. It is manifeft, that *Arminian* notions of moral agency, and *the being* of a faculty of will, cannot confift together; and that if there be any fuch thing as either a virtuous or vicious act, it cannot be an act of the will; no will can be at all concerned in it. For that act which is performed without inclination, without Motive, without end, muft be performed without any concern of the will. To fuppofe an act of the will without thefe, implies a contradiction. If the foul in its act has no motive or end; then, in that act (as was obferved before) it feeks no-

thing, goes after nothing, exerts no inclination to any thing; and this implies, that in that act it desires nothing, and chuses nothing; so that there is no act of choice in the case: and that is as much as to say, there is no act of will in the case. Which very effectually shuts all vicious and virtuous acts out of the universe; in as much as, according to this, there can be no vicious or virtuous act wherein the will is concerned; and according to the plainest dictates of reason, and the light of nature, and also the principles of *Arminians* themselves, there can be no virtuous or vicious act wherein the will is not concerned. And therefore there is no room for any virtuous or vicious acts at all.

*Corol.* 4. If none of the moral actions of intelligent beings are influenced by either previous Inclination or Motive, another strange thing will follow; and this is, that God not only cannot fore-know any of the future moral actions of his creatures, but he can make no conjecture, can give no probable guess concerning them. For, all conjecture in things of this nature, must depend on some discerning or apprehension of these two things, *previous Disposition* and *Motive*, which, as has been observed, *Arminian* notions of moral agency, in their real consequence, altogether exclude.

# PART IV.

Wherein the chief grounds of the reasonings of *Arminians*, in support and defence of the forementioned notions of *Liberty*, *moral Agency*, &c. and against the opposite doctrine, are considered.

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## SECTION I.

*The* Essence *of the Virtue and Vice of Dispositions of the Heart, and Acts of the Will, lies not in their* Cause, *but their* Nature.

ONE main foundation of the reasons, which are brought to establish the forementioned notions of liberty, virtue, vice, *&c.* is a supposition, that the virtuousness of the dispositions, or acts of the will, consists not in the nature of these dispositions or acts, but wholly in the Origin or Cause of them: so that if the disposition of the mind, or acts of the will, be never so good, yet if the Cause of the disposition or act be not our vir-

tue, there is nothing virtuous or praiſe-worthy in it; and, on the contrary, if the will, in its inclination or acts, be never ſo bad, yet, unleſs it ariſes from ſomething that is our vice or fault, there is nothing vicious or blame-worthy in it. Hence their grand objection and pretended demonſtration, or ſelf evidence, againſt any virtue and commendableneſs, or vice and blame-worthineſs, of thoſe habits or acts of the will, which are not from ſome virtuous or vicious determination of the will itſelf.

Now, if this matter be well conſidered, it will appear to be altogether a miſtake, yea, a groſs abſurdity; and that it is moſt certain, that if there be any ſuch things, as a virtuous or vicious diſpoſition, or volition of mind, the virtuouſneſs or viciouſneſs of them conſiſts not in the Origin or cauſe of theſe things, but in the nature of them.

If the Eſſence of virtuouſneſs or commendableneſs, and of viciouſneſs or fault, does not lie in the nature of the diſpoſitions or acts of mind, which are ſaid to be our virtue or our fault, but in their Cauſe, then it is certain it lies no where at all. Thus, for inſtance, if the vice of a *vicious* act of will, lies not in the Nature of the act, but the Cauſe; ſo that its being of a bad Nature will not make it at all our fault, unleſs it ariſes from ſome faulty determination of our's, as its Cauſe, or ſomething in us that is our fault; then, for the ſame reaſon, neither can the viciouſneſs of that Cauſe lie in the nature of the thing itſelf, but in *its* Cauſe: that evil determination of our's is not our fault, merely becauſe it is of a bad Nature, unleſs it ariſes from ſome Cauſe in us that is our fault. And when we are come to

this higher Cause, still the reason of the thing holds good; though this Cause be of a bad Nature, yet we are not at all to blame on that account, unless it arises from something faulty in us. Nor yet can blame-worthiness lie in the Nature of *this Cause*, but in the Cause of *that*. And thus we must drive faultiness back from step to step, from a lower Cause to a higher, *in infinitum*: and that is, thoroughly to banish it from the world, and to allow it no possibility of existence any where in the universality of things. On these principles, vice, or moral evil, cannot consist in any thing that is an *effect*; because *fault* does not consist in the Nature of things, but in their Cause; as well as because effects are necessary, being unavoidably connected with their Cause: therefore the Cause only is to blame. And so it follows, that faultiness can lie *only in that Cause*, which is a *Cause only*, and no effect of any thing. Nor yet can it lie in this; for then it must lie in the Nature of the thing itself; not in its being from any determination of our's, nor any thing faulty in us which is the Cause, nor indeed from any Cause at all; for, by the supposition, it is no effect, and *has no Cause*. And thus, he that will maintain, it is not the Nature of habits or acts of will that makes them virtuous or faulty, but the Cause, must immediately run himself out of his own assertion; and in maintaining it, will insensibly contradict and deny it.

This is certain, that if effects are vicious and faulty, not from their Nature, or from any thing inherent in them, but because they are from a bad Cause, it must be on account of the *badness* of the Cause: a bad effect in the will must be bad, because the Cause is *bad*, or *of an evil Nature*, or *has badness* as a quality inherent in it: and a *good*

effect in the will must be *good*, by reason of the *goodness* of the Cause, or its being *of a good Kind and Nature*. And if this be what is meant, the very supposition of fault and praise lying not in the Nature of the thing, but the Cause, contradicts itself, and does at least resolve the Essence of virtue and vice unto the Nature of things, and supposes it originally to consist in that.—And if a caviller has a mind to run from the absurdity, by saying, "No, "the fault of the thing, which is the Cause, lies "not in this, that the Cause itself is *of an evil Na-* "*ture*, but that the Cause is evil in that sense, "that it is from another bad Cause." Still the absurdity will follow him; for, if so then the Cause before charged is at once acquitted, and all the blame must be laid to the higher Cause, and must consist in that's being *evil* or *of an evil Nature*. So now, we are come again to lay the blame of the thing blame-worthy, to the Nature of the thing, and not to the Cause. And if any is so foolish as to go higher still, and ascend from step to step, till he is come to that. which is the first Cause concerned in the whole affair, and will say, all the blame lies in that; then. at last, he must be forced to own, that the faultiness of the thing, which he supposes alone blame-worthy, lies wholly *in the Nature* of the thing and not in the Original or Cause of it; for the supposition is, that it has no Original, it is determined by no act of our's, is caused by nothing faulty in us, being absolutely *without any Cause*. And so the race is at an end, but the evader is taken in his flight.

It is agreeable to the natural notions of mankind, that moral evil, with its desert of dislike and abhorrence, and all its other ill-deservings, consists in a certain *deformity* in the *Nature* of certain dispositions of the heart, and acts of the

will; and not in the deformity of *something else*, diverse from the very thing itself, which deserves abhorrence, supposed to be the Cause of it. Which would be absurd, because that would be to suppose a thing, that is innocent and not evil, is truly evil and faulty, because another thing is evil. It implies a contradiction; for it would be to suppose, the very thing, which is morally evil and blame-worthy, is innocent and not blame-worthy; but that something else, which is its Cause, is only to blame. To say, that vice does not consist in the thing which is vicious, but in its Cause, is the same as to say, that vice does not consist in vice, but in that which produces it.

It is true, a Cause may be to blame, for being the Cause of vice: it may be wickedness in the Cause, that it produces wickedness. But it would imply a contradiction, to suppose that these two are the same individual wickedness. The wicked act of the Cause in producing wickedness, is one wickedness; and the wickedness produced, if there be any produced, is another. And therefore, the wickedness of the latter does not lie in the former, but is distinct from it; and the wickedness of both lies in the *evil Nature* of the things, which are wicked.

The thing, which makes sin hateful, is that by which it deserves punishment; which is but the expression of hatred. And that, which renders virtue lovely, is the same with that, on the account of which, it is fit to receive praise and reward; which are but the expressions of esteem and love. But that which makes vice hateful, is its hateful Nature; and that which renders virtue lovely, is its amiable Nature. It is a certain beauty or deformity that are *inherent* in that

good or evil will, which is the *soul* of virtue and vice (and not in the *occasion* of it) which is their worthiness of esteem or disesteem, praise or dispraise, according to the common sense of mankind. If the Cause or occasion of the rise of an hateful disposition or act of will be also hateful; suppose another antecedent evil will; that is entirely another sin, and deserves punishment by itself, under a distinct consideration. There is worthiness of dispraise in the Nature of an evil volition, and not wholly in some foregoing act, which is its Cause; otherwise the evil volition, which is the effect, is no moral evil, any more than sickness, or some other natural calamity, which arises from a Cause morally evil.

Thus, for instance, ingratitude is hateful and worthy of dispraise, according to common sense; not because something as bad, or worse than ingratitude, was the Cause that produced it; but because it is hateful in itself, by its own inherent deformity. So the love of virtue is amiable, and worthy of praise, not merely because something else went before this love of virtue in our minds, which caused it to take place there; for instance, our own choice; we chose to love virtue, and, by some method or other, wrought ourselves into the love of it; but because of the amiableness and condescendency of such a disposition and inclination of heart. If that *was* the case, that we *did* chuse to love virtue, and so produced that love in ourselves, this choice itself could be no otherwise amiable or praise-worthy, than as love to virtue, or some other amiable inclination, was exercised and implied in it. If that choice was amiable at all, it must be so on account of some amiable quality in the nature of the choice. If we chose to love virtue,

not in love to virtue, or any thing that was good, and exercised no sort of good disposition in the choice, the choice itself was not virtuous, nor worthy of any praise, according to common sense, because the choice was not of a *good Nature*.

It may not be improper here to take notice of something said by an author, that has lately made a mighty noise in America. "A necessary holi-"ness (says he *) is no holiness.—Adam could "not be originally created in righteousness and "true holiness, because he must *chuse* to be "righteous, *before* he could be righteous. And "therefore he must exist, he must be created, "yea, he must exercise thought and reflection, "before he was righteous." There is much more to the same effect in that place, and also in p. 437, 438, 439, 440. If these things are so, it will certainly follow, that the first chusing to be righteous is no righteous choice; there is no righteousness or holiness in it; because no chusing to be righteous goes before it. For he plainly speaks of *chusing to be righteous*, as what *must go before righteousness*: and that which follows the choice, being the effect of the choice, cannot be righteousness or holiness: for an effect is a thing necessary, and cannot prevent the influence or efficacy of its cause; and therefore is unavoidably dependent upon the Cause: and he says, *a necessary holiness is no holiness*. So that neither can a choice of righteousness be righteousness or holiness, nor can any thing that is consequent on that choice, and the effect of it, be righteousness or holiness; nor can any thing that is without choice, be righteousness or holi-

* Scrip. Doc. of *Original Sin*, p. 180. 3d Edit.

nefs. So that by his fcheme, all righteoufnefs and holinefs is at once fhut out of the world, and no door left open, by which it can ever poffibly enter into the world.

I fuppofe, the way that men came to entertain this abfurd inconfiftent notion, with refpect to *internal inclinations and volitions* themfelves, (or notions that imply it,) *viz.* that the Effence of their moral good or evil lies not in their Nature, but their Caufe; was, that it is indeed a very plain dictate of common fenfe, that it is fo with refpect to all *outward actions*, and fenfible motions of the body; that the moral good or evil of them does not lie at all in the motions themfelves; which, taken by themfelves, are nothing of a moral nature; and the Effence of all the moral good or evil that concerns them, lies in thofe internal difpofitions and volitions, which are the caufe of them. Now, being always ufed to determine this, without hefitation or difpute, concerning *external Actions;* which are the things, that in the common ufe of language are fignified by fuch phrafes, as men's *actions*, or their *doings;* hence, when they came to fpeak of volitions, and *internal exercifes* of their inclinations, under the fame denomination of their *actions*, or *what they do*, they unwarily determined the cafe muft alfo be the fame with thefe, as with *external actions;* not confidering the vaft difference in the Nature of the cafe.

If any fhall ftill object and fay, why is it not neceffary that the Caufe fhould be confidered, in order to determine whether any thing be worthy of blame or praife? Is it agreeable to reafon and common fenfe, that a man is to be praifed or

blamed for that, which he is not the Cause or author of, and has no hand in?

I answer, such phrases as *being the Cause*, *being the author*, *having a hand*, and the like are ambiguous. They are most vulgarly understood for being the designing voluntary Cause, or Cause by antecedent choice: and it is most certain, that men are not, in this sense, the Causes or authors of the first act of their wills, in any case; as certain as any thing is, or ever can be; for nothing can be more certain, than that a thing is not before it is, nor a thing of the same kind before the first thing of that kind; and so no choice before the first choice.—As the phrase, *being the author*, may be understood, not of being the producer by an antecedent act of will; but as a person may be said to be the author of the act of will itself, by his being the immediate agent, or the being that *is acting*, or *in exercise* in that act; if the phrase of *being the author*, is used to signify this, then doubtless common sense requires men's being the authors of their own acts of will, in order to their being esteemed worthy of praise or dispraise, on account of them. And common sense teaches, that they must be the authors of *external actions*, in the former sense, namely, their being the Causes of them by an act of will or choice, in order to their being justly blamed or praised: but it teaches no such thing with respect to the acts of the will themselves.——But this may appear more manifest by the things, which will be observed in the following section.

## SECTION II.

*The Falsenes and Inconsistence of that metaphysical Notion of* Action, *and* Agency, *which seems to be generally entertained by the Defenders of the* Arminian *Doctrine concerning Liberty, moral Agency*, &c.

ONE thing, that is made very much a ground of argument and supposed demonstration by *Arminians*, in defence of the forementioned principles, concerning moral Agency, virtue, vice, &c. is their metaphysical notion of *Agency* and *Action*. They say, unless the soul has a self-determining power, it has no power of *Action;* if its volitions be not caused by itself, but are excited and determined by some extrinsic cause, they cannot be the soul's own *acts;* and that the soul cannot be *active*. but must be wholly *passive*, in those effects which it is the subject of necessarily, and not from its own free determination.

Mr. Chubb lays the foundation of his scheme of liberty, and of his arguments to support it, very much in this position, that *man is an Agent, and capable of Action*. Which doubtless is true: but *self-determination* belongs to his notion of *Action*, and is the very essence of it. Whence he infers, that it is impossible for a man to act and be acted upon, in the same thing, at the same time; and that nothing, that is an Action, can be the effect of the Action of another: and he insists, that a *necessary Agent*, or an Agent that is necessarily determined to act, is a *plain contradiction*,

But those are a precarious sort of demonstrations, which men build on the meaning that they arbitrarily affix to a word; especially when that meaning is abstruse, inconsistent, and entirely diverse from the original sense of the word in common speech.

That the meaning of the word *Action*, as Mr. Chubb and many others use it, is utterly unintelligible and inconsistent, is manifest, because it belongs to their notion of an Action, that it is something wherein is no passion or passiveness; that is (according to their sense of passiveness) it is under the power, influence or action of no cause. And this implies, that Action has no cause, and is no effect; for to be an effect implies *passiveness*, or the being subject to the power and Action of its cause. And yet they hold, that the mind's *Action* is the effect of its own determination, yea, the mind's free and voluntary determination; which is the same with free choice. So that Action is the effect of something preceding, even a preceding act of choice: and consequently, in this effect the mind is passive, subject to the power and Action of the preceding cause, which is the foregoing choice, and therefore cannot be active. So that here we have this contradiction, that Action is always the effect of foregoing choice; and therefore cannot be Action; because it is *passive* to the power of that preceding causal choice; and the mind cannot be active and passive in the same thing, at the same time. Again, they say, necessity is utterly inconsistent with Action, and a necessary Action is a contradiction; and so their notion of Action implies contingence, and excludes all necessity. And therefore, their notion of Action implies, that it has no necessary dependence or connection with

any thing foregoing; for ſuch a dependence or connection excludes contingence, and implies neceſſity. And yet their notion of Action implies neceſſity, and ſuppoſes that it is neceſſary, and cannot be contingent. For they ſuppoſe, that whatever is properly called Action, muſt be determined by the will and free choice; and this is as much as to ſay, that it muſt be neceſſary, being dependent upon, and determined by ſomething foregoing; namely, a foregoing act of choice. Again, it belongs to their notion of Action, of that which is a proper and mere act, that it is the beginning of motion, or of exertion of power; but yet it is implied in their notion of Action, that it is not the beginning of motion or exertion of power, but is conſequent and dependent on a preceding exertion of power, *viz.* the power of will and choice: for they ſay there is no proper Action but what is freely *choſen;* or, which is the ſame thing, determined by a foregoing act of free choice. But if any of them ſhall ſee cauſe to deny this, and ſay they hold no ſuch thing as that every Action is choſen or determined by a foregoing choice; but that the very firſt exertion of will only, undetermined by any preceding act, is properly called Action; then I ſay, ſuch a man's notion of Action implies neceſſity; for what the mind is the ſubject of, without the determination of its own previous choice, it is the ſubject of neceſſarily, as to any hand, that free choice has in the affair, and, without any ability, the mind has to prevent it, by any will or election of its own; becauſe by the ſuppoſition it precludes all previous acts of the will or choice in the caſe, which might prevent it. So that it is again, in this other way, implied in their notion of act, that it is both neceſſary and not neceſſary. Again, it belongs to

their notion of an *act*, that it is no effect of a pre-determining bias or preponderation, but springs immediately out of indifference; and this implies, that it cannot be from foregoing choice, which is foregoing preponderation: if it be not habitual, but occasional, yet if it causes the act, it is truly previous, efficacious and determining. And yet, at the same time, it is essential to their notion of the act, that it is what the Agent is the Author of freely and voluntarily, and that is, by previous choice and design.

So that, according to their notion of the act, considered with regard to its consequences, these following things are all essential to it; *viz.* That it should be necessary, and not necessary; that it should be from a cause, and no cause; that it should be the fruit of choice and design, and not the fruit of choice and design; that it should be the beginning of motion or exertion, and yet consequent on previous exertion; that it should be before it is; that it should spring immediately out of indifference and equilibrium, and yet be the effect of preponderation; that it should be self-originated, and also have its original from something else; that it is what the mind causes itself, of its own will, and can produce or prevent, according to its choice or pleasure, and yet what the mind has no power to prevent, precluding all previous choice in the affair.

So that an act, according to their metaphysical notion of it, is something of which there is no idea: it is nothing but a confusion of the mind, excited by words without any distinct meaning, and is an absolute non-entity; and that in two respects: (1.) There is nothing in the world that ever was, is, or can be, to answer the things

which muſt belong to its deſcription, according to what they ſuppoſe to be eſſential to it. And (2.) There neither is, nor ever was, nor can be, any notion or idea to anſwer the word, as they uſe and explain it. For if we ſhould ſuppoſe any ſuch notion, it would many ways deſtroy itſelf. But it is impoſſible any idea or notion ſhould ſubſiſt in the mind, whoſe very nature and eſſence, which conſtitutes it, deſtroys it.—If ſome learned philoſopher, who had been abroad, in giving an account of the curious obſervations he had made in his travels, ſhould ſay, " He had " been in *Terra del Fuego*, and there had ſeen an " animal, which he calls by a certain name, " that begat and brought forth itſelf, and yet " had a ſire and dam diſtinct from itſelf; that " it had an appetite, and was hungry before it " had a being; that his maſter, who led him, " and governed him at his pleaſure was always " governed by him, and driven by him where he " pleaſed; that when he moved, he always took " a ſtep before the firſt ſtep; that he went with " his head firſt, and yet always went tail fore- " moſt; and this, though he had neither head " nor tail:" it would be no impudence at all, to tell ſuch a traveller, though a learned man, that he himſelf had no notion or idea of ſuch an animal, as he gave an account of, and never had, nor ever would have.

As the forementioned notion of Action is very inconſiſtent, ſo it is wholly diverſe from the original meaning of the word. The more uſual ſignification of it, in vulgar ſpeech, ſeems to be ſome *motion* or *exertion of power*, that is voluntary, or that is *the effect of the will;* and is uſed in the ſame ſenſe as *doing:* and moſt commonly it is uſed to ſignify *outward Actions*. So *thinking* is

often distinguished from *acting*; and *desiring* and *willing*, from *doing*.

Besides this more usual and proper signification of the word *Action*, there are other ways in which the word is used, that are less proper, which yet have place in common speech. Oftentimes it is used to signify some motion or alteration in inanimate things, with relation to some object and effect. So the spring of a watch is said to *act* upon the chain and wheels; the sun beams, to act upon plants and trees; and the fire, to act upon wood. Sometimes, the word is used to signify motions, alterations, and exertion of power, which are seen in corporeal things, *considered absolutely;* especially when these motions seem to arise from some internal cause which is *hidden;* so that they have a greater resemblance of those motions of our bodies, which are the effects of natural volition, or invisible exertions of will. So the fermentation of liquor, the operations of the loadstone, and of electrical bodies, are called the *Action* of these things. And sometimes, the word *Action* is used to signify the exercise of thought, or of will and inclination: so meditating, loving, hating, inclining, disinclining, chusing and refusing, may be sometimes called acting; though more rarely (unless it be by philosophers and metaphysicians) than in any of the other senses.

But the word is never used in vulgar speech in that sense, which *Arminian* divines use it in, namely, for the self-determinate exercise of the will, or an exertion of the soul that arises without any necessary connection, with any thing foregoing. If a man does something voluntarily, or as the effect of his choice, then in the most pro-

per ſenſe, and as the word is moſt originally and commonly uſed, he is ſaid to *act:* but whether that choice or volition be ſelf-determined, or no, whether it be connected with foregoing habitual bias, whether it be the certain effect of the ſtrongeſt motive, or ſome intrinſic cauſe, never comes into conſideration in the meaning of the word.

And if the word *Action* is arbitrarily uſed by ſome men otherwiſe, to ſuit ſome ſcheme of metaphyſic or morality, no argument can reaſonably be founded on ſuch a uſe of this term, to prove any thing but their own pleaſure. For divines and philoſophers ſtrenuouſly to urge ſuch arguments, as though they were ſufficient to ſupport and demonſtrate a whole ſcheme of moral philoſophy and divinity, is certainly to erect a mighty edifice on the ſand, or rather on a ſhadow. And though it may now perhaps, through cuſtom, have become natural for them to uſe the word in this ſenſe (if that may be called a ſenſe or meaning, which is inconſiſtent with itſelf) yet this does not prove, that it is agreeable to the natural notions, men have of things, or that there can be any thing in the creation that ſhould anſwer ſuch a meaning. And though they appeal to experience, yet the truth is, that men are ſo far from experiencing any ſuch thing, that it is impoſſible for them to have any conception of it.

If it ſhould be objected, that *Action* and *Paſſion* are doubtleſs words of a contrary ſignification; but to ſuppoſe that the Agent, in its Action, is under the power and influence of ſomething intrinſic, is to confound Action and Paſſion, and make them the ſame thing.

I answer, that Action and Passion are doubtless, as they are sometimes used, words of opposite signification; but not as signifying opposite *existences*, but only opposite *relations*. The words *cause* and *effect* are terms of opposite signification; but, nevertheless, if I assert, that the same thing may, at the same time, in different respects and relations, be both *cause* and *effect*, this will not prove that I confound the terms. The soul may be both *active* and *passive* in the same thing in different respects; *active* with relation to one thing, and *passive* with relation to another. The word *passion*, when set in opposition to *Action*, or rather *Activeness*, is merely a relative: it signifies no effect or cause, nor any proper existence; but is the same with *passiveness*, or a being passive, or a being acted upon by some thing. Which is a mere relation of a thing to some power or force exerted by some cause, producing some effect in it, or upon it. And *Action*, when set properly in opposition to *Passion*, or *Passiveness*, is no real existence; it is not the same with *AN Action*, but it is a mere relation: it is the *Activeness* of something on another thing, being the opposite relation to the other, *viz.* a relation of power, or force, exerted by some cause, towards another thing, which is the subject of the effect of that power. Indeed, the word *Action* is frequently used to signify something not merely *relative*, but more *absolute*, and a real existence; as when we say *an Action*; when the word is not used transitively, but absolutely, for some motion or exercise of body or mind, without any relation to any object or effect: and as used thus, it is not properly the opposite of *Passion*; which ordinarily signifies nothing absolute, but merely the *relation* of *being acted upon*. And therefore if the word *Action* be used in the like relative sense,

then Action and Paſſion are only two contrary relations. And it is no abſurdity to ſuppoſe, that contrary relations may belong to the ſame thing, at the ſame time, with reſpect to different things. So to ſuppoſe, that there are acts of the ſoul by which a man voluntarily moves, and acts upon objects, and produces effects, which yet themſelves are effects of ſomething elſe, and wherein the ſoul itſelf is the object of ſomething acting upon, and influencing that, do not at all confound Action and Paſſion. The words may nevertheleſs be properly of oppoſite ſignification: there may be as true and real a difference between *acting* and being *cauſed to act*, though we ſhould ſuppoſe the ſoul to be both in the ſame volition, as there is between *living* and *being quickened*, or *made to live*. It is no more a contradiction, to ſuppoſe that Action may be the effect of ſome other cauſe, beſides the Agent, or Being that acts, than to ſuppoſe, that life may be the effect of ſome other cauſe, beſides the Liver, or the Being that lives, in whom life is cauſed to be.

The thing which has led men into this inconſiſtent notion of Action, when applied to volition, as though it were eſſential to this internal Action, that the Agent ſhould be ſelf-determined in it, and that the will ſhould be the cauſe of it, was probably this; that according to the ſenſe of mankind, and the common uſe of language, it is ſo with reſpect to men's external Actions; which are what originally, and according to the vulgar uſe and moſt proper ſenſe of the word, are called *Actions*. Men in theſe are ſelf-directed, ſelf-determined, and their wills are the cauſe of the motions of their bodies, and the external things that are done; ſo that unleſs men do them voluntarily, and of choice, and the Action be

determined by their antecedent volition, it is no Action or Doing of theirs. Hence some metaphysicians have been led unwarily, but exceeding absurdly, to suppose the same concerning volition itself, that *that* also must be determined by the will; which is to be determined by antecedent volition, as the motion of the body is; not considering the contradiction it implies.

But it is very evident, that in the metaphysical distinction between Action and Passion (though long since become common and the general vogue) due care has not been taken to conform language to the nature of things, or to any distinct clear ideas. As it is in innumerable other philosophical, metaphysical terms, used in these disputes; which has occasioned inexpressible difficulty, contention, error and confusion.

And thus probably it came to be thought, that necessity was inconsistent with Action, as these terms are applied to volition. First, these terms *Action* and *Necessity* are changed from their original meaning, as signifying external voluntary Action and Constraint, (in which meaning they are evidently inconsistent) to signify quite other things, *viz.* volition itself, and certainty of existence. And when the change of signification is made, care is not taken to make proper allowances and abatements for the difference of sense; but still the same things are unwarily attributed to *Action* and *Necessity*, in the new meaning of the words, which plainly belonged to them in their first sense; and on this ground, maxims are established without any real foundation, as though they were the most certain truths, and the most evident dictates of reason.

But however ftrenuoufly it is maintained, that what is neceffary cannot be properly called Action, and that a neceffary Action is a contradiction, yet it is probable there are few *Arminian* divines, who, if thoroughly tried, would ftand to thefe principles. They will allow, that God is, in the higheft fenfe, an active Being, and the higheft Fountain of Life and Action; and they would not probably deny, that thofe, that are called God's acts of righteoufnefs, holinefs and faithfulnefs, are truly and properly God's *acts*, and God is really a holy *Agent* in them; and yet, I truft, they will not deny, that God neceffarily acts juftly and faithfully, and that it is impoffible for Him to act unrighteoufly and unholily.

## SECTION III.

*The Reafons why fome think it contrary to* common Senfe, *to fuppofe thofe Things which are* neceffary, *to be worthy of either* Praife *or* Blame.

IT is abundantly affirmed and urged by *Arminian* writers, that it is contrary to *common Senfe*, and the natural notions and apprehenfions of mankind, to fuppofe otherwife than that neceffity (making no diftinction between natural and moral neceffity) is inconfiftent with Virtue and Vice, Praife and Blame, Reward and Punifhment. And their arguments from hence have been greatly triumphed in; and have been not a little perplexing to many, who have been friendly to the truth, as clearly revealed in the holy Scriptures: it has feemed to them indeed difficult, to reconcile *Calviniftic* doctrines with the notions, men commonly have of juftice and equity. And

the true reasons of it seem to be these that follow.

I. It is indeed a very plain dictate of common Sense, that natural necessity is wholly inconsistent with just Praise or Blame. If men do things which in themselves are very good, fit to be brought to pass, and very happy effects, properly against their wills, and cannot help it; or do them from a necessity that is without their wills, or with which their wills have no concern or connection; then it is a plain dictate of common Sense, that it is none of their virtue, nor any moral good in them; and that they are not worthy to be rewarded or praised; or at all esteemed, honoured or loved on that account. And, on the other hand, that if, from like necessity, they do those things which in themselves are very unhappy and pernicious, and do them, because they cannot help it; the necessity is such, that it is all one whether they will them, or no; and the reason whey they are done, is from necessity only, and not from their wills; it is a very plain dictate of common Sense, that they are not at all to blame; there is no vice, fault, or moral evil at all in the effect done; nor are they, who are thus necessitated, in any wise worthy to be punished, hated, or in the least disrespected, on that account.

In like manner, if things, in themselves good and desirable, are absolutely impossible, with a natural impossibility, the universal reason of mankind teaches, that this *wholly and perfectly* excuses persons in their not doing them.

And it is also a plain dictate of common Sense, that if the doing things, in themselves good, or

avoiding things in themselves evil, is not *absolutely impossible*, with such a natural impossibility, but very *difficult*, with a natural difficulty; that is, a difficulty prior *to*, and not at all consisting *in* will and inclination itself, and which would remain the same, let the inclination be what it will; then a person's neglect or omission is excused *in some measure*, though not wholly; his sin is less aggravated, than if the thing to be done were easy. And if instead of difficulty and hindrance, there be a contrary natural propensity in the state of things, to the thing to be done, or effect to be brought to pass, abstracted from any consideration of the inclination of the heart; though the propensity be not so great as to amount to a natural necessity; yet being some approach to it, so that the doing the good thing be very much from this natural tendency in the state of things, and but little from a good inclination; then it is a dictate of common Sense, that there is so much the less virtue in what is done; and so it is less praise-worthy and rewardable. The reason is easy, *viz.* because such a natural propensity or tendency is an approach to natural necessity; and the greater the propensity, still so much the nearer is the approach to necessity. And, therefore, as natural necessity takes away or shuts out *all* virtue, so this propensity approaches to an abolition of virtue; that is, it *diminishes* it. And, on the other hand, natural difficulty, in the state of things, is an approach to natural impossibility. And as the latter, when it is complete and absolute, *wholly* takes away Blame; so such difficulty takes away *some* Blame, or diminishes Blame; and makes the thing done to be less worthy of punishment.

II. Men, in their first use of such phrases as these, *must*, *can't*, *can't help it*, *can't avoid it*, *necessary*, *unable*, *impossible*, *unavoidable*, *irresistable*, &c. use them to signify a necessity of constraint or restraint, a natural necessity or impossibility; or some necessity that the will has nothing to do in; which may be, whether men will or no; and which may be supposed to be just the same, let men's inclinations and desires be what they will. Such kind of terms in their original use, I suppose, among all nations, are relative; carrying in their signification (as was before observed) a reference or respect to some contrary will, desire or endeavour, which, it is supposed, is, or may be, in the case. All men find, and begin to find in early childhood, that there are innumerable things that cannot be done, which they desire to do; and innumerable things which they are averse to, that must be, they cannot avoid them, they will be, whether they chuse them or no. It is to express this necessity, which men so soon and so often find, and which so greatly and early affects them in innumerable cases, that such terms and phrases are first formed; and it is to signify such a necessity, that they are first used, and that they are most constantly used, in the common affairs of life; and not to signify any such metaphysical, speculative and abstract notion, as that connection in the nature or course of things, which is between the subject and predicate of a proposition, and which is the foundation of the certain truth of that proposition; to signify which, they who employ themselves in philosophical inquiries into the first origin and metaphysical relations and dependencies of things, have borrowed these terms, for want of others. But we grow up from our cradles in a use of such terms and phrases entirely different from this,

and carrying a ſenſe exceeding diverſe from that, in which they are commonly uſed in the controverſy between *Arminians* and *Calviniſts*. And it being, as was ſaid before, a dictate of the univerſal ſenſe of mankind, evident to us as ſoon as we begin to think, that the neceſſity ſignified by theſe terms, in the ſenſe in which we firſt learn them, does excuſe perſons and free them from all Fault or Blame; hence our ideas of excuſableneſs or faultleſneſs is tied to theſe terms and phraſes by a ſtrong habit, which is begun in childhood, as ſoon as we begin to ſpeak, and grows up with us, and is ſtrengthened by conſtant uſe and cuſtom, the connection growing ſtronger and ſtronger.

The habitual connection, which is in men's minds between Blameleſneſs and thoſe forementioned terms, *muſt*, *cannot*, *unable*, *neceſſary*, *impoſſible*, *unavoidable*, &c. becomes very ſtrong; becauſe, as ſoon as ever men begin to uſe reaſon and ſpeech, they have occaſion to excuſe themſelves, from the natural neceſſity ſignified by theſe terms, in numerous inſtances.—*I can't do it*—*I could not help it*.—And all mankind have conſtant and daily occaſion to uſe ſuch phraſes in this ſenſe, to excuſe themſelves and others, in almoſt all the concerns of life, with reſpect to diſappointments, and things that happen, which concern and affect ourſelves and others, that are hurtful, or diſagreeable to us or them, or things deſirable, that we or others fail of.

That a being accuſtomed to an union of different ideas, from early childhood, makes the habitual connection exceeding ſtrong, as though ſuch connection were owing to *nature*, is manifeſt in innumerable inſtances. It is altogether by ſuch an habitual connection of ideas, that men judge

of the bigness or distance of the objects of sight, from their appearance. Thus it is owing to such a connection early established, and growing up with a person, that he judges a mountain, which he sees at ten miles distance, to be bigger than his nose, or further off than the end of it. Having been used so long to join a considerable distance and magnitude with such an appearance, men imagine it is by a dictate of natural sense: whereas, it would be quite otherwise with one that had his eyes newly opened, who had been born blind: he would have the same visible appearance, but natural sense would dictate no such thing, concerning the magnitude or distance of what appeared.

III. When men, after they had been so habituated to connect ideas of Innocency or Blamelessness with such terms, that the union seems to be the effect of mere nature, come to hear the same terms used, and learn to use them themselves in the forementioned new and metaphysical sense, to signify quite another sort of necessity, which has no such kind of relation to a contrary supposable will and endeavour; the notion of plain and manifest Blamelessness, by this means, is, by a strong prejudice, insensibly and unwarily transferred to a case to which it by no means belongs: the change of the use of the terms, to a signification which is very diverse, not being taken notice of, or adverted to. And there are several reasons, why it is not.

1. The terms, as used by philosophers, are not very distinct and clear in their meaning: few use them in a fixed determined sense. On the contrary, their meaning is very vague and confused. Which is what commonly happens to the

words used to signify things intellectual and moral, and to express what Mr. Locke calls *mixt modes*. If men had a clear and distinct understanding of what is intended by these metaphysical terms, they would be able more easily to compare them with their original and common Sense; and so would not be so easily led into delusion by no sort of terms in the world, as by words of this sort.

2. The change of the signification of the terms is the more insensible, because the things signified, though indeed very different, yet do in some generals agree. In *necessity*, that which is *vulgarly* so called, there is a strong connection between the thing said to be necessary, and something antecedent to it, in the order of nature; so there is also in *philosophical necessity*. And though in both kinds of necessity, the connection cannot be called by that name, with relation to an opposite will or endeavour, to which it is *superior*; which is the case in vulgar necessity; yet in both, the connection is *prior* to will and endeavour, and so, in some respect, *superior*. In both kinds of necessity, there is a foundation for some certainty of the proposition, that affirms the event.—The terms used being the same, and the things signified agreeing in these and some other general circumstances, and the expressions as used by philosophers being not well defined, and so of obscure and loose signification; hence persons are not aware of the great difference; had the notions of innocence or faultiness, which were so strongly associated with them, and were strictly united in their minds, ever since they can remember, remain united with them still, as if the union were altogether natural and necessary; and they

that go about to make a separation, seem to them to do great violence even to nature itself.

IV. Another reason why it appears difficult to reconcile it with reason, that men should be blamed for that which is necessary with a moral necessity (which, as was observed before, is a species of philosophical necessity) is, that for want of due consideration, men inwardly entertain that apprehension, that this necessity may be against men's wills and sincere endeavours. They go away with that notion, that men may truly will, and wish and strive that it may be otherwise, but that invincible necessity stands in the way. And many think thus concerning themselves: some, that are wicked men, think they wish, that they were good, that they loved God and holiness; but yet do not find that their wishes produce the effect.—The reasons why men think, are as follow; (1.) They find what may be called an *indirect willingness* to have a better will, in the manner before observed. For it is impossible, and a contradiction to suppose the will to be directly and properly against itself. And they do not consider, that this indirect willingness is entirely a different thing from properly willing the thing that is the duty and virtue required; and that there is no virtue in that sort of willingness which they have. They do not consider, that the volitions, which a wicked man may have that he loved God, are no acts of the will at all against the moral evil of not loving God; but only some disagreeable consequences. But the making the requisite distinction requires more care of reflection and thought, than most men are used to. And men, through a prejudice in their own favour, are disposed to think well of their own desires and dispositions, and to account them good and virtuous, though their respect to vir-

tue be only *indirect* and *remote*, and it is nothing at all that is virtuous that truly excites or terminates their inclinations. (2.) Another thing, that insensibly leads and beguiles men into a supposition that this moral necessity or impossibility is, or may be, against men's wills and true endeavours, is the derivation and formation of the terms themselves, that are often used to express it, which is such as seems directly to point to, and holds this forth. Such words, for instance, as *unable*, *unavoidable*, *impossible*, *irresistible;* which carry a plain reference to a supposable power exerted, endeavours used, resistance made, in opposition to the necessity: and the persons that hear them, not considering nor suspecting but that they are used in their proper sense: that sense being therefore understood, there does naturally, and as it were necessarily arise in their minds a supposition, that it may be so indeed, that true desires and endeavours may take place, but that invincible necessity stands in the way, and renders them vain and to no effect.

V. Another thing, which makes persons more ready to suppose it to be contrary to reason, that men should be exposed to the punishments threatened to sin, for doing those things which are morally necessary, or not doing those things morally impossible, is, that imagination strengthens the argument, and adds greatly to the power and influence of the seeming reasons against it, from the greatness of that punishment. To allow that they may be justly exposed to a small punishment, would not be so difficult. Whereas, if there were any good reason in the case, if it were truly a dictate of reason, that such necessity was inconsistent with faultiness, or just punishment, the demonstration would be equally certain with re-

spect to a small punishment, or any punishment at all, as a very great one: but it is not equally easy to the imagination. They that argue against the justice of *damning* men for those things that are thus necessary, seem to make their argument the stronger, by setting forth the greatness of the punishment in strong expressions:—*That a man should be cast into eternal burnings, that he should be made to fry in hell to all eternity for those things which he had no power to avoid, and was under a fatal, unfrustrable, invincible necessity of doing.*——

## Section IV.

*It is agreeable to* common Sense, *and* the natural Notions of Mankind, *to suppose moral Necessity to be consistent with Praise and Blame, Reward and Punishment.*

WHETHER the reasons, that have been given, why it appears difficult to some persons, to reconcile with common Sense the praising or blaming, rewarding or punishing those things which are morally necessary, are thought satisfactory or not; yet it most evidently appears, by the following things, that if this matter be rightly understood, setting aside all delusion arising from the impropriety and ambiguity of terms, this is not at all inconsistent with the natural apprehensions of mankind, and that sense of things which is found every where in the common people; who are furthest from having their thoughts perverted from their natural channel, by metaphysical and philosophical subtilties; but, on the contrary, altogether agreeable *to*, and the

very voice and dictate *of* this natural and vulgar Sense.

I. This will appear, if we consider what the vulgar Notion of *blame-worthiness* is. The idea, which the common people, through all ages and nations, have of faultiness, I suppose to be plainly this; *a person's being or doing wrong, with his own will and pleasure;* containing these two things; 1. *His doing wrong, when he does as he pleases.* 2. *His pleasures being wrong.* Or, in other words, perhaps more intelligibly expressing their Notion; *a person's having his heart wrong, and doing wrong from his heart.* And this is the sum total of the matter.

The common people do not ascend up in their reflections and abstractions to the metaphysical sources, relations and dependencies of things, in order to form their Notion of faultiness or blame-worthiness. They do not wait till they have decided by their refinings, what first determines the will; whether it be determined by something extrinsic, or intrinsic; whether volition determines volition, or whether the understanding determines the will; whether there be any such thing as metaphysicians mean by contingence (if they have any meaning;) whether there be a sort of a strange unaccountable sovereignty in the will, in the exercise of which, by its own sovereign acts, it brings to pass all its own sovereign acts. They do not take any part of their Notion of fault or blame from the resolution of any such questions. If this were the case, there are multitudes, yea the far greater part of mankind, nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand, would live and die, without having any such Notion, as that of fault, ever entering into their

heads, or without so much as one having any conception that any body was to be either blamed or commended for any thing. To be sure, it would be a long time before men came to have such Notions. Whereas it is manifest, they are some of the first Notions that appear in children; who discover, as soon as they can think, or speak, or act at all as rational creatures, a sense of desert. And, certainly, in forming their Notion of it, they make no use of metaphysics. All the ground they go upon, consists in these two things; *experience*, and a *natural sensation* of a certain fitness or agreeableness, which there is in uniting such moral evil as is above described, *viz. a being or doing wrong with the will*, and resentment in others, and pain inflicted on the person in whom this moral evil is. Which *natural Sense* is what we call by the name of *conscience*.

It is true, the common people and children, in their Notion of any faulty act or deed, of any person, do suppose that it is the person's *own act and deed*. But this is all that belongs, to what they understand by a thing's being a person's *own deed or action;* even that it is something done by him of choice. That some exercise or motion should begin of itself, does not belong to their Notion of *an action*, or *doing*. If so, it would belong to their Notion of it, that it is something, which is the cause of its own beginning: and that is as much as to say, that it is before it begins to be. Nor is their Notion of *an action* some motion or exercise, that begins accidentally, without any cause or reason; for that is contrary to one of the prime dictates of common Sense, namely, that every thing that begins to be, has some cause or reason why it is.

The common people, in their Notion of a faulty or praiſe-worthy deed or work done by any one, do ſuppoſe, that the man does it in the exerciſe of *liberty*. But then their Notion of liberty is only a perſon's having opportunity of doing as he pleaſes. They have no Notion of liberty conſiſting in the will's firſt acting, and ſo cauſing its own acts; and determining, and ſo cauſing its own determinations; or chuſing, and ſo cauſing its own choice. Such a Notion of liberty is what none have, but thoſe that have darkened their own minds with confuſed metaphyſical ſpeculation, and abſtruſe and ambiguous terms. If a man is not reſtrained from acting as his will determines, or conſtrained to act otherwiſe; then he has liberty, according to common Notions of liberty, without taking into the idea that grand contradiction of all, the determinations of a man's free will being the effects of the determinations of his free will.—— Nor have men commonly any Notion of freedom conſiſting in indifference. For if ſo, then it would be agreeable to their Notion, that the greater indifference men act with, the more freedom they act with; whereas, the reverſe is true. He that in acting, proceeds with the fulleſt inclination, does what he does with the greateſt freedom, according to common Senſe. And ſo far is it from being agreeable to common Senſe, that ſuch liberty as conſiſts in indifference is requiſite to praiſe or blame, that on the contrary, the dictate of every man's natural ſenſe through the world is, that the further he is from being indifferent in his acting good or evil, and the more he does either with full and ſtrong inclination, the more is he eſteemed or abhorred, commended or condemned.

II. If it were inconsistent with the common Sense of mankind, that men should be either to be blamed or commended in any volitions, they have, or fail of, in case of moral necessity or impossibility; then it would surely also be agreeable to the same Sense and reason of Mankind, that the nearer the case approaches to such a moral necessity or impossibility. either through a strong antecedent moral propensity, on the one hand,* or a great antecedent opposition and difficulty, on the other, the nearer does it approach to a being neither blameable nor commendable; so that acts exerted with such preceding propensity, would be worthy of proportionably less praise; and when omitted, the act being attended with such difficulty, the omission would be worthy of the less blame. It is so, as was observed before, with natural necessity and impossibility, propensity and difficulty: as it is a plain dictate of the sense of all Mankind, that natural necessity and impossibility take away *all* blame and praise; and therefore, that the nearer the approach is to these, through previous propensity or difficulty, so praise and blame are proportionably *diminished.* And if it were as much a dictate of common Sense, that moral necessity of doing, or impossibility of avoiding, takes away *all* praise and blame, as that natural necessity or impossibility does this; then, by a perfect parity of reason, it would be as much the dictate of common Sense, that an *approach* to moral necessity of doing, or impossibility of avoiding, *diminishes* praise and blame, as that an approach to natural necessity and impossibility does so. It is equally the voice of common Sense, that persons are *excusable*

* It is here argued, on supposition that not all propensity implies moral necessity, but only some very high degree; which none will deny.

*in part*, in neglecting things difficult againſt their wills, as that they are *excuſable wholly* in neglecting things impoſſible againſt their wills. And if it made no difference. whether the impoſſibility were natural and againſt the will, or moral, lying in the will, with regard to excuſableneſs; ſo neither would it make any difference, whether the difficulty, or approach to neceſſity be natural againſt the will, or moral, lying in the propenſity of the will.

But it is apparent, that the reverſe of theſe things is true. If there be an approach to a moral neceſſity in a man's exertion of good acts of will, they being the exerciſe of a ſtrong propenſity to good, and a very powerful love to virtue; it is ſo far from being the dictate of common Senſe, that he is leſs virtuous, and the leſs to be eſteemed, loved and praiſed; that it is agreeable to the natural Notions of all mankind, that he is ſo much the better man, worthy of greater reſpect, and higher commendation. And the ſtronger the inclination is, and the nearer it approaches to neceſſity in that reſpect; or to impoſſibility of neglecting the virtuous act, or of doing a vicious one; ſtill the more virtuous, and worthy of higher commendation. And, on the other hand, if a man exerts evil acts of mind; as, for inſtance, acts of pride or malice from a rooted and ſtrong habit or principle of haughtineſs and malicioufneſs, and a violent propenſity of heart to ſuch acts; according to the natural Senſe of men, he is ſo far from being the leſs hateful and blameable on that account, that he is ſo much the more worthy to be deteſted and condemned, by all that obſerve him.

Moreover, it is manifest that it is no part of the Notion, which mankind commonly have of a blameable or praise-worthy act of the will, that it is an act which is not determined by an antecedent bias or motive, but by the sovereign power of the will itself; because, if so, the greater hand such causes have in determining any acts of the will, so much the less virtuous or vicious would they be accounted; and the less hand, the more virtuous or vicious. Whereas, the reverse is true: men do not think a good act to be the less praise-worthy, for the agent's being much determined in it by a good inclination or a good motive, but the more. And if good inclination or motive, has but little influence in determining the agent, they do not think his act so much the more virtuous, but the less. And so concerning evil acts, which are determined by evil motives or inclinations.

Yea, if it be supposed, that good or evil dispositions are implanted in the hearts of men, by nature itself (which, it is certain, is vulgarly supposed in innumerable cases) yet it is not commonly supposed, that men are worthy of no praise or dispraise for such dispositions; although what is natural, is undoubtedly necessary, nature being prior to all acts of the will whatsoever. Thus, for instance, if a man appears to be of a very haughty or malicious disposition, and is supposed to be so by his natural temper, it is no vulgar Notion, no dictate of the common Sense and apprehension of men, that such dispositions are no vices or moral evils, or that such persons are not worthy of disesteem, or odium and dishonour; or that the proud or malicious acts which flow from such natural dispositions, are worthy of no resentment. Yea, such vile natural dispositions,

and the ſtrength of them, will commonly be mentioned rather as an aggravation of the wicked acts, that come from ſuch a fountain, than an extenuation of them. Its being natural for men to act thus, is often obſerved by men in the height of their indignation: they will ſay, "It "is his very nature: he is of a vile natural tem-"per; it is as natural to him to act ſo, as it is "to breathe; he cannot help ſerving the devil, "*&c.*" But it is not thus with regard to hurtful miſchievous things, that any are the ſubjects or occaſions of, by *natural neceſſity*, againſt their inclinations. In ſuch a caſe, the neceſſity, by the common voice of mankind, will be ſpoken of as a full excuſe.——Thus it is very plain, that common Senſe makes a vaſt difference between theſe two kinds of neceſſity, as to the judgment it makes of their influence on the moral quality and deſert of men's actions.

And theſe dictates of men's minds are ſo natural and neceſſary, that it may be very much doubted whether the *Arminians* themſelves have ever got rid of them; yea, their greateſt doctors, that have gone furtheſt in defence of their metaphyſical Notions of liberty, and have brought their arguments to their greateſt ſtrength, and, as they ſuppoſe, to a demonſtration, againſt the conſiſtence of virtue and vice with any neceſſity: it is to be queſtioned, whether there is ſo much as one of them, but that, if he ſuffered very much from the injurious acts of a man, under the power of an invincible haughtineſs and malignancy of temper, would not, from the forementioned natural ſenſe of mind, reſent it far otherwiſe, than if as great ſufferings came upon him from the wind that blows, and fire that burns by natural neceſſity; and otherwiſe than he

would, if he suffered as much from the conduct of a man perfectly delirious; yea, though he first brought his distraction upon him some way by his own fault.

Some seem to disdain the distinction that we make between *natural* and *moral necessity*, as though it were altogether impertinent in this controversy: "that which is necessary (say they) is necessary; "it is that which must be, and cannot be pre-"vented. And that which is impossible, is im-"possible, and cannot be done: and, therefore, "none can be to blame for not doing it." And such comparisons are made use of, as the commanding of a man to walk, who has lost his legs, and condemning and punishing him for not obeying; inviting and calling upon a man, who is shut up in a strong prison, to come forth, *&c.* But, in these things, *Arminians* are very unreasonable. Let common Sense determine whether there be not a great difference between those two cases; the one, that of a man who has offended his Prince, and is cast into prison; and after he has lain there a while, the King comes to him, calls him to come forth to him; and tells him, that if he will do so, and will fall down before him and humbly beg his pardon, he shall be forgiven, and set at liberty, and also be greatly enriched, and advanced to honour: the prisoner heartily repents of the folly and wickedness of his offence against his Prince, is thoroughly disposed to abase himself, and accept of the King's offer; but is confined by strong walls, with gates of brass, and bars of iron. The other case is, that of a man who is of a very unreasonable spirit, of a haughty, ungrateful, wilful disposition; and, moreover, has been brought up in traiterous principles; and has his heart possessed with an ex-

treme and inveterate enmity to his lawful ſovereign; and for his rebellion is caſt into priſon, and lies long there, loaden with heavy chains, and in miſerable circumſtances. At length the compaſſionate Prince comes to the priſon, orders his chains to be knocked off, and his priſon-doors to be ſet wide open; calls to him, and tells him, if he would come forth to him, and fall down before him, acknowledge that he has treated him unworthily, and aſk his forgiveneſs; he ſhall be forgiven, ſet at liberty, and ſet in a place of great dignity and profit in his court. But he is ſtout and ſtomachful, and full of haughty malignity, that he cannot be willing to accept the offer: his rooted ſtrong pride and malice have perfect power over him, and as it were bind him, by binding his heart: the oppoſition of his heart has the maſtery over him, having an influence on his mind far ſuperior to the King's grace and condeſcenſion, and to all his kind offers and promiſes. Now, is it agreeable to common Senſe, to aſſert and ſtand to it, that there is no difference between theſe two caſes, as to any worthineſs of blame in the priſoners; becauſe, forſooth, there is a neceſſity in both, and the required act in each caſe is impoſſible? It is true, a man's evil diſpoſitions may be as ſtrong and immoveable as the bars of a caſtle. But who cannot ſee, that when a man, in the latter caſe, is ſaid to be *unable* to obey the command, the expreſſion is uſed improperly, and not in the ſenſe it has originally and in common ſpeech? and that it may properly be ſaid to be in the rebel's power to come out of priſon, ſeeing he can eaſily do it if he pleaſes; though by reaſon of his vile temper of heart, which is fixed and rooted, it is impoſſible that it ſhould pleaſe him?

Upon the whole, I presume there is no person of good understanding, who impartially considers the things which have been observed, but will allow, that it is not evident, from the dictates of the common Sense, or natural Notions of mankind, that moral necessity is inconsistent with Praise and Blame. And, therefore, if the *Arminians* would prove any such inconsistency, it must be by some philosophical and metaphysical arguments, and not common Sense.

There is a grand illusion in the pretended demonstration of *Arminians* from common Sense. The main strength of all these demonstrations lies in that prejudice, that arises through the insensible change of the use and meaning of such terms as *liberty*, *able*, *unable*, *necessary*, *impossible*, *unavoidable*, *invincible*, *action*, &c. from their original and vulgar Sense, to a metaphysical Sense, entirely diverse; and the strong connection of the ideas of Blamelessness, &c. with some of these terms, by an habit contracted and established, while these terms were used in their first meaning. This prejudice and delusion, is the foundation of all those positions, they lay down as maxims, by which most of the Scriptures, which they alledge in this controversy, are interpreted, and on which all their pompous demonstrations from Scripture and reason depend. From this secret delusion and prejudice they have almost all their advantages: it is the strength of their bulwarks, and the edge of their weapons. And this is the main ground of all the right they have to treat their neighbours in so assuming a manner, and to insult others, perhaps as wise and good as themselves, as *weak bigots*, *men that dwell in the dark caves of superstition*, *perversely set*, *obstinately shutting their eyes against the noon-day light*, *ene-*

*mies to common Sense, maintaining the first-born of absurdities*, &c. &c. But perhaps an impartial consideration of the things, which have been observed in the preceding parts of this enquiry, may enable the lovers of truth better to judge, whose doctrine is indeed *absurd*, *abstruse*, *self-contradictory*, and inconsistent with common Sense, and many ways repugnant to the universal dictates of the reason of mankind.

*Corol.* From things which have been observed, it will follow, that it is agreeable to common Sense to suppose, that the glorified saints have not their freedom at all diminished, in any respect; and that God Himself has the highest possible freedom, according to the true and proper meaning of the term; and that he is, in the highest possible respect, an agent, and active in the exercise of his infinite holiness; though he acts therein, in the highest degree, necessarily: and his actions of this kind are in the highest, most absolutely perfect manner virtuous and praise-worthy; and are so, for that very reason, because they are most perfectly necessary.

## SECTION V.

*Concerning those* Objections, *that this Scheme of Necessity renders all* Means and Endeavours *for the avoiding of Sin, or the obtaining Virtue and Holiness*, vain, and to no purpose; *and that it makes Men no more than mere* Machines *in Affairs of Morality and Religion.*

ARMINIANS say, if it be so, that sin and virtue come to pass by a necessity consisting in a sure connection of causes and effects, antecedents and consequents, it can never be worth the while to use any Means or Endeavours to obtain the one, and avoid the other; seeing no endeavours can alter the futurity of the event, which is become necessary by a connection already established.

But I desire, that this matter may be fully considered; and that it may be examined with a thorough strictness, whether it will follow that Endeavours and Means, in order to avoid or obtain any future thing, must be more in vain, on the supposition of such a connection of antecedents and consequents, than if the contrary be supposed.

For Endeavours to be in vain, is for them not to be successful; that is to say, for them not eventually to be the Means of the thing aimed at, which cannot be, but in one of these two ways; either *first*, that although the Means are used, yet the event aimed at does not follow: or, *se-*

*condly*, If the event does follow, it is not becauſe of the Means, or from any connection or dependence of the event on the Means, the event would have come to paſs, as well without the Means as with them. If either of theſe two things are the caſe, then the Means are not properly ſucceſsful, and are truly in vain. The ſucceſsfulneſs or unſucceſsfulneſs of Means, in order to an effect or their being in vain or not in vain, conſiſts in thoſe Means being connected, or not connected, with the effect, in ſuch a manner as this, *viz.* That the effect is *with* the Means, and not *without* them; or, that the being of the effect is, on the one hand, connected with means, and the want of the effect, on the other hand, is connected with the want of the Means. If there be ſuch a connection as this between Means and end, the Means are not in vain: the more there is of ſuch a connection, the further they are from being in vain; and the leſs of ſuch a connection, the more they are in vain.

Now, therefore, the queſtion to be anſwered, (in order to determine, whether it follows from this doctrine of the neceſſary connection between foregoing things, and conſequent ones, that Means uſed in order to any effect, are more in vain than they would be otherwiſe) is, whether it follows from it, that there is leſs of the forementioned connection between Means and effect; that is, whether, on the ſuppoſition of there being a real and true connection between antecedent things and conſequent ones, there muſt be leſs of a connection between Means and effect, than on the ſuppoſition of there being no fixed connection, between antecedent things and conſequent ones: and the very ſtating of this queſtion is ſufficient to anſwer it. It muſt appear to every

one that will open his eyes, that this queſtion cannot be affirmed, without the groſſeſt abſurdity and inconſiſtence. Means are foregoing things, and effects are following things: And if there were no connection between foregoing things and following ones, there could be no connection between Means and end; and ſo all means would be wholly vain and fruitleſs. For it is by virtue of ſome connection only, that they become ſucceſsful: It is ſome connection obſerved, or revealed, or otherwiſe known, between antecedent things and following ones, that is what directs in the choice of Means. And if there were no ſuch thing as an eſtabliſhed connection, there could be no choice, as to Means; one thing would have no more tendency to an effect, than another; there would be no ſuch thing as tendency in the caſe. All thoſe things, which are ſucceſsful means of other things, do therein prove connected antecedents of them: and therefore to aſſert, that a fixed connection between antecedents and conſequents makes Means vain and uſeleſs, or ſtands in the way to hinder the connection between Means and end, is juſt ſo ridiculous, as to ſay, that a connection between antecedents and conſequents ſtands in the way to hinder a connection between antecedents and conſequents.

Nor can any ſuppoſed connection of the ſucceſſion or train of antecedents and conſequents, from the very beginning of all things, the connection being made already ſure and neceſſary, either by eſtabliſhed laws of nature, or by theſe together with a degree of ſovereign immediate interpoſitions of divine power, on ſuch and ſuch occaſions, or any other way (if any other there be;) I ſay, no ſuch neceſſary connection of a ſe-

ries of antecedents and confequents can in the leaft tend to hinder, but that the means we ufe may belong to the feries; and fo may be fome of thofe antecedents which are connected with the confequents we aim at, in the eftablifhed courfe of things. Endeavours which we ufe, are things that exift; and, therefore, they belong to the general chain of events; all the parts of which chain are fuppofed to be connected; and fo Endeavours are fuppofed to be connected with fome effects, or fome confequent things or other. And certainly this does not hinder but that the events they are connected with, may be thofe which we aim at, and which we chufe, becaufe we judge them moft likely to have a connection with thofe events, from the eftablifhed order and courfe of things which we obferve, or from fomething in divine Revelation.

Let us fuppofe a real and fure connection between a man's having his eyes open in the clear day-light, with good organs of fight, and feeing; fo that feeing is connected with his opening his eyes, and not feeing with his not opening his eyes; and alfo the like connection between fuch a man's attempting to open his eyes, and his actually doing it: the fuppofed eftablifhed connection between thefe antecedents and confequents, let the connection be never fo fure and neceffary, certainly does not prove that it is in vain, for a man in fuch circumftances, to attempt to open his eyes, in order to feeing: his aiming at that event, and the ufe of the Means, being the effect of his will, does not break the connection, or hinder the fuccefs.

So that the objection we are upon does not lie againft the doctrine of the neceffity of events by a certainty of connection and confequence;

On the contrary, it is truly forcible against the *Arminian* doctrine of contingence and self-determination; which is inconsistent with such a connection. If there be no connection between those events, wherein virtue and vice consist, and any thing antecedent; then there is no connection between these events and any Means or Endeavours used in order to them: and if so, then those means must be in vain. The less there is of connection between foregoing things and following ones, so much the less there is between Means and end, Endeavours and success; and in the same proportion are Means and Endeavours ineffectual and in vain.

It will follow from *Arminian* principles, that there is no degree of connection between virtue or vice, and any foregoing event or thing: or, in other words, that the determination of the existence of virtue or vice do not in the least depend on the influence of any thing that comes to pass antecedently, from which the determination of its existence is, as its cause, Means, or ground; because, so far as it is so, it is not from self-determination: and, therefore, so far there is nothing of the nature of virtue or vice. And so it follows, that virtue and vice are not at all, in any degree, dependent upon, or connected with, any foregoing event or existence, as its cause, ground, or Means. And if so, then all foregoing Means must be totally in vain.

Hence it follows, that there cannot, in any consistence with the *Arminian* scheme, be any reasonable ground of so much as a conjecture concerning the consequence of any Means and Endeavours, in order to escaping vice or obtaining virtue, or any choice or preference of Means,

as having a greater probability of fuccefs by fome than others; either from any natural connection or dependence of the end on the means, or through any divine conftitution, or revealed way of God's beftowing or bringing to pafs thefe things, in confequence of any Means, Endeavours, Prayers or Deeds. Conjectures, in this latter cafe, depend on a fuppofition, that God himfelf is the Giver, or determining Caufe of the events fought: but if they depend on felf-determination, then God is not the determining or difpofing Author of them: and if thefe things are not of his difpofal, then no conjecture can be made, from any revelation he has given, concerning any way or method of his difpofal of them.

Yea, on thefe principles, it will not only follow, that men cannot have any reafonable ground of judgment or conjecture, that their Means and Endeavours to obtain virtue or avoid vice, will be fuccefsful, but they may be fure, they will not; they may be certain, that they will be in vain; and that if ever the thing, which they feek, comes to pafs it will not be at all owing to the Means they ufe. For Means and Endeavours can have no effect at all, in order to obtain the end, but in one of thefe two ways: either, (1.) Through a natural tendency and influence, to prepare and difpofe the mind more to virtuous acts, either by caufing the difpofition of the heart to be more in favour of fuch acts, or by bringing the mind more into the view of powerful motives and inducements: or, (2.) By putting perfons more in the way of God's beftowment of the benefit. But neither of thefe can be the cafe. *Not the latter;* for, as has been juft now obferved, it does not confift with the *Arminian* notion of felf-deter-

mination, which they suppose essential to virtue, that God should be the Bestower, or (which is the same thing) the determining, disposing Author of Virtue. *Not the former*, for natural influence and tendency supposes causality and connection; and supposes necessity of event, which is inconsistent with *Arminian* liberty. A tendency of Means, by biassing the heart in favour of virtue, or by bringing the will under the influence and power of motives in its determinations, are both inconsistent with *Arminian* liberty of will, consisting in indifference, and sovereign self-determination, as has been largely demonstrated.

But for the more full removal of this prejudice against the doctrine of necessity, which has been maintained, as though it tended to encourage a total neglect of all Endeavours as vain; the following things may be considered.

The question is not, Whether men may not thus improve this doctrine: we know that many true and wholesome doctrines are abused: but, whether the doctrine gives any just occasion for such an improvement; or whether, on the supposition of the truth of the doctrine, such a use of it would not be unreasonable? If any shall affirm, that it would not, but that the very nature of the doctrine is such as gives just occasion for it, it must be on this supposition; namely, that such an invariable necessity of all things already settled, must render the interposition of all Means, Endeavours, Conclusions or Actions of ours, in order to the obtaining any future end whatsoever, perfectly insignificant; because they cannot in the least alter or vary the course and series of things, in any event or circumstance;

all being already fixed unalterably by neceſſity: and that therefore it is folly, for men to uſe any Means *for any end*; but their wiſdom, to ſave themſelves the trouble of Endeavours, and take their eaſe. No perſon can draw ſuch an inference from this doctrine, and come to ſuch a concluſion, without contradicting himſelf, and going counter to the very principles he pretends to act upon: for he comes to a concluſion, and takes a courſe, *in order to an end*, even *his eaſe*, or the ſaving himſelf from trouble; he ſeeks ſomething future, and uſes Means in order to a future thing, even in his drawing up that concluſion, that he will ſeek nothing, and uſe no Means in order to any thing in future; he ſeeks his future eaſe, and the benefit and comfort of indolence. If prior neceſſity, that determines all things, makes vain all actions or concluſions of ours, in order to any thing future; then it makes vain all concluſions and conduct of ours, in order to our future eaſe. The meaſure of our eaſe, with the time, manner and every circumſtance of it, is already fixed, by all-determining neceſſity, as much as any thing elſe. If he ſays within himſelf, "What "future happineſs or miſery I ſhall have, is al-"ready, in effect, determined by the neceſſary "courſe and connection of things; therefore, I "will ſave myſelf the trouble of labour and "diligence, which cannot add to my determined "degree of happineſs, or diminiſh my miſery; "but will take my eaſe, and will enjoy the com-"fort of ſloth and negligence." Such a man contradicts himſelf: he ſays, the meaſure of his future happineſs and miſery is already fixed, and he will not try to diminiſh the one, nor add to the other: but yet, in his very concluſion, he contradicts this; for, he takes up this concluſion, *to add to his future happineſs*, by the eaſe and com-

fort of his negligence; and to diminish his future trouble and misery, by saving himself the trouble of using Means and taking Pains.

Therefore persons cannot reasonably make this improvement of the doctrine of necessity, that they will go into a voluntary negligence of Means for their own happiness. For the principles they must go upon, in order to this, are inconsistent with their making any improvement at all of the doctrine: for to make some improvement of it, is to be influenced by it, to come to some voluntary conclusion, in regard to their own conduct, with some view or aim: but this, as has been shown, is inconsistent with the principles they pretend to act upon In short, the principles are such as cannot be acted upon at all, or, in any respect, consistently. And, therefore, in every pretence of acting upon them, or making any improvement at all of them, there is a self-contradiction.

As to that Objection against the doctrine, which I have endeavoured to prove, that it makes men no more than mere Machines; I would say, that notwithstanding this doctrine, Man is entirely, perfectly and unspeakably different from a mere Machine, in that he has reason and understanding, and has a faculty of will, and is so capable of volition and choice; and in that, his will is guided by the dictates or views of his understanding; and in that his external actions and behaviour, and, in many respects, also his thoughts, and the exercises of his mind, are subject to his will; so that he has liberty to act according to his choice, and do what he pleases; and by Means of these things, is capable of moral habits and moral acts, such inclinations and actions as, ac-

cording to the common fenfe of mankind, are worthy of praife, efteem, love and reward; or, on the contrary, of difefteem, deteftation, indignation and punifhment.

In thefe things is all the difference from mere Machines, as to liberty and agency, that would be any perfection, dignity or privilege, in any refpect: all the difference that can be defired, and all that can be conceived of; and indeed all that the pretenfions of the *Arminians* themfelves come to, as they are forced often to explain themfelves. (Though their explications overthrow and abolifh the things afferted, and pretended to be explained) For they are forced to explain a felf-determining power of will, by a power in the foul, to determine as it chufes or wills; which comes to no more than this, that a man has a power of chufing, and, in many inftances, can do as he chufes. Which is quite a different thing from that contradiction, his having power of chufing his firft act of choice in the cafe.

Or, if their fcheme makes any other difference than this, between Men and Machines, it is for the worfe: it is fo far from fuppofing Men to have a dignity and privilege above Machines, that it makes the manner of their being determined ftill more unhappy. Whereas, Machines, are guided by an underftanding caufe, by the fkilful hand of the workman or owner; the will of Man is left to the guidance of nothing, but abfolute blind contingence.

## SECTION VI.

*Concerning that* Objection *against the Doctrine which has been maintained, that it agrees with the* Stoical *Doctrine of* Fate, *and the Opinions of Mr. Hobbes.*

WHEN *Calvinists* oppose the *Arminian* notion of the freedom of will, and contingence of volition, and insist that there are no acts of the will, nor any other events whatsoever, but what are attended with some kind of necessity; their opposers cry out of them, as agreeing with the antient *Stoicks* in their doctrine of *Fate*, and with Mr. Hobbes in his opinion of necessity.

It would not be worth while to take notice of so impertinent an Objection, had it not been urged by some of the chief *Arminian* writers.—There were many important truths maintained by the antient *Greek* and *Roman* philosophers, and especially the *Stoicks*, that are never the worse for being held by them. The *Stoick* philosophers, by the general agreement of Christian divines, and even *Arminian* divines, were the greatest, wisest, and most virtuous of all the heathen philosophers; and, in their doctrine and practice, came the nearest to Christianity of any of their sects. How frequently are the sayings of these philosophers, in many of the writings and sermons, even of *Arminian* divines, produced, not as arguments of the falseness of the doctrines which they delivered, but as a confirmation of some of the greatest truths of the Christian Religion, relating to the Unity and Per-

fections of the Godhead, a future ſtate, the duty and happineſs of mankind, &c. as obſerving how the light of nature and reaſon, in the wiſeſt and beſt of the Heathen, harmonized with, and confirms the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt.

And it is very remarkable, concerning Dr. Whitby, that although he alledges the agreement of the *Stoicks* with us, wherein he ſuppoſes they maintained the like doctrine with us, as an argument againſt the truth of our doctrine; yet, this very Dr. Whitby alledges the agreement of the *Stoicks* with the *Arminians*, wherein he ſuppoſes they taught the ſame doctrine with them, as an argument for the truth of their doctrine.* So that, when the *Stoicks* agree with them, this (it ſeems) is a confirmation of their doctrine, and a confutation of ours, as ſhewing that our opinions are contrary to the natural ſenſe and common reaſon of mankind: nevertheleſs, when the *Stoicks* agree with *us*, it argues no ſuch thing in our favour; but, on the contrary, is a great argument againſt us, and ſhews our doctrine to be heatheniſh.

It is obſerved by ſome *Calviniſtic* writers, that the *Arminians* ſymbolize with the *Stoicks*, in ſome of thoſe doctrines wherein they are oppoſed by the *Calviniſts*; particularly in their denying an original, innate, total corruption and depravity of heart; and in what they held of man's ability to make himſelf truly virtuous and conformed to God;—and in ſome other doctrines.

It may be further obſerved, it is certainly no better Objection againſt our doctrine, that it agrees, in ſome reſpects, with the doctrine of the

* *Whitby* on the five points, Edit. 3. p. 325, 326, 327.

antient *Stoick* philosophers, than it is against theirs, wherein they differ from us, that it agrees, in some respects, with the opinion of the very worst of the heathen philosophers, the followers of Epicurus, that father of atheism and licentiousness, and with the doctrine of the Sadducees and Jesuits.

I am not much concerned to know precisely, what the antient *Stoick* philosophers held concerning *Fate*, in order to determine what is truth; as though it were a sure way to be in the right, to take good heed to differ from them. It seems, that they differed among themselves; and probably the doctrine of *Fate* as maintained by most of them, was, in some respects, erroneous. But whatever their doctrine was, if any of them held such a Fate, as is repugnant to any liberty, consisting in our doing as we please, I utterly deny such a Fate. If they held any such Fate, as is not consistent with the common and universal notions that mankind have of liberty, activity, moral agency, virtue and vice; I disclaim any such thing, and think I have demonstrated that the scheme I maintain is no such scheme. If the *Stoicks*, by *Fate*, meant any thing of such a nature, as can be supposed to stand in the way of the advantage and benefit of the use of means and endeavours, or make it less worth the while for men to desire, and seek after any thing wherein their virtue and happiness consists; I hold no doctrine that is clogged with any such inconvenience. any more than any other scheme whatsoever; and by no means so much as the *Arminian* scheme of contingence; as has been shewn. If they held any such doctrine of universal fatality, as is inconsistent with any kind of liberty, that is or can be any perfection, dignity, privilege or benefit, or any thing desirable, in any respect, for

any intelligent creature, or indeed with any liberty that is poſſible or conceivable; I embrace no ſuch doctrine. If they held any ſuch doctrine of Fate, as is inconſiſtent with the world's being in all things ſubject to the diſpoſal of an intelligent wiſe agent, that preſides, not as the *ſoul* of the world, but as the Sovereign *Lord* of the Univerſe, governing all things by proper will, choice and deſign, in the exerciſe of the moſt perfect liberty conceivable, without ſubjection to any conſtraint, or being properly under the power or influence of any thing before, above or without himſelf; I wholly renounce any ſuch doctrine.

As to Mr. Hobbes's maintaining the ſame doctrine concerning neceſſity;—I confeſs, it happens I never read Mr. Hobbes. Let his opinion be what it will, we need not reject all truth which is demonſtrated by clear evidence, merely becauſe it was once held by ſome bad man. This great truth, *that Jeſus is the Son of God*, was not ſpoiled becauſe it was once and again proclaimed with a loud voice by the devil. If truth is ſo defiled, becauſe it is ſpoken by the mouth, or written by the pen of ſome ill-minded miſchievous man, that it muſt never be received, we ſhall never know, when we hold any of the moſt precious and evident truths by a ſure tenure. And if Mr. Hobbes has made a bad uſe of this truth, that is to be lamented; but the truth is not to be thought worthy of rejection on that account. It is common for the corruptions of the hearts of evil men to abuſe the beſt things to vile purpoſes.

I might alſo take notice of its having been obſerved, that the *Arminians* agree with Mr. Hobbes in many more things than the *Calviniſts*.* As,

* Dr. Gill, in his Anſwer to Dr. Whitby. Vol. III. p. 183, &c.

in what he is ſaid to hold concerning original ſin, in denying the neceſſity of ſupernatural illumination, in denying infuſed grace, in denying the doctrine of juſtification by faith alone; and other things.

## SECTION VII.

### *Concerning the* Neceſſity *of the* Divine Will.

SOME may poſſibly object againſt what has been ſuppoſed of the abſurdity and inconſiſtence of a ſelf-determining power in the will, and the impoſſibility of its being otherwiſe, than that the will ſhould be determined in every caſe by ſome motive, and by a motive which (as it ſtands in the view of the underſtanding) is of ſuperior ſtrength to any appearing on the other ſide; that if theſe things are true, it will follow, that not only the will of created minds, but the will of *God Himſelf* is neceſſary in all its determinations. Concerning which, ſays the Author of the *Eſſay on the Freedom of Will in God and in the Creature* (pag. 85, 86.) "What ſtrange doctrine is "this, contrary to all our ideas of the dominion "of God? does it not deſtroy the glory of his "liberty of choice, and take away from the "Creator and Governor and Benefactor of the "world, that moſt free and Sovereign Agent, all "the glory of this ſort of freedom? Does it "not ſeem to make him a kind of mechanical "medium of fate, and introduce Mr. Hobbes's "doctrine of fatality and Neceſſity, into all "things that God hath to do with? Does it not "ſeem to repreſent the bleſſed God, as a Being "of vaſt underſtanding, as well as power and "efficiency, but ſtill to leave him without a

" will to chuſe among all the objects within his
" view? In ſhort, it ſeems to make the bleſſed
" God a ſort of Almighty Miniſter of Fate, un-
" der its univerſal and ſupreme influence; as it
" was the profeſſed ſentiment of ſome of the
" antients, that Fate was above the gods."

This is declaiming, rather than arguing; and an application to men's imaginations and prejudices, rather than to mere reaſon.—But I would calmly endeavour to conſider, whether there be any reaſon in this frightful repreſentation.—But before I enter upon a particular conſideration of the matter, I would obſerve this: that it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, it ſhould be much more difficult to expreſs or conceive things according to exact metaphyſical truth, relating to the nature and manner of the exiſtence of things in the Divine Underſtanding and Will, and the operation of theſe faculties (if I may ſo call them) of the Divine Mind, than in the human mind; which is infinitely more within our view, and nearer to a proportion to the meaſure of our comprehenſion, and more commenſurate to the uſe and import of human ſpeech. Language is indeed very deficient, in regard of terms to expreſs preciſe truth concerning our own minds, and their faculties and operations. Words were firſt formed to expreſs external things; and thoſe that are applied to expreſs things internal and ſpiritual, are almoſt all borrowed, and uſed in a ſort of figurative ſenſe. Whence they are, moſt of them, attended with a great deal of ambiguity and unfixedneſs in their ſignification, occaſioning innumerable doubts, difficulties and confuſions, in enquiries and controverſies, about things of this nature. But language is much leſs adapted to expreſs

things in the mind of the incomprehensible Deity, precisely as they are.

We find a great deal of difficulty in conceiving exactly of the nature of our own souls. And notwithstanding all the progress, which has been made, in past and present ages, in this kind of knowledge, whereby our metaphysics, as it relates to these things, is brought to greater perfection than once it was; yet, here is still work enough left for future enquiries and researches, and room for progress still to be made, for many ages and generations. But we had need to be infinitely able metaphysicians, to conceive with clearness, according to strict, proper and perfect truth, concerning the nature of the Divine Essence, and the modes of the action and operation of the powers of the Divine Mind.

And it may be noted particularly, that though we are obliged to conceive of some things in God as consequent and dependent on others, and of some things pertaining to the Divine Nature and Will as the foundation of others, and so before others in the order of nature: as, we must conceive of the knowledge and holiness of God as prior, in the order of nature, to his happiness; the perfection of his understanding, as the foundation of his wise purposes and decrees; the holiness of his nature, as the cause and reason of his holy determinations. And yet, when we speak of cause and effect, antecedent and consequent, fundamental and dependent, determining and determined, in the first Being, who is self-existent, independent, of perfect and absolute simplicity and immutability, and the first cause of all things; doubtless there must be less propriety in such representations, that when we speak of derived de-

pendent beings, who are compounded, and liable to perpetual mutation and ſucceſſion.

Having premiſed this, I proceed to obſerve concerning the forementioned Author's exclamation, about the *neceſſary Determination of God's Will*, in all things, by what he ſees to be *fitteſt* and *beſt*.

That all the ſeeming force of ſuch objections and exclamations muſt ariſe from an imagination, that there is ſome ſort of privilege or dignity in being without ſuch a moral Neceſſity, as will make it impoſſible to do any other, than always chuſe what is wiſeſt and beſt; as though there were ſome diſadvantage, meanneſs and ſubjection, in ſuch a Neceſſity; a thing by which the will was confined, kept under, and held in ſervitude by ſomething, which, as it were, maintained a ſtrong and invincible power and dominion over it, by bonds that held him faſt, and that he could, by no means, deliver himſelf from. Whereas, this muſt be all mere imagination and deluſion. It is no diſadvantage or diſhonour to a being, neceſſarily to act in the moſt excellent and happy manner, from the neceſſary perfection of his own nature. This argues no imperfection, inferiority or dependence, nor any want of dignity, privilege or aſcendency.* It is not inconſiſtent with the

* "It might have been objected, with more plauſible-
"neſs, that the Supreme Cauſe cannot be free, becauſe he muſt
"needs do always what is beſt in the whole. But this would
"not at all ſerve Spinoza's purpoſe; for this is a Neceſſity,
"not of nature and of fate, but of fitneſs and wiſdom; a Ne-
"ceſſity conſiſtent with the greateſt freedom, and moſt per-
"fect choice. For the only foundation of this Neceſſity is
"ſuch an unalterable rectitude of will, and perfection of
"wiſdom, as makes it impoſſible for a wiſe being to act fool-
"iſhly." Clark's Demonſtration of the Being and Attributes of God. Edit. 6. p. 64.

absolute and most perfect sovereignty of God. The sovereignty of God is his ability and authority to do whatever pleases him; whereby *He doth according to his will in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what dost thou?*— The following things belong to the *sovereignty* of God; *viz.* (1.) Supreme, Universal, and Infinite *Power;* whereby he is able to do what he pleases, without control, without any confinement of that power, without any subjection, in the least measure, to any other power; and so without any hinderance or restraint, that it should be either impossible, or at all difficult, for him to accomplish his Will; and without any dependence of his power on any other power, from whence it should be derived, or which it should stand in any need of: so far from this, that all other power is derived from him, and is absolutely dependent on him. (2.) That He has supreme *authority;*

" Though God is a most perfect free Agent, yet he cannot " but do always what is best and wisest in the whole. The " reason is evident; because perfect wisdom and goodness " are as steady and certain principles of action, as Necessity " itself; and an infinitely wise and good Being, indued " with the most perfect liberty, can no more chuse to act in " contradiction to wisdom and goodness, than a necessary agent " can act contrary to the Necessity by which it is acted; it " being as great an absurdity and impossibility in choice, for " Infinite Wisdom to chuse to act unwisely, or Infinite Good- " ness to chuse what is not good, as it would be in nature, " for absolute Necessity to fail of producing its necessary " effect. There was, indeed, no Necessity in nature, that God " should at first create such beings as he has created, or indeed " any being at all; because he is, in Himself, infinitely happy " and all-sufficient. There was, also, no Necessity in nature, " that he should preserve and continue things in being, after " they were created; because he would be self-sufficient with- " out their continuance, as he was before their creation. " But it was fit and wise and good, that Infinite Wisdom should

absolute and most perfect right to do what he wills, without subjection to any superior authority, or any derivation of authority from any other, or limitation by any distinct independent authority, either superior, equal, or inferior; he being the head of all dominion, and fountain of all authority; and also without restraint by any obligation, implying either subjection, derivation, or dependence, or proper limitation. (3.) That his *Will* is supreme, underived, and independent on any thing without Himself; being in every thing determined by his own counsel, having no other rule but his own wisdom; his will not being subject to, or restrained by the will of any other, and other wills being perfectly subject to his. (4.) That his *Wisdom*, which determines his will, is supreme, perfect, underived, self-sufficient and independent; so that it may be said, as in Isa. xl. 14. *With whom took He counsel? And who instructed Him and taught Him in*

"manifest, and Infinite Goodness communicate itself; and "therefore it was necessary, in the sense of Necessity I am "now speaking of, that things should be made *at such a time*, "and continued *so long*, and indeed with various perfections "in such degrees, as Infinite Wisdom and Goodness saw it "wisest and best that they should." *Ibid.* p. 112, 113.

"'Tis not a fault, but a perfection of our nature, to de- "sire, will and act, according to the last result of a fair ex- "amination.—This is so far from being a restraint or di- "minution of freedom, that it is the very improvement and "benefit of it: 'tis not an abridgment, 'tis the end and "use of our liberty; and the further we are removed from "such a determination, the nearer we are to misery and sla- "very. A perfect indifference in the mind, not determin- "able by its last judgment, of the good or evil that is thought "to attend its choice, would be so far from being an advan- "tage and excellency of any intellectual nature, that it "would be as great an imperfection, as the want of indiffe- "rency to act, or not to act, till determined by the will, "would be an imperfection on the other side.—'Tis as

*the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and shewed him the way of understanding?*—There is no other Divine Sovereignty but this: and this is properly *absolute sovereignty:* no other is desirable; nor would any other be honourable, or happy: and indeed, there is no other conceivable or possible. It is the glory and greatness of the Divine Sovereign, that God's Will is determined by his own infinite all-sufficient wisdom in every thing; and in nothing at all is either directed by any inferior wisdom, or by no wisdom; whereby it would become senseless arbitrariness, determining and acting without reason, design or end.

If God's Will is steadily and surely determined in every thing by *supreme* wisdom, then it is in every thing necessarily determined to that which is *most* wise. And, certainly, it would be a disadvantage and indignity, to be otherwise. For if

" much a perfection, that desire or the power of preferring " should be determined by good, as that the power of acting " should be determined by the will: and the certainer such " determination is, the greater the perfection. Nay, were " we determined by any thing but the last result of our own " minds, judging of the good or evil of any action, we were " not free. This very end of our freedom being, that we " might attain the good we chuse; and, therefore, every man " is brought under a Necessity by his constitution, as an in- " telligent being, to be determined in willing by his own " thought and judgment, what is best for him to do; else " he would be under the determination of some other than " himself, which is want of liberty. And to deny that a " man's will, in every determination, follows his own judg- " ment, is to say, that a man wills and acts for an end that " he would not have, at the same time that he wills and acts " for it. For if he prefers it in his present thoughts, be- " fore any other, it is plain he then thinks better of it, and " would have it before any other; unless he can have, and " not have it; will, and not will it, at the same time; a

the Divine Will was not neceſſarily determined to that, which in every caſe is wiſeſt and beſt, it muſt be ſubject to ſome degree of undeſigning contingence; and ſo in the ſame degree liable to evil. To ſuppoſe the Divine Will liable to be carried hither and thither at random, by the uncertain wind of blind contingence, which is guided by no wiſdom, no motive, no intelligent dictate whatſoever, (if any ſuch thing were poſſible) would certainly argue a great degree of imperfection and meanneſs, infinitely unworthy of the Deity.—If it be a diſadvantage, for the Divine Will to be attended with this moral Neceſſity, then the more free from it, and the

" contradiction too manifeſt to be admitted—If we look upon thoſe ſuperior beings above us, who enjoy perfect happineſs, we ſhall have reaſon to judge, that they are more ſteadily determined in their choice of good than we; and yet we have no reaſon to think they are leſs happy, or leſs free, than we are. And if it were fit for ſuch poor finite creatures as we are, to pronounce what Infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs could do, I think we might ſay, that God himſelf cannot chuſe what is not good. *The freedom of the Almighty hinders not his being determined by what is beſt.*— But to give a right view of this miſtaken part of liberty, let me aſk, Would any one be a changeling, becauſe he is leſs determined by wiſe determination, than a wiſe man? Is it worth the name of freedom, to be at liberty to play the fool, and draw ſhame and miſery upon a man's ſelf? If to break looſe from the conduct of reaſon, and to want that reſtraint of examination and judgment, that keeps us from doing or chuſing the worſe, be liberty, true liberty, mad-men and fools are the only free men. Yet, I think, no body would chuſe to be mad, for the ſake of ſuch liberty, but he that is mad already. *Locke*, Hum. Und. Vol. I. Edit. 7. p. 215, 216.

" This Being, having all things always neceſſarily in view, muſt always, and eternally will, according to his infinite comprehenſion of things; that is, muſt will all things that are wiſeſt and beſt to be done. There is not getting free of this conſequence. If it can will at all, it muſt will this way. To be capable of knowing, and not capable of

more left at random, the greater dignity and advantage. And, consequently, to be perfectly free from the direction of understanding, and universally and entirely left to senseless unmeaning contingence, to act absolutely at random, would be the supreme glory.

It no more argues any dependence of God's Will, that his supremely wise volition is necessary, than it argues a dependence of his being, that his existence is necessary. If it be something too low, for the Supreme Being to have his Will determined by moral Necessity, so as necessarily, in every case, to will in the highest degree holily and happily; then why is it not also something too low, for him to have his existence, and the in-

"willing, is not to be understood. And to be capable of "willing otherwise than what is wisest and best, contradicts "that knowledge which is infinite. Infinite Knowledge must "direct the will without error. *Here then, is the origin of "moral Necessity; and that is really, of freedom*—Perhaps it "may be said, when the Divine Will is determined, from the "consideration of the eternal aptitudes of things, it is as "necessarily determined, as if it were physically impelled, if "that were possible. But it is unskilfulness, to suppose this "an objection. The great principle is once established, *viz.* "That the Divine Will is determined by the eternal reason "and aptitudes of things, instead of being physically im-"pelled; and after that, the more strong and necessary this "determination is, the more perfect the Deity must be al-"lowed to be: it is this that makes him an amiable and "adorable Being, whose Will and Power are constantly, im-"mutably determined, by the consideration of what is wisest "and best; instead of a surd Being, with power, but without "discerning and reason. *It is the beauty of this Necessity, "that it is strong as fate itself, with all the advantage of reason "and goodness.*—It is strange, to see men contend, that the "Deity is not free, because he is necessarily rational, im-"mutably good and wise; when a man is allowed still the "perfecter being, the more fixedly and constantly his will is "determined by reason and truth." *Enquiry into the Nature of the Hum. Soul.* Edit. 3. Vol. II. p. 403, 404.

finite perfection of his nature, and his infinite happineſs determined by Neceſſity? It is no more to God's diſhonour, to be neceſſarily wiſe, than to be neceſſarily holy. And, if neither of them be to his diſhonour, then it is not to his diſhonour neceſſarily to act holily and wiſely. And it be not diſhonourable to be neceſſarily holy and wiſe, in the highèſt poſſible degree, no more is it mean and diſhonourable, neceſſarily to act holily and wiſely in the higheſt poſſible degree; or, which is the ſame thing, to do that, in every caſe, which, above all other things, is wiſeſt and beſt.

The reaſon, why it is not diſhonourable, to be neceſſarily *moſt* holy, is, becauſe holineſs in itſelf is an excellent and honourable thing. For the ſame reaſon, it is no diſhonour to be neceſſarily *moſt* wiſe, and, in every caſe, to act moſt wiſely, or do the thing which is the wiſeſt of all; for wiſdom is alſo in itſelf excellent and honourable.

The forementioned Author of the *Eſſay on the Freedom of Will*, &c. as has been obſerved, repreſents that doctrine of the Divine Will's being in every thing neceſſarily determined by ſuperior fitneſs, as making the bleſſed God a kind of Almighty Miniſter and mechanical medium of fate: and he inſiſts, p. 93, 94. that this moral Neceſſity and impoſſibility is, in effect, the ſame thing with phyſical and natural Neceſſity and impoſſibility: and in p. 54, 55. he ſays, "The "ſcheme which determines the will always and "certainly by the underſtanding, and the un-"derſtanding by the appearance of things, "ſeems to take away the true nature of vice "and virtue. For the ſublimeſt of virtues, and

"the vilest of vices, seem rather to be matters "of fate and Necessity, flowing naturally and "necessarily from the existence, the circum-"stances, and present situation of persons and "things: for this existence and situation ne-"cessarily makes such an appearance to the "mind; from this appearance flows a necessary "perception and judgment, concerning these "things; this judgment, necessarily determines "the will: and thus, by this chain of necef-"sary causes, virtue and vice would lose their "nature, and become natural ideas, and necef-"sary things, instead of moral and free ac-"tions."

And yet this same author allows, p. 30, 31. That a perfectly wise being will constantly and certainly chuse what is most fit; and says, p. 102, 103. "I grant, and always have granted, that "wheresoever there is such antecedent superior "fitness of things, God acts according to it, "so as never to contradict it; and, particularly, "in all his judicial proceedings as a Governor, "and Distributer of rewards and punishments." Yea, he says expressly, p. 42. "That it is not "possible for God to act otherwise, than accord-"ing to this fitness and goodness in things."

So that according to this Author, putting these several passages of this Essay together, there is *no virtue, nor any thing of a moral nature*, in the most sublime and glorious acts and exercises of God's holiness, justice, and faithfulness; and he never does any thing which is in itself supremely worthy, and, above all other things, fit and excellent, but only as a kind of mechanical medium of fate; and in *what he does as the Judge, and moral Governor of the world*, he exercises no

moral excellency; exercising no freedom in these things, because he acts by moral Necessity, which is, in effect, the same with physical or natural Necessity; and, therefore, he only acts by an *Hobistical* fatality; *as a Being indeed of vast understanding, as well as power and efficiency* (as he said before) *but without a will to chuse. being a kind of Almighty Minister of fate, acting under its supreme influence.* For he allows, that in all these things, God's Will is determined constantly and certainly by a superior fitness, and that it is not possible for him to act otherwise. And if these things are so, what glory or praise belongs to God for doing holily and justly, or taking the most fit, holy, wise and excellent course, in any one instance? Whereas, according to the Scriptures, and also the common Sense of mankind, it does not, in the least, derogate from the honour of any being, that through the moral perfection of his nature, he necessarily acts with supreme wisdom and holiness: but, on the contrary, his praise is the greater; herein consists the height of his glory.

The same author, p. 56. supposes, that herein appears the excellent *character of a wise and good man, that though he can chuse contrary to the fitness of things, yet he does not; but suffers himself to be directed by fitness;* and that, in this conduct, *he imitates the blessed God.* And yet, he supposes it is contrariwise with the blessed God; not that he suffers himself to be directed by fitness, when *he can chuse, contrary to the fitness of things,* but that *he cannot chuse contrary to the fitness of things;* as he says, p. 42.—*That it is not possible for God to act otherwise than according to this fitness, where there is any fitness or goodness in things:* Yea, he supposes, p. 31. That if a man *were perfectly wise*

*and good, he could not do otherwise than be constantly and certainly determined by the fitness of things.*

One thing more I would observe, before I conclude this section; and that is, that if it derogates nothing from the glory of God, to be necessarily determined by superior fitness in some things, then neither does it to be thus determined in all things; from any thing in the nature of such Necessity, as at all detracting from God's freedom, independence, absolute supremacy, or any dignity or glory of his nature, state or manner of acting; or as implying any infirmity, restraint, or subjection. And if the thing be such as well consists with God's glory, and has nothing tending at all to detract from it; then we need not be afraid of ascribing it to God in too many things, lest thereby we should detract from God's glory too much.

## SECTION VIII.

### *Some further Objections against the moral* Necessity of GOD's Volitions *considered.*

THE Author last cited, as has been observed, owns that God, being perfectly wise, will constantly and certainly chuse what appears most fit, where there is a superior fitness and goodness in things; and that it is not possible for him to do otherwise. So that it is in effect confessed, that in those things where there is any real preferableness, it is no dishonour, nothing in any respect unworthy of God, for him to act from Necessity; notwithstanding all that can be objected from the agreement of such a Necessity,

with the fate of the *Stoicks*, and the Neceſſity maintained by Mr. Hobbes. From which it will follow, that if it were ſo, that in all the different things, among which God chuſes, there were evermore a ſuperior fitneſs, or preferableneſs on one ſide, then it would be no diſhonour, or any thing, in any reſpect, unworthy, or unbecoming of God, for his will to be neceſſarily determined in every thing. And if this be allowed, it is a giving up entirely the argument, from the unſuitableneſs of ſuch a Neceſſity to the liberty, ſupremacy, independence and glory of the Divine Being; and a reſting the whole weight of the affair on the deciſion of another point wholly diverſe; *viz. Whether it be ſo indeed*, that in all the various poſſible things, which are in God's view, and may be conſidered as capable objects of his choice, there is not evermore a preferableneſs in one thing above another. This is denied by this Author; who ſuppoſes, that in many inſtances, between two or more poſſible things, which come within the view of the Divine Mind, there is a perfect indifference and equality, as to fitneſs or tendency, to attain any good end which God can have in view, or to anſwer any of his deſigns. Now, therefore, I would conſider whether this be evident.

The arguments brought to prove this, are of two kinds. (1.) It is urged, that, in many inſtances, we muſt ſuppoſe there is abſolutely no difference between various poſſible objects of choice, which God has in view: and (2.) that the difference between many things is ſo inconſiderable, or of ſuch a nature, that it would be unreaſonable to ſuppoſe it to be of any conſequence; or to ſuppoſe that any of God's wiſe de-

signs would not be answered in one way as well as the other.

Therefore,

I. The first thing to be considered is, whether there are any instances wherein there is a perfect likeness, and absolutely no difference, between different objects of choice, that are proposed to the Divine Understanding?

And here, in the *first* place, it may be worthy to be considered, whether the contradiction there is in the *terms* of the question proposed, does not give reason to suspect, that there is an inconsistence in the *thing* supposed. It is enquired, whether *different* objects of choice may not be absolutely *without difference?* If they are absolutely *without difference*, then how are they *different* objects of choice? If there be absolutely *no difference*, in any respect, then there is *no variety* or *distinction:* for distinction is only by some difference. And if there be no *variety* among proposed *objects of choice*, then there is no opportunity for *variety of choice*, or difference of determination. For that determination of a thing, which is not different in any respect, is not a different determination, but the same. That this is no quibble, may appear more fully anon.

The arguments, to prove that the Most High, in some instances, chuses to do one thing rather than another, where the things themselves are perfectly without difference, are two.

1. That the various parts of infinite time and space, absolutely considered, are perfectly alike, and do not differ at all one from another: and that therefore, when God determined to create

the world in ſuch a part of infinite duration and ſpace, rather than others, he determined and preferred, among various objects, between which there was no preferableneſs, and abſolutely no difference.

*Anſw.* This objection ſuppoſes an infinite length of time before the world was created, diſtinguiſhed by ſucceſſive parts, properly and truly ſo; or a ſucceſſion of limited and unmeaſurable periods of time, following one another, in an infinitely long ſeries: which muſt needs be a groundleſs imagination. The eternal duration which was before the world, being only the eternity of God's exiſtence; which is nothing elſe but his immediate, perfect and invariable poſſeſſion of the whole of his unlimited life, together and at once; *Vitæ interminabilis, tota, ſimul & perfecta poſſeſſio.* Which is ſo generally allowed, that I need not ſtand to demonſtrate it.*

* 'If all created beings were taken away, all poſſibility 'of any mutation or ſucceſſion, of one thing to another, 'would appear to be alſo removed. Abſtract ſucceſſion in 'eternity is ſcarce to be underſtood. What is it that ſuc-'ceeds? One minute to another, perhaps, *velut unda ſuper-'venit undam.* But when we imagine this, we fancy that 'the minutes are things ſeparately exiſting. This is the 'common notion; and yet it is a manifeſt prejudice. Time 'is nothing but the exiſtence of created ſucceſſive beings, 'and eternity the neceſſary exiſtence of the Deity. Therefore, 'if this neceſſary being hath no change or ſucceſſion in his 'nature, his exiſtence muſt of courſe be unſucceſſive. We 'ſeem to commit a double overſight in this caſe; *firſt*, we 'find ſucceſſion in the neceſſary nature and exiſtence of the 'Deity himſelf: which is wrong, if the reaſoning above be 'concluſive. And *then* we aſcribe this ſucceſſion to eternity, 'conſidered abſtractedly from the Eternal Being; and ſup-'poſe it, one knows not what, a thing ſubſiſting by itſelf, 'and flowing, one minute after another. This is the work 'of pure imagination, and contrary to the reality of things.

So this objection supposes an extent of space beyond the limits of the creation, of an infinite length, breadth and depth, truly and properly distinguished into different measurable parts, limited at certain stages, one beyond another, in an infinite series. Which notion of absolute and infinite space is doubtless as unreasonable, as that now mentioned, of absolute and infinite duration. It is as improper, to imagine that the immensity and omnipresence of God is distinguished by a series of miles and leagues, one beyond another; as that the infinite duration of God is distinguished by months and years, one after another. A diversity and order of distinct parts, limited by certain periods, is as conceivable, and does as naturally obtrude itself on our imagination, in one case as the other; and there is equal reason in each case, to suppose that our imagination deceives us. It is equally improper, to talk of months and years of the Divine Existence, and mile-squares of Deity: and we equally deceive our-

'Hence the common metaphorical expressions; *Time runs* 'a-pace, *let us lay hold on the present minute*, and the like. The 'philosophers themselves mislead us by their illustration. 'They compare eternity to the motion of a point running 'on for ever, and making a traceless infinite line. Here the 'point is supposed a thing actually subsisting, representing 'the present minute; and then they ascribe motion or succession to it: that is, they ascribe motion to a mere non-'entity, to illustrate to us a successive eternity, made up of 'finite successive parts.——If once we allow an all-perfect 'mind, which hath an eternal, immutable and infinite comprehension of all things, always (and allow it we must) 'the distinction of past and future vanishes with respect to 'such a mind.—In a word, if we proceed step by step, as 'above, the eternity or existence of the Deity will appear 'to be *Vitæ interminabilis, tota, simul & perfecta possessio;* 'how much soever this may have been a paradox hitherto." *Enquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul.* Vol. II. 409, 410, 411. Edit. 3.

ſelves, when we talk of the world's being differently fix'd, with reſpect to either of theſe ſorts of meaſures. I think, we know not what we mean, if we ſay, the world might have been differently placed from what it is, in the broad expanſe of infinity: or, that it might have been differently fixed in the long line of eternity: and all arguments and objections, which are built on the imaginations we are apt to have of infinite extenſion or duration, are buildings founded on ſhadows, or caſtles in the air.

2. The ſecond argument, to prove that the Moſt High wills one thing rather than another, without any ſuperior fitneſs or preferableneſs in the thing preferred, is God's actually placing in different parts of the world, particles, or atoms of matter, that are perfectly equal and alike. The forementioned Author ſays, p. 78, *&c.* "If one "would deſcend to the minute ſpecific particles, "of which different bodies are compoſed, we "ſhould ſee abundant reaſon to believe, that there "are thouſands of ſuch little particles, or atoms "of matter, which are perfectly equal and alike, "and could give no diſtinct determination to the "Will of God, where to place them." He there inſtances in particles of water, of which there are ſuch immenſe numbers, which compoſe the rivers and oceans of this world; and the infinite myriads of the luminous and fiery particles, which compoſe the body of the Sun; ſo many, that it would be very unreaſonable to ſuppoſe no two of them ſhould be exactly equal and alike.

*Anſw.* (1.) To this I anſwer: that as we muſt ſuppoſe matter to be infinitely diviſible, it is very unlikely, that any two, of all theſe particles, are exactly equal and alike; ſo unlikely, that it is a

thouſand to one, yea, an infinite number to one, but it is otherwiſe: and that although we ſhould allow a great ſimilarity between the different particles of water and fire, as to their general nature and figure; and however ſmall we ſuppoſe thoſe particles to be, it is infinitely unlikely, that any two of them ſhould be exactly equal in dimenſions and quantity of matter.—If we ſhould ſuppoſe a great many globes of the ſame nature with the globe of the earth, it would be very ſtrange, if there were any two of them that had exactly the ſame number of particles of duſt and water in them. But infinitely leſs ſtrange, than that two particles of light ſhould have juſt the ſame quantity of matter. For a particle of light, according to the doctrine of the infinite diviſibility of matter, is compoſed of infinitely more aſſignable parts, than there are particles of duſt and water in the globe of the earth. And as it is infinitely unlikely, that any two of theſe particles ſhould be *equal;* ſo it is, that they ſhould be *alike* in other reſpects: to inſtance in the configuration of their ſurfaces. If there were very many globes, of the nature of the earth, it would be very unlikely that any two ſhould have exactly the ſame number of particles of duſt, water and ſtone, in their ſurfaces, and all poſited exactly alike, one with reſpect to another, without any difference, in any part diſcernible either by the naked eye or microſcope; but infinitely leſs ſtrange, than that two particles of light ſhould be perfectly of the ſame figure. For there are infinitely more aſſignable real parts on the ſurface of a particle of light, than there are particles of duſt, water and ſtone, on the ſurface of the terreſtrial Globe.

*Anſw.* (2.) But then, ſuppoſing that there are two particles, or atoms of matter, perfectly equal and alike, which God has placed in different parts of the creation; as I will not deny it to be poſſible for God to make two bodies perfectly alike, and put them in different places; yet it will not follow, that two different or diſtinct acts or effects of the Divine Power have exactly the ſame fitneſs for the ſame ends. For theſe two different bodies are not different or diſtinct, in any other reſpects than thoſe wherein they *differ*: they are two in no other reſpects than thoſe wherein there is a difference. If they are perfectly equal and alike *in themſelves*, then they can be diſtinguiſhed, or be diſtinct, only in thoſe things which are called *circumſtances;* as place, time, reſt, motion, or ſome other preſent or paſt circumſtances or relations. For it is difference only that conſtitutes diſtinction. If God makes two bodies, *in themſelves* every way equal and alike, and agreeing perfectly in all other circumſtances and relations, but only *their place;* then in this only is there any diſtinction or duplicity. The figure is the ſame, the meaſure is the ſame, the ſolidity and reſiſtance are the ſame, and every thing the ſame, but only the place. Therefore what the Will of God determines, is this, namely, that there ſhould be the ſame figure, the ſame extenſion, the ſame reſiſtance, *&c.* in two different places. And for this determination he has ſome reaſon. There is ſome end, for which ſuch a determination and act has a peculiar fitneſs, above all other acts. Here is no one thing determined without an end, and no one thing without a fitneſs for that end, ſuperior to any thing elſe. If it be the pleaſure of God to cauſe the ſame reſiſtance, and the ſame figure, to be in two different places and ſitua-

tions, we can no more justly argue from it, that here must be some determination or act of God's will, that is wholly without motive or end, then we can argue, that whenever, in any case it is a man's will to speak the same words, or make the same sounds at two different times; there must be some determination or act of his will, without any motive or end. The difference of place, in the former case, proves no more than the difference of time does in the other. If any one should say, with regard to the former case, that there must be something determined without an end; *viz.* that of those two similar bodies, this in particular should be made in this place, and the other in the other, and should enquire, why the Creator did not make them in a transposition, when both are alike, and each would equally have suited either place? The enquiry supposes something that is not true; namely, that the two bodies differ and are distinct in other respects besides their place. So that with this distinction, *inherent* in them, they might, in their first creation, have been transposed, and each might have begun its existence in the place of the other.

Let us, for clearness sake, suppose, that God had, at the beginning, made two globes, each of an inch diameter, both perfect spheres, and perfectly solid, without pores, and perfectly alike in every respect, and placed them near one to another, one towards the right hand, and the other towards the left, without any difference as to time, motion or rest, past or present, or any circumstance, but only their place; and the question should be asked, why God in their creation placed them so? Why that which is made on the right hand, was not made on the left, and *vice versa?* Let it be well considered, whether there

be any sense in such a question; and whether the enquiry does not suppose something false and absurd. Let it be considered, what the Creator must have done otherwise than he did, what different act of will or power he must have exerted, in order to the thing proposed. All that could have been done, would have been to have made two spheres, perfectly alike, in the same places where he has made them, without any difference of the things made, either in themselves or in any circumstance; so that the whole effect would have been without any difference, and, therefore, just the same. By the supposition, the two spheres are different in no other respect but their place: and therefore in other respects they are the same. Each has the same roundness; it is not a distinct rotundity, in any other respect but its situation. There are, also, the same dimensions, differing in nothing but their place. And so of their resistance, and every thing else that belongs to them.

Here, if any chuses to say, "that there is a difference in another respect, *viz.* that they are not NUMERICALLY the same: that it is thus with all the qualities that belong to them: that it is confessed, they are, in some respects, the same; that is, they are both exactly alike; but yet *numerically* they differ. Thus the roundness of one is not the same *numerical individual* roundness with that of the other." Let this be supposed; then the question about the determination of the Divine Will in the affair, is, why did God will, that this *individual* roundness should be at the right hand, and the other *individual* roundness at the left? why did not he make them in a contrary position? Let any rational person consider, whether such questions be not words without a meaning; as much as if God should see fit for

ſome ends, to cauſe the ſame ſounds to be repeated, or made at two different times; the ſounds being perfectly the ſame in every other reſpect, but only one was a minute after the other; and it ſhould be aſked, upon it, why God cauſed theſe ſounds, numerically different, to ſucceed one the other in ſuch a manner? Why he did not make that individual ſound, which was in the firſt minute, to be in the ſecond? And the individual ſound of the laſt minute to be in the firſt; which enquiries would be even ridiculous; as, I think, every perſon muſt ſee, at once, in the caſe propoſed of two ſounds, being only the ſame repeated, abſolutely without any difference, but that one circumſtance of time. If the Moſt High ſees it will anſwer ſome good end, that the ſame ſound ſhould be made by lightening at two diſtinct times, and therefore wills that it ſhould be ſo, muſt it needs therefore be, that herein there is ſome act of God's will without any motive or end? God ſaw fit often, at diſtinct times, and on different occaſions, to ſay the very ſame words to Moſes; namely, thoſe, *I am Jehovah.* And would it not be unreaſonable to infer, as a certain conſequence, from this, that here muſt be ſome act or acts of the Divine Will, in determining and diſpoſing theſe words exactly alike, at different times wholly without aim or inducement? But it would be no more unreaſonable than to ſay, that there muſt be an act of God's without any inducement, if he ſees it beſt, and, for ſome reaſons, determines that there ſhall be the ſame reſiſtance, the ſame dimenſions, and the ſame figure, in ſeveral diſtinct places.

If, in the inſtance of the two ſpheres, perfectly alike, it be ſuppoſed poſſible that God might have made them in a contrary poſition; that which is

made at the right hand, being made at the left; then I ask, Whether it is not evidently equally possible, if God had made but one of them, and that in the place of the right-hand globe, that he might have made that numerically different from what it is, and numerically different from what he did make it; though perfectly alike, and in the same place: and at the same time, and in every respect, in the same circumstances and relations? Namely, Whether he might not have made it numerically the same with that which he has now made at the left hand; and so have left that which is now created at the right hand, in a state of non-existence? And, if so, whether it would not have been possible to have made one in that place, perfectly like these, and yet numerically differing from both? And let it be considered, whether, from this notion of a numerical difference in bodies, perfectly equal and alike, which numerical difference is something inherent in the bodies themselves, and diverse from the difference of place or time, or any circumstance whatsoever; it will not follow, that there is an infinite number of numerically different possible bodies, perfectly alike, among which God chuses, by a self-determining power, when he goes about to create bodies.

Therefore let us put the case thus: supposing that God, in the beginning, had created but one perfectly solid sphere, in a certain place; and it should be enquired, Why God created that individual sphere, in that place, at that time? And why he did not create another sphere perfectly like it, but numerically different, in the same place, at the same time? Or why he chose to bring into being there, that very body, rather than any of the infinite number of other bodies,

perfectly like it; either of which he could have made there as well, and would have anſwered his end as well? Why he cauſed to exiſt, at that place and time, that individual roundneſs, rather than any other of the infinite number of individual rotundities, juſt like it? Why that individual reſiſtance, rather than any other of the infinite number of poſſible reſiſtances juſt like it? And it might as reaſonably be aſked, Why, when God firſt cauſed it to thunder, he cauſed that individual ſound then to be made, and not another juſt like it? Why did he make choice of this very ſound, and reject all the infinite number of other poſſible ſounds juſt like it, but numerically differing from it, and all differing one from another? I think, every body muſt be ſenſible of the aſurdity and nonſenſe of what is ſuppoſed in ſuch enquiries. And, if we calmly attend to the matter, we ſhall be convinced, that all ſuch kind of objections as I am anſwering, are founded on nothing but the imperfection of our manner of conceiving things, and the obſcureneſs of language, and great want of clearneſs and preciſion in the ſignification of terms.

If any ſhall find fault with this reaſoning, that it is going a great length into metaphyſical niceties and ſubtilties; I anſwer, the objection which they are in reply to, is a metaphyſical ſubtilty, and muſt be treated according to the nature of it.*

II. Another thing alledged is, that innumerable things which are determined by the Divine

* "For men to have recourſe to ſubtilties, in raiſing difficulties, and then complain, that they ſhould be taken off by minutely examining theſe ſubtilties, is a ſtrange kind of procedure." *Nature of the Human Soul*, vol. 2, p. 331.

will, and chosen and done by God rather than others, differ from those that are not chosen in so inconsiderable a manner, that it would be unreasonable to suppose the difference to be of any consequence, or that there is any superior fitness or goodness, that God can have respect to in the determination.

To which I answer; it is impossible for us to determine, with any certainty or evidence, that because the difference is very small, and appears to us of no consideration, therefore there is absolutely no superior goodness, and no valuable end, which can be proposed by the Creator and Governor of the world, in ordering such a difference. The forementioned author mentions many instances. One is, there being one atom in the whole universe more, or less. But, I think, it would be unreasonable to suppose, that God made one atom in vain, or without any end or motive. He made not one atom, but what was a work of his Almighty Power, as much as the whole globe of the earth, and requires as much of a constant exertion of Almighty Power to uphold it; and was made and is upheld understandingly, and on design, as much as if no other had been made but that. And it would be as unreasonable to suppose, that he made it without any thing really aimed at in so doing, as much as to suppose, that he made the planet Jupiter without aim or design.

It is possible, that the most minute effects of the Creator's power, the smallest assignable difference between the things which God has made, may be attended, in the whole series of events, and the whole compass and extent of their influence, with very great and important conse-

quences. If the laws of motion and gravitation, laid down by Sir Isaac Newton, hold universally, there is not one atom, nor the least assignable part of an atom, but what has influence, every moment, throughout the whole material universe, to cause every part to be otherwise than it would be, if it were not for that particular corporeal existence. And however the effect is insensible for the present, yet it may, in length of time, become great and important.

To illustrate this, let us suppose two bodies moving the same way, in straight lines, perfectly parallel one to another; but to be diverted from this parallel course, and drawn one from another, as much as might be by the attraction of an atom, at the distance of one of the furthest of the fixed stars from the earth; these bodies being turned out of the lines of their parallel motion, will, by degrees, get further and further distant, one from the other; and though the distance may be imperceptible for a long time, yet at length it may become very great. So the revolution of a planet round the sun being retarded or accelerated, and the orbit of its revolution made greater or less, and more or less elliptical, and so its periodical time longer or shorter, no more than may be by the influence of the least atom, might, in length of time, perform a whole revolution sooner or later than otherwise it would have done; which might make a vast alteration with regard to millions of important events. So the influence of the least particle may, for ought we know, have such effect on something in the constitution of some human body, as to cause another thought to arise in the mind at a certain time, than otherwise would have been; which, in length of time, (yea, and that not very great) might oc-

caſion a vaſt alteration through the whole world of mankind. And ſo innumerable other ways might be mentioned, wherein the leaſt aſſignable alteration may poſſibly be attended with great conſequences.

Another *argument*, which the fore-mentioned author brings againſt a neceſſary determination of the Divine Will, by a ſuperior fitneſs, is, that ſuch doctrine derogates from the *freeneſs* of God's *grace* and *goodneſs*, in chuſing the objects of his favour and bounty, and from the *obligation* upon men to *thankfulneſs* for ſpecial benefits. P. 89, *&c.*

In anſwer to this objection, I would obſerve,

1. That it derogates no more from the goodneſs of God, to ſuppoſe the exerciſe of the benevolence of his nature to be determined by wiſdom, than to ſuppoſe it determined by chance, and that his favours are beſtowed altogether at random, his will being determined by nothing but perfect accident, without any end or deſign whatſoever; which muſt be the caſe, as has been demonſtrated, if Volition be not determined by a prevailing motive. That which is owing to perfect contingence, wherein neither previous inducement, nor antecedent choice has any hand, is not owing more to goodneſs or benevolence, than that which is owing to the influence of a wiſe end.

2. It is acknowledged, that if the motive that determines the Will of God, in the choice of the objects of his favours, be any moral quality in the object, recommending that object to his benevolence above others, his chuſing that object is not ſo great a manifeſtation of the freeneſs and ſovereignty of his grace, as if it were otherwiſe.

But there is no Necessity of supposing this, in order to our supposing that he has some wise end in view, in determining to bestow his favours on one person rather than another. We are to distinguish between the *merit of the object of God's Favour*, or a moral qualification of *the object* attracting that favour and recommending to it, and the *natural fitness* of such a determination *of the act of God's goodness*, to answer some wise design of his own, some end in the view of God's Omniscience.—It is God's own act, that is the proper and immediate object of his Volition.

3. I suppose that none will deny, but that, in some instances, God acts from wise design in determining the particular subjects of his favours: none will say, I presume, that when God distinguishes, by his bounty, particular societies, or persons, He never, in any instance, exercises any wisdom in so doing, aiming at some happy consequence. And, if it be not denied to be so in some instances, then I would enquire, whether, in these instances, God's goodness is less manifested, than in those wherein God has no aim or end at all? And whether the subjects have less cause of thankfulness? And if so, who shall be thankful for the bestowment of distinguishing mercy, with that enhancing circumstance of the distinction's being made without an end? How shall it be known when God is influenced by some wise aim, and when not? It is very manifest, with respect to the apostle Paul, that God had wise ends in chusing him to be a Christian and an apostle, who had been a persecutor, &c. The apostle himself mentions one end. 1 Tim. i. 15, 16. *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might shew forth*

*all long-ſuffering, for a pattern to them who ſhould hereafter believe on Him to life everlaſting.* But yet the apoſtle never looked on it as a diminution of the freedom and riches of Divine Grace in his election, which he ſo often and ſo greatly magnifies. This brings me to obſerve,

4. Our ſuppoſing ſuch a moral Neceſſity in the acts of God's will, as has been ſpoken of, is ſo far from neceſſarily derogating from the riches of God's grace to ſuch as are the choſen objects of his favour, that, in many inſtances, this moral Neceſſity may ariſe from goodneſs, and from the great degree of it. God may chuſe this object rather than another, as having a ſuperior fitneſs to anſwer the ends, deſigns and inclinations of his goodneſs; being more ſinful, and ſo more miſerable and neceſſitous than others; the inclinations of Infinite Mercy and Benevolence may be more gratified, and the gracious deſign of God's ſending his Son into the world, may be more abundantly anſwered, in the exerciſes of mercy towards ſuch an object, rather than another.

One thing more I would obſerve, before I finiſh what I have to ſay on the head of the Neceſſity of the acts of God's will; and that is, that ſomething much more like a ſervile ſubjection of the Divine Being to fatal Neceſſity, will follow from *Arminian* principles, than from the doctrines which they oppoſe. For they (at leaſt moſt of them) ſuppoſe, with reſpect to all events that happen in the moral world, depending on the Volitions of moral agents, which are the moſt important events of the univerſe, to which all others are ſubordinate; I ſay, they ſuppoſe, with reſpect to theſe, that God has a certain foreknowledge of them, antecedent to any purpoſes or decrees of his about them. And if ſo, they have a

fixed certain futurity, prior to any designs or volitions of his, and independent on them, and to which his volitions must be subject, as he would wisely accommodate his affairs to this fixed futurity of the state of things in the moral world. So that here, instead of a moral necessity of God's Will, arising from, or consisting in, the infinite perfection and blessedness of the Divine Being, we have a fixed unalterable state of things, properly distinct from the perfect nature of the Divine Mind, and the state of the Divine Will and Design, and entirely independent on these things, and which they have no hand in, because they are prior to them; and which God's Will is truly subject to, being obliged to conform or accommodate himself to it, in all his purposes and decrees, and in every thing he does in his disposals and government of the world; the moral world being the end of the natural; so that all is in vain, that is not accommodated to that state of the moral world, which consists in, or depends upon, the acts and state of the wills of moral agents, which had a fixed futurition from eternity. Such a subjection to necessity as this, would truly argue an inferiority and servitude, that would be unworthy of the Supreme Being; and is much more agreeable to the notion which many of the heathen had of Fate, as above the gods, than that moral necessity of fitness and wisdom which has been spoken of; and is truly repugnant to the absolute sovereignty of God, and inconsistent with the supremacy of his will; and really subjects the will of the Most High, to the will of his creatures, and brings him into dependence upon them.

## SECTION IX.

*Concerning that Objection against the Doctrine which has been maintained, that it makes GOD the* Author of Sin.

IT is urged by *Arminians*, that the doctrine of the necessity of men's volitions, or their necessary connection with antecedent events and circumstances, makes the first cause, and supreme orderer of all things, the Author of Sin; in that he has so constituted the state and course of things, that sinful volitions become necessary, in consequence of his disposal. Dr. Whitby, in his Discourse on the Freedom of the Will, † cites one of the antients, as on his side, declaring that this opinion of the necessity of the will "absolves Sinners, as doing nothing of their own "accord which was evil, and would cast all the "blame of all the wickedness committed in the "world, upon God, and upon his Providence, "if that were admitted by the assertors of this "fate; whether he himself did necessitate them "to do these things, or ordered matters so, that "they should be constrained to do them by some "other cause." And the doctor says, in another place, § "In the nature of the thing, and in "the opinion of philosophers, *causa deficiens, in "rebus necessariis, ad causam per se efficientem re-"ducenda est.* In things necessary, the deficient "cause must be reduced to the efficient. And "in this case the reason is evident; because the "not doing what is required, or not avoiding "what is forbidden, being a defect, must follow

† On the five Points, p. 361. § *Ibid.* p. 486.

" from the position of the necessary cause of that " deficiency."

Concerning this, I would observe the following things.

I. If there be any difficulty in this matter, it is nothing peculiar to this scheme; it is no difficulty or disadvantage, wherein it is distinguished from the scheme of *Arminians;* and, therefore, not reasonably objected by them.

Dr. Whitby supposes, that if Sin necessarily follows from God's withholding assistance, or if that assistance be not given, which is absolutely necessary to the avoiding of Evil; then, in the nature of the thing, God must be as properly the Author of that Evil, as if he were the efficient cause of it. From whence, according to what he himself says of the devils and damned spirits, God must be the proper Author of their perfect unrestrained wickedness: he must be the efficient cause of the great pride of the devils, and of their perfect malignity against God, Christ, his saints, and all that is good, and of the insatiable cruelty of their disposition. For he allows, that God has so forsaken them, and does so withhold his assistance from them, that they are incapacitated from doing good, and determined only to evil.* Our doctrine, in its consequence, makes God the Author of men's Sin in this world, no more, and in no other sense, than his doctrine, in its consequence, makes God the Author of the hellish pride and malice of the devils. And doubtless the latter is as odious an effect as the former.

Again, if it will *follow at all*, that God is the Author of Sin, from what has been supposed

* On the five Points, p. 302, 305.

of a ſure and infallible connection between antecedents and conſequents, it will *follow becauſe of this*, *viz.* that for God to be the Author or Orderer of thoſe things which, he knows before-hand, will infallibly be attended with ſuch a conſequence, is the ſame thing, in effect, as for him to be the Author of that conſequence. But, if this be ſo, this is a difficulty which equally attends the doctrine of *Arminians* themſelves; at leaſt, of thoſe of them who allow God's certain fore-knowledge of all events. For, on the ſuppoſition of ſuch a fore-knowledge, this is the caſe with reſpect to every Sin that is committed: God knew, that if he ordered and brought to paſs ſuch and ſuch events, ſuch Sins would infallibly follow. As for inſtance, God certainly foreknew, long before Judas was born, that if he ordered things ſo, that there ſhould be ſuch a man born, at ſuch a time, and at ſuch a place, and that his life ſhould be preſerved, and that he ſhould, in Divine Providence, be led into acquaintance with Jeſus; and that his heart ſhould be ſo influenced by God's Spirit or Providence, as to be inclined to be a follower of Chriſt; and that he ſhould be one of thoſe twelve, which ſhould be choſen conſtantly to attend him as his family; and that his health ſhould be preſerved, ſo that he ſhould go up to Jeruſalem, at the laſt Paſſover in Chriſt's life; and it ſhould be ſo ordered, that Judas ſhould ſee Chriſt's kind treatment of the woman which anointed him at Bethany, and have that reproof from Chriſt, which he had at that time, and ſee and hear other things, which excited his enmity againſt his Maſter, and other circumſtances ſhould be ordered, as they were ordered; it would be what would moſt certainly and infallibly follow, that Judas would betray his Lord, and would ſoon

after hang himself, and die impenitent, and be sent to hell, for his horrid wickedness.

Therefore, this supposed difficulty ought not to be brought as an objection against the scheme which has been maintained, as *disagreeing* with the *Arminian* scheme, seeing it is no difficulty owing to such a *disagreement;* but a difficulty wherein the *Arminians* share with us. That must be unreasonably made an objection against our differing from them, which we should not escape or avoid at all by agreeing with them.

And therefore I would observe,

II. They who object, that this doctrine makes God the Author of Sin, ought distinctly to explain what they mean by that phrase, *The Author of Sin.* I know the phrase, as it is commonly used, signifies something very ill. If by *the Author of Sin*, be meant *the Sinner*, *the Agent*, or *Actor of Sin*, or *the Doer of a wicked thing;* so it would be a reproach and blasphemy, to suppose God to be the Author of Sin. In this sense, I utterly deny God to be the Author of Sin; rejecting such an imputation on the Most High, as what is infinitely to be abhorred; and deny any such thing to be the consequence of what I have laid down. But if, by *the Author of Sin*, is meant the permitter, or not a hinderer of Sin; and, at the same time, a disposer of the state of events, in such a manner, for wise, holy, and most excellent ends and purposes, that Sin, if it be permitted or not hindered, will most certainly and infallibly follow: I say, if this be all that is meant, by being the Author of Sin, I do not deny that God is the Author of Sin, (though I dislike and reject the phrase, as that which by use and custom is apt to carry another sense) it is no reproach

for the Moſt High to be thus the Author of Sin. This is not to be the *Actor of Sin*, but, on the contrary, *of holineſs*. What God doth herein, is holy; and a glorious exerciſe of the infinite excellency of his nature. And, I do not deny, that God's being thus the Author of Sin, follows from what I have laid down; and, I aſſert, that it equally follows from the doctrine which is maintained by moſt of the *Arminian* divines.

That it is moſt certainly ſo, that God is in ſuch a manner the Diſpoſer and Orderer of Sin, is evident, if any credit is to be given to the Scripture; as well as becauſe it is impoſſible, in the nature of things, to be otherwiſe. In ſuch a manner God ordered the obſtinacy of Pharaoh, in his refuſing to obey God's Commands, to let the people go. Exod. iv. 21. *I will harden his heart, and he ſhall not let the people go.* Chap. vii. 2—5. *Aaron thy brother ſhall ſpeak unto Pharaoh, that he ſend the children of Iſrael out of his land. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and multiply my ſigns and my wonders in the land of Egypt. But Pharaoh ſhall not hearken unto you; that I may lay mine hand upon Egypt, by great judgments*, &c. Chap. ix. 12. *And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them, as the Lord had ſpoken unto Moſes.* Chap. x. 1, 2. *And the Lord ſaid unto Moſes, Go in unto Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his ſervants, that I might ſhew theſe my ſigns before him, and that thou mayſt tell it in the ears of thy ſon, and thy ſon's ſon, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my ſigns which I have done amongst them, that ye may know that I am the Lord.* Chap. xiv. 4. *And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he ſhall follow after them: and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his Hoſt.* Ver. 8. *And the Lord hardened the heart of*

*Pharaoh King of Egypt, and he pursued after the Children of Israel.* And it is certain, that in such a manner God, for wise and good ends, ordered that event, Joseph's being sold into Egypt, by his brethren. Gen. xlv. 5. *Now, therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life.* Ver. 7, 8. *God did send me before you to preserve a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance: so that now it was not you, that sent me hither, but God.* Psal. cvii. 17. *He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant.* It is certain, that thus God ordered the Sin and Folly of Sihon King of the Amorites, in refusing to let the people of Israel pass by him peaceably. Deut. ii. 30. *But Sihon King of Heshbon would not let us pass by him; for the Lord thy God hardened his spirit, and made his heart obstinate, that he might deliver him into thine hand.* It is certain, that God thus ordered the Sin and Folly of the Kings of Canaan, that they attempted not to make peace with Israel, but, with a stupid boldness and obstinacy, set themselves violently to oppose them and their God. Josh. xi. 20. *For it was of the Lord, to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favour; but that he might destroy them, as the Lord commanded Moses.* It is evident, that thus God ordered the treacherous rebellion of Zedekiah against the King of Babylon. Jer. lii. 3. *For through the anger of the Lord it came to pass in Jerusalem, and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence, that Zedekiah rebelled against the King of Babylon.* So 2 Kings xxiv. 20. And it is exceeding manifest, that God thus ordered the rapine and unrighteous ravages of Nebuchadnezzar, in spoiling and ruining the nations round about. Jer. xxv. 9. *Behold, I will*

*ſend and take all the families of the north, ſaith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar my ſervant, and will bring them againſt this land, and againſt all the nations round about; and will utterly deſtroy them, and make them an aſtoniſhment, and an hiſſing, and perpetual deſolations.* Chap. xliii. 10, 11. *I will ſend and take Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my ſervant: and I will ſet his throne upon theſe ſtones that I have hid, and he ſhall ſpread his royal pavilion over them. And when he cometh, he ſhall ſmite the land of Egypt, and deliver ſuch as are for death to death, and ſuch as are for captivity to captivity, and ſuch as are for the ſword to the ſword.* Thus God repreſents himſelf as *ſending* for Nebuchadnezzar, and *taking* of him and his armies, and *bringing* him againſt the nations, which were to be deſtroyed by him, to that very end, that he might utterly deſtroy them, and make them deſolate; and as appointing the work that he ſhould do, ſo particularly, that the very perſons were deſigned, that he ſhould kill with the ſword; and thoſe that ſhould be killed with famine and peſtilence, and thoſe that ſhould be carried into captivity; and that in doing all theſe things, he ſhould act as his ſervant; by which, leſs cannot be intended, than that he ſhould ſerve his purpoſes and deſigns. And in Jer. xxvii. 4, 5, 6. God declares, how he would cauſe him thus to ſerve his deſigns, *viz.* by bringing this to paſs in his ſovereign diſpoſals, as the great Poſſeſſor and Governor of the Univerſe, that diſpoſes all things juſt as pleaſes him. *Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, the God of Iſrael; I have made the earth, the man and the beaſt, that are upon the ground, by my great power, and my ſtretched out arm, and have given it unto whom it ſeemed meet unto me: and now I have given all theſe lands into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar* MY SERVANT, *and the beaſts of the*

*field have I given also to serve him.* And Nebuchadnezzar is spoken of as doing these things, by having his *arms strengthened* by God, and having *God's sword put into his hands, for this end.* Ezek. xxx. 24, 25, 26. Yea, God speaks of his terribly ravaging and wasting the nations, and cruelly destroying all sorts, without distinction of sex or age, as the weapon in God's hand, and the instrument of his indignation, which God makes use of to fulfil his own purposes, and execute his own vengeance. Jer. li. 20. &c. *Thou art my battle-axe, and weapons of war: For with thee will I break in pieces the nations, and with thee will I destroy kingdoms, and with thee will I break in pieces the horse and his rider, and with thee will I break in pieces the chariot and his rider; with thee also will I break in pieces man and woman; and with thee will I break in pieces old and young; and with thee will I break in pieces the young man and the maid,* &c. It is represented, that the designs of Nebuchadnezzar, and those that destroyed Jerusalem, never could have been accomplished, had not God determined them, as well as they; Lam. iii. 37. *Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, and the Lord commandeth it not?* And yet the King of Babylon's thus destroying the nations, and especially the *Jews*, is spoken of as his great wickedness, for which God finally destroyed him. Isa. xiv. 4, 5, 6, 12. Hab. ii. 5,—12. and Jer. chap. l. and li. It is most manifest, that God, to serve his own designs, providentially ordered Shimei's cursing David. 2 Sam. xvi. 10, 11. *The Lord hath said unto him, curse David.—Let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him.*

It is certain, that God thus, for excellent, holy, gracious and glorious ends, ordered the fact which they committed, who were concerned in

Chrift's death; and that therein they did but fulfil God's defigns. As, I truft, no Chriftian will deny it was the defign of God, that Chrift fhould *be crucified*, and that for this end, he came into the world. It is very manifeft, by many Scriptures, that the whole affair of Chrift's crucifixion, with its circumftances, and the treachery of Judas, that made way for it, was ordered in God's Providence, in purfuance of his purpofe; notwithftanding the violence that is ufed with thofe plain Scriptures, to obfcure and pervert the fenfe of them. Acts ii. 23. *Him being delivered, by the determinate counfel and foreknowledge of God,* ye have taken, and with wicked hands, have crucified and flain.* Luke xxii. 21, 22. † *But behold the hand of him that betrayeth me, is with me on the table: and truly the Son of Man goeth, as it was determined.* Acts iv. 27, 28. *For of a truth, againft the holy child Jefus, whom thou haft anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Ifrael, were gathered together, for to do whatfoever thy hand and thy counfel determined before to be done.* Acts iii. 17, 18. *And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did*

* "Grotius, as well as Beza, obferves, προγνωσις muft "here fignify decree; and Elfner has fhewn that it has that "fignification, in approved Greek writers. And it is cer-"tain εκδοτος fignifies one given up into the hands of an "enemy." Doddridge in Loc.

† "As this paffage is not liable to the ambiguities, which "fome have apprehended in Acts ii. 23. and iv. 28. (which "yet feem on the whole to be parallel to it, in their moft "natural conftruction) I look upon it as an evident proof, "that thefe things are, in the language of Scripture, faid "to be determined or decreed (or exactly bounded and "marked out by God, as the word ωριζω moft naturally fig-"nifies) which he fees in fact will happen, in confequence "of his volitions, without any neceffitating agency; as well "as thofe events, of which he is properly the Author." Dodd. in Loc.

*also your rulers: but these things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.* So that what these murderers of Christ did, is spoken of as what God brought to pass or ordered, and that by which he fulfilled his own word.

In Rev. xvii. 17. *The agreeing of the Kings of the earth to give their kingdom to the beast*, though it was a very wicked thing in them, is spoken of as *a fulfilling God's Will*, and what *God had put into their hearts to do.* It is manifest, that God sometimes permits Sin to be committed, and at the same time orders things so, that if he permits the fact, it will come to pass, because, on some accounts, he sees it needful and of importance, that it should come to pass. Matt. xviii. 7. *It must needs be, that offences come; but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh.* With 1 Cor. xi. 19. *For there must also be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.*

Thus it is certain and demonstrable, from the holy Scriptures, as well as the nature of things, and the principles of *Arminians*, that God permits Sin; and at the same time, so orders things, in his Providence, that it certainly and infallibly will come to pass, in consequence of his permission.

I proceed to observe in the next place,

III. That there is a great difference between God's being concerned thus, by his *permission*, in an event and act, which, in the inherent subject and agent of it, is Sin, (though the event will certainly follow on his permission) and his being concerned in it by *producing* it and exerting the act of Sin; or between his being the *Orderer* of its certain existence, by *not hindering* it, under

certain circumſtances, and his being the proper *Actor* or *Author* of it, by a *poſitive Agency* or *Efficiency*. And this, notwithſtanding what Dr. Whitby offers about a ſaying of philoſophers, that *cauſa deficiens, in rebus neceſſariis, ad cauſam per ſe efficientem reducenda eſt*. As there is a vaſt difference between the ſun's being the cauſe of the lightſomneſs and warmth of the atmoſphere, and brightneſs of gold and diamonds, by its preſence and poſitive influence; and its being the occaſion of darkneſs and froſt, in the night, by its motion, whereby it deſcends below the horizon. The motion of the ſun is the occaſion of the latter kind of events; but it is not the proper cauſe, efficient or producer of them; though they are neceſſarily conſequent on that motion, under ſuch circumſtances: no more is any action of the Divine Being the Cauſe of the Evil of men's wills. If the ſun were the proper *cauſe* of cold and darkneſs, it would be the *fountain* of theſe things, as it is the fountain of light and heat: and then ſomething might be argued from the nature of cold and darkneſs, to a likeneſs of nature in the ſun; and it might be juſtly inferred, that the ſun itſelf is dark and cold, and that his beams are black and froſty. But from its being the cauſe no otherwiſe than by its departure, no ſuch thing can be inferred, but the contrary; it may juſtly be argued, that the ſun is a bright and hot body, if cold and darkneſs are found to be the conſequence of its withdrawment; and the more conſtantly and neceſſarily theſe effects are connected with, and confined to its abſence, the more ſtrongly does it argue the ſun to be the fountain of light and heat. So, inaſmuch as Sin, is not the Fruit of any poſitive Agency or influence of the Moſt High, but, on the contrary, ariſes from the withholding of his

action and energy, and, under certain circumstances, necessarily follows on the want of his influence; this is no argument that he is sinful, or his operation evil, or has any thing of the nature of Evil; but, on the contrary, that He, and his Agency, are altogether good and holy, and that He is the fountain of all Holiness. It would be strange arguing, indeed, because men never commit Sin, but only when God leaves them *to themselves*, and necessarily sin, when he does so, and therefore their Sin is not *from themselves* but from God; and so, that God must be a sinful Being; as strange as it would be to argue, because it is always dark when the sun is gone, and never dark when the sun is present, that therefore all darkness is from the sun, and that his disk and beams must needs be black.

IV. It properly belongs to the Supreme and Absolute Governor of the universe, to order all important events within his dominion, by his wisdom: but the events in the moral world are of the most important kind, such as the moral actions of intelligent creatures, and their consequences.

These events will be ordered by something. They will either be disposed by wisdom, or they will be disposed by chance; that is, they will be disposed by blind and undesigning causes, if that were possible, and could be called a disposal. Is it not better, that the good and evil which happens in God's world, should be ordered, regulated, bounded and determined by the good pleasure of an infinitely wise Being, who perfectly comprehends within his understanding and constant view, the universality of things, in all their extent and duration, and sees all the influ-

ence of every event, with respect to every individual thing and circumstance, throughout the grand system, and the whole of the eternal series of consequences; than to leave these things to fall out by chance, and to be determined by those causes which have no understanding or aim? Doubtless, in these important events, there is a better and a worse, as to the time, subject, place, manner and circumstances of their coming to pass, with regard to their influence on the state and course of things. And if there be, it is certainly best that they should be determined to that time, place, *&c.* which is best. And therefore it is in its own nature fit, that wisdom, and not chance, should order these things. So that it belongs to the Being, who is the possessor of infinite Wisdom, and is the Creator and Owner of the whole system of created existences, and has the care of all; I say, it belongs to him, to take care of this matter; and he would not do what is proper for him, if he should neglect it. And it is so far from being unholy in him, to undertake this affair, that it would rather have been unholy to neglect it; as it would have been a neglecting what fitly appertains to him; and so it would have been a very unfit and unsuitable neglect.

Therefore the sovereignty of God doubtless extends to this matter: especially considering, that if it should be supposed to be otherwise, and God should leave men's volitions, and all moral events, to the determination and disposition of blind unmeaning causes, or they should be left to happen perfectly without a cause; this would be no more consistent with liberty, in any notion of it, and particularly not in the *Arminian* notion of it, than if these events were subject to

the disposal of Divine Providence, and the will of man were determined by circumstances which are ordered and disposed by Divine wisdom; as appears by what has been already observed. But it is evident, that such a providential disposing and determining men's moral actions, though it infers a moral necessity of those actions, yet it does not in the least infringe the real liberty of mankind; the only liberty that common sense teaches to be necessary to moral agency, which, as has been demonstrated, is not inconsistent with such necessity.

On the whole, it is manifest, that God may be, in the manner which has been described, the Orderer and Disposer of that event, which, in the inherent subject and agent, is moral Evil; and yet His so doing may be no moral Evil. He may will the disposal of such an event, and its coming to pass for good ends, and his will not be an immoral or sinful will, but a perfect holy will. and he may actually, in his Providence, so dispose and permit things, that the event may be certainly and infallibly connected with such disposal and permission, and his act therein not be an immoral or unholy, but a perfectly holy act. Sin may be an evil thing, and yet that there should be such a disposal and permission, as that it should come to pass, may be a good thing. This is no contradiction, or inconsistence. Joseph's brethren's selling him into Egypt, consider it only as it was acted by them, and with respect to their views and aims which were evil, was a very bad thing; but it was a good thing, as it was an event of God's ordering, and considered with respect to his views and aims which were good. Gen. l. 20. *As for you, ye thought Evil against me; but God meant it unto Good.* So the crucifixion of

Chriſt, if we conſider only thoſe things which belong to the event as it proceeded from his murderers, and are comprehended within the compaſs of the affair conſidered as their act, their principles, diſpoſitions, views and aims; ſo it was one of the moſt heinous things that ever was done; in many reſpects the moſt horrid of all acts: but conſider it, as it was willed and ordered of God, in the extent of his deſigns and views, it was the moſt admirable and glorious of all events; and God's willing the event was the moſt holy volition of God, that ever was made known to men; and God's act in ordering it, was a divine act, which, above all others, manifeſts the moral excellency of the Divine Being.

The conſideration of theſe things may help us to a ſufficient anſwer to the cavils of *Arminians*, concerning what has been ſuppoſed by many *Calviniſts*, of a diſtinction between a *ſecret* and *revealed* Will of God, and their diverſity one from the other; ſuppoſing that the *Calviniſts* herein aſcribe inconſiſtent Wills to the Moſt High: which is without any foundation. God's *ſecret* and *revealed* Will, or, in other words, his *diſpoſing* and *perceptive* Will may be diverſe, and exerciſed in diſſimilar acts, the one in diſapproving and oppoſing, the other in willing and determining, without any inconſiſtence. Becauſe, although theſe diſſimilar exerciſes of the Divine Will may, in ſome reſpects, relate to the ſame things, yet, in ſtrictneſs, they have different and contrary objects, the one evil and the other good. Thus, for inſtance, the crucifixion of Chriſt was a thing contrary to the revealed or perceptive Will of God; becauſe, as it was viewed and done by his malignant murderers, it was a thing infinitely contrary to the holy Nature of God, and ſo neceſſarily contrary to the

holy inclination of his heart revealed in his law. Yet this does not at all hinder but that the crucifixion of Christ, considered with all those glorious consequences, which were within the view of the Divine Omniscience, might be indeed, and therefore might appear to God to be, a glorious event; and consequently be agreeable to his will, though this Will may be secret, *i. e.* not revealed in God's law. And thus considered, the crucifixion of Christ was not evil but good. If the secret exercises of God's Will were of a kind that is dissimilar and contrary to his revealed Will, respecting the same, or like objects; if the objects of both were good, or both evil; then, indeed, to ascribe contrary kinds of volition or inclination to God, respecting these objects, would be to ascribe an inconsistent Will to God: but to ascribe to him different and opposite exercises of heart, respecting different objects, and objects contrary one to another, is so far from supposing God's Will to be *inconsistent* with itself, that it cannot be supposed *consistent* with itself any other way. For any Being to have a Will of choice respecting good, and, at the same time, a Will of rejection and refusal respecting evil, is to be very consistent: but the contrary, *viz.* to have the same Will towards these contrary objects, and to chuse and love both good and evil, at the same time, is to be very inconsistent.

There is no inconsistence in supposing, that God may hate a thing as it is in itself, and considered simply as evil, and yet that it may be his Will it should come to pass, considering all consequences. I believe, there is no person of good understanding, who will venture to say, he is certain that it is impossible it should be best, taking in the whole compass and extent of existence,

and all consequences in the endless series of events, that there should be such a thing as moral evil in the world. ‡ And, if so, it will certainly

‡ Here are worthy to be observed some passages of a late noted writer, of our nation, that no body who is acquainted with him, will suspect to be very favourable to *Calvinism*. 'It is difficult (says he) to handle the *necessity of evil* in such 'a manner, as not to stumble such as are not above being 'alarmed at propositions which have an uncommon sound. 'But if philosophers will but reflect calmly on the matter, 'they will find, that consistently with the unlimited power 'of the Supreme Cause, it may be said, that in the best or-'dered system, *evils* must have place.'—Turnbull's PRINCIPLES *of moral Philosophy* p. 327, 328. He is there speaking of *moral* evils, as may be seen.

Again the same Author, in his *second Vol.* entitled *Christian Philosophy*, p. 35. has these words: 'If the Author and 'Governor of all things be infinitely *perfect*, then whatever 'is, is *right;* of all possible systems he hath chosen the *best:* 'and, consequently, there is *no absolute evil* in the universe.— 'This being the case, all the seeming *imperfections* or *evils* in it 'are such only in a *partial* view; and, with respect to the *whole* 'system, they are *goods*.'

Ibid. p. 37. '*Whence then comes evil*, is the question that 'hath, in all ages, been reckoned the *Gordian* knot in philo-'sophy. And, indeed, if we own the existence of evil in the 'world in an *absolute* sense, we diametrically contradict what 'hath been just now proved of God. For if there be any '*evil* in the system, that is not good with respect to the *whole*, 'then is the *whole* not good, but evil: or, at best, very im-'perfect: and an *Author* must be as his *workmanship* is; as 'is the effect, such is the cause. But the solution of this 'difficulty is at hand; *That there is no evil in the universe*. 'What! Are there no pains, no imperfections? Is there no 'misery, no vice in the world? or are not these *evils?* Evils 'indeed they are; that is, those of one sort are hurtful, and 'those of the other sort are equally hurtful, and abominable: 'but they are *not* evil or mischievous with respect to the '*whole*.'

Ibid. p. 42. 'But He is, at the same time, said to *create* 'evil, darkness, confusion; and yet to do no evil, but to be 'the Author of good only. He is called the *Father of Lights*, 'the Author of *every perfect and good gift, with whom there* '*is no variableness nor shadow of turning*, who *tempteth no*

follow, that an infinitely wise Being, who always chuses what is best, must chuse that there should be such a thing. And, if so, then such a choice is not an evil, but a wise and holy choice. And if so, then that Providence which is agreeable to such a choice, is a wise and holy Providence. Men do *will* sin as sin, and so are the authors and actors of it: they love it as sin, and for evil ends and purposes. God does not will sin as sin, or for the sake of any thing evil; though it be his pleasure so to order things, that, He permitting, sin will come to pass; for the sake of the great good that by his disposal shall be the consequence. His willing to order things so that evil should come to pass, for the sake of the contrary good, is no argument that He does not hate evil, as evil: and if so, then it is no reason why he may not reasonably forbid evil as evil, and punish it as such.

The *Arminians* themselves must be obliged, whether they will or no, to allow a distinction of God's Will, amounting to just the same thing that *Calvinists* intend by their distinction of a *secret and revealed Will.* They must allow a distinction of those things which God thinks best should be, considering all circumstances and consequences, and so are agreeable to his disposing Will, and those things which he loves, and are agreeable to his

'*man*, but *giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.* And 'yet, by the prophet Isaias, He is introduced saying of 'Himself, *I form light, and create darkness; I make peace, and* '*create evil: I the Lord, do all these things.* What is the 'meaning, the plain language of all this, but that the Lord 'delighteth in goodness, and (as the Scripture speaks) evil 'is *his strange work?* He intends and pursues the universal '*good* of his creation: and the *evil* which happens, is not 'permitted for its own sake, or through any pleasure in evil, 'but because it is requisite to the *greater good* pursued.'

nature, in themſelves conſidered. Who is there that will dare to ſay, that the helliſh pride, malice and cruelty of devils, are agreeable to God, and what He likes and approves? And yet, I truſt, there is no Chriſtian divine but what will allow, that it is agreeable to God's Will ſo to order and diſpoſe things concerning them, ſo to leave them to themſelves, and give them up to their own wickedneſs, that this perfect wickedneſs ſhould be a neceſſary conſequence. Beſure Dr. Whitby's words do plainly ſuppoſe and allow it. §

Theſe following things may be laid down as maxims of plain truth, and indiſputable evidence.

1. That God is a *perfectly happy* Being, in the moſt abſolute and higheſt ſenſe poſſible.

2. That it will follow from hence, that God is free from every thing that is *contrary to happineſs;* and ſo, that in ſtrict propriety of ſpeech, there is no ſuch thing as any pain, grief, or trouble, in God.

3. When any intelligent being is really croſſed and diſappointed, and things are contrary to what he truly deſires, he is the *leſs pleaſed* or has *leſs pleaſure*, his *pleaſure and happineſs is diminiſhed*, and he ſuffers what is diſagreeable to him, or is the ſubject of ſomething that is of a nature contrary to joy and happineſs, even pain and grief. †

§ Whitby on the five Points, Edit. 2. 300, 305, 309.

† Certainly it is not leſs abſurd and unreaſonable, to talk of God's Will and Deſires being truly and properly croſſed, without his ſuffering any uneaſineſs, or any thing grievous or diſagreeable, than it is to talk of ſomething that may be called a *revealed Will*, which may, in ſome reſpect, be different from a *ſecret* purpoſe; which purpoſe may be fulfilled, when the other is oppoſed.

From this laſt axiom, it follows, that if no diſtinction is to be admitted between God's hatred of ſin, and his Will with reſpect to the event and the exiſtence of ſin, as the all-wiſe Determiner of all events, under the view of all conſequences through the whole compaſs and ſeries of things; I ſay, then it certainly follows, that the coming to paſs of every individual act of ſin is truly, all things conſidered, contrary to his Will, and that his Will is really croſſed in it; and this in proportion as He hates it. And as God's hatred of ſin is infinite, by reaſon of the infinite contrariety of his Holy Nature to ſin; ſo his Will is infinitely croſſed in every act of ſin that happens. Which is as much as to ſay, He endures that which is infinitely diſagreeable to Him, by means of every act of ſin that He ſees committed. And, therefore, as appears by the preceding poſitions, He endures truly and really, infinite grief or pain from every ſin. And ſo He muſt be infinitely croſſed, and ſuffer infinite pain, every day, in millions of millions of inſtances: He muſt continually be the ſubject of an immenſe number of *real*, and truly infinitely *great* croſſes and vexations. Which would be to make him infinitely the moſt miſerable of all Beings.

If any objector ſhould ſay; all that theſe things amount to, is, that *God may do evil that good may come;* which is juſtly eſteemed immoral and ſinful in men; and therefore may be juſtly eſteemed inconſiſtent with the moral perfections of God. I anſwer, that for God to diſpoſe and permit evil, in the manner that has been ſpoken of, is not to do evil that good may come; for it is not to do evil at all.—In order to a thing's being morally evil, there muſt be one of theſe things belonging to it: either it muſt be a thing

*unfit* and *unsuitable* in its own nature; or it must have a *bad tendency;* or it must proceed from an *evil disposition*, and be done for an evil end. But neither of these things can be attributed to God's ordering and permitting such events, as the immoral acts of creatures, for good ends. (1.) It is not *unfit in its own nature*, that He should do so. For it is in its own nature *fit*, that *infinite wisdom*, and not blind chance, should dispose moral good and evil in the world. And it is *fit*, that the Being who has *infinite wisdom*, and is the Maker, Owner, and Supreme Governor of the World, should take care of that matter. And therefore, there is no *unfitness*, or unsuitableness in his doing it. It may be unfit, and so immoral, for any other beings to go about to order this affair; because they are not possessed of a wisdom, that in any manner fits them for it; and in other respects, they are not fit to be trusted with this affair; nor does it belong to them, they not being the owners and lords of the universe.

We need not be afraid to affirm, that if a wise and good man knew with absolute certainty, it would be best, all things considered, that there should be such a thing as moral evil in the world, it would not be contrary to his wisdom and goodness, for him to chuse that it should be so. It is no evil desire, to desire good, and to desire that which, all things considered, is best. And it is no unwise choice, to chuse that that should be, which it is best should be; and to chuse the existence of that thing concerning which this is known, *viz.* that it is best it should be, and so is known in the whole to be most worthy to be chosen. On the contrary, it would be a plain defect in wisdom and goodness, for him not to chuse it. And the reason why he might not *or-*

*der* it, if he were able, would not be becaufe he might not defire it, but only the ordering of that matter does not belong to him. But it is no harm for Him who is, by right, and in the greateft propriety, the Supreme Orderer of all things, to order every thing in fuch a manner, as it would be a point of wifdom in Him to chufe that they fhould be ordered. If it would be a plain defect of wifdom and goodnefs in a Being, not to chufe that that fhould be, which He certainly knows it would, all things confidered, be beft fhould be (as was but now obferved) then it muft be impoffible for a Being who has no defect of wifdom and goodnefs, to do otherwife than chufe it fhould be; and that, for this very reafon, becaufe He is perfectly wife and good. And if it be agreeable to perfect wifdom and goodnefs for him to chufe that it fhould be, and the ordering of all things fupremely and perfectly belongs to him, it muft be agreeable to infinite wifdom and goodnefs, to order that it fhould be. If the choice is good, the ordering and difpofing things according to that choice muft alfo be good. It can be no harm in one to whom it belongs *to do his Will in the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth*, to execute a good volition. If this Will be good, and the object of his Will be, all things confidered, good and beft, then the chufing or willing it is not *willing evil* that good may come. And if fo, then his ordering, according to that Will, is not *doing evil*, that good may come.

2. It is not of a *bad tendency*, for the Supreme Being thus to order and permit that moral evil to be, which it is beft fhould come to pafs. For that it is of good tendency, is the very thing fuppofed in the point now in queftion.—Chrift's crucifixion, though a moft horrid fact in them that

perpetrated it, was of most glorious tendency as permitted and ordered of God.

3. Nor is there any need of supposing, it *proceeds from any evil disposition or aim:* for by the supposition, what is aimed at is good, and good is the actual issue, in the final result of things.

## SECTION X.

### *Concerning* Sin's first Entrance *into the World.*

THE things, which have already been offered, may serve to obviate or clear many of the objections which might be raised concerning Sin's first coming into the world; as though it would follow from the doctrine maintained that God must be the Author of the first Sin, through his so disposing things, that it should necessarily follow from his permission, that the sinful act should be committed, &c. I need not, therefore, stand to repeat what has been said already, about such a necessity's not proving God to be the Author of Sin, in any ill sense, or in any such sense as to infringe any liberty of man, concerned in his moral agency, or capacity of blame, guilt and punishment.

But, if it should nevertheless be said, supposing the case so, that God, when he had made man, might so order his circumstances, that from these circumstances, together with his withholding further assistance and Divine Influence, his Sin would infallibly follow, why might not God as well have first made man with a fixed prevailing principle of Sin in his heart?

I anſwer, 1. It was meet, if Sin did come into exiſtence, and appear in the world, it ſhould ariſe from the imperfection which properly belongs to a creature, as ſuch, and ſhould appear ſo to do, that it might appear not to be from God as the efficient or fountain. But this could not have been, if man had been made at firſt with Sin in his heart; nor unleſs the abiding principle and habit of Sin were firſt introduced by an evil act of the creature. If Sin had not aroſe from the imperfection of the creature, it would not have been ſo viſible, that it did not ariſe from God, as the poſitive cauſe, and real ſource of it.—But it would require room that cannot be here allowed, fully to conſider all the difficulties which have been ſtarted, concerning the firſt Entrance of Sin into the world.

And therefore,

2. I would obſerve, that objections againſt the doctrine that has been laid down, in oppoſition to the *Arminian* notion of liberty, from theſe difficulties, are altogether impertinent; becauſe no additional difficulty is incurred, by adhering to a ſcheme in this manner differing from theirs, and none would be removed or avoided, by agreeing with, and maintaining theirs. Nothing that the *Arminians* ſay, about the contingence, or ſelf-determining power of man's will, can ſerve to explain, with leſs difficulty, how the firſt ſinful volition of mankind could take place, and man be juſtly charged with the blame of it. To ſay, the will was ſelf-determined, or determined by free choice, in that ſinful volition; which is to ſay, that the firſt ſinful volition was determined by a foregoing ſinful volition; is no ſolution of the difficulty. It is an odd way of ſolving difficulties, to advance greater, in order to it. To ſay, two and

two makes nine; or, that a child begat his father, solves no difficulty: no more does it, to say, the first sinful act of choice was before the first sinful act of choice, and chose and determined it, and brought it to pass. Nor is it any better solution, to say, the first sinful volition chose, determined and produced itself; which is to say, it was before it was. Nor will it go any further towards helping us over the difficulty, to say, the first sinful volition arose accidentally, without any cause at all; any more than it will solve that difficult question, *How the world could be made out of nothing?* to say, it came into being out of nothing, without any cause; as has been already observed. And if we should allow that *that* could be, that the first evil volition should arise by perfect accident, without any cause; it would relieve no difficulty, about God's laying the blame of it to man. For how was man to blame for perfect accident, which had no cause, and which, therefore, he (to be sure) was not the cause of, any more than if it came by some external cause?—Such kind of solutions are no better, than if some person, going about to solve some of the strange mathematical paradoxes, about infinitely great and small quantities; as, that some infinitely great quantities are infinitely greater than some other infinitely great quantities; and also that some infinitely small quantities, are infinitely less than others, which yet are infinitely little; in order to a solution, should say, that mankind have been under a mistake, in supposing a greater quantity to exceed a smaller; and that a hundred, multiplied by ten, makes but a single unit.

## SECTION XI.

### *Of a ſuppoſed Inconſiſtence of theſe Principles with GOD's* moral Character.

THE things which have been already obſerved, may be ſufficient to anſwer moſt of the objections, and ſilence the great exclamations of *Arminians* againſt the *Calviniſts*, from the ſuppoſed inconſiſtence of *Calviniſtic* principles with the moral perfections of God, as exerciſed in his government of mankind. The conſiſtence of ſuch a doctrine of neceſſity as has been maintained, with the fitneſs and reaſonableneſs of God's commands, promiſes and threatenings, rewards and puniſhments, has been particularly conſidered: the cavils of our opponents, as though our doctrine of neceſſity made God the author of ſin, have been anſwered; and alſo their objection againſt theſe principles, as inconſiſtent with God's ſincerity, in his counſels, invitations and perſuaſions, has been already obviated, in what has been obſerved, reſpecting the conſiſtence of what *Calviniſts* ſuppoſe, concerning the ſecret and revealed will of God; by that it appears, there is no repugnance in ſuppoſing it may be the ſecret will of God, that his ordination and permiſſion of events ſhould be ſuch, that it ſhall be a certain conſequence, that a thing never will come to paſs; which yet it is man's duty to do, and ſo God's perceptive will. that he ſhould do; and this is the ſame thing as to ſay, God may ſincerely command and require him to do it. And if he may be ſincere in commanding him, he may, for the ſame reaſon, be ſincere in counſelling, inviting and uſing perſuaſions with him to do it. Counſels

and invitations are manifeſtations of God's perceptive will, or of what God loves and what is in itſelf, and as man's act, agreeable to his heart; and not of his diſpoſing will, and what he chuſes as a part of his own infinite ſcheme of things. It has been particularly ſhewn, Part III. Sect. IV. that ſuch a neceſſity as has been maintained, is not inconſiſtent with the propriety and fitneſs of divine commands; and for the ſame reaſon, not inconſiſtent with the ſincerity and invitations and counſels, in the Corollary at the end of that Section. Yea, it hath been ſhewn, Part III. Sect. VII. Corol. 1. that this objection of *Arminians*, concerning the ſincerity and uſe of divine exhortations, invitations and counſels, is demonſtrably againſt themſelves.

Notwithſtanding, I would further obſerve, that the difficulty of reconciling the ſincerity of counſels, invitations and perſuaſions with ſuch an antecedent known fixedneſs of all events, as has been ſuppoſed, is not peculiar to this ſcheme, as diſtinguiſhed from that of the generality of *Arminians*, which acknowledge the abſolute foreknowledge of God: and therefore, it would be unreaſonably brought as an objection againſt my differing from them. The main ſeeming difficulty in the caſe is this: that God, in counſelling, inviting and perſuading, makes a ſhew of aiming at, ſeeking and uſing endeavours for the thing exhorted and perſuaded to; whereas, it is impoſſible for any intelligent being truly to ſeek, or uſe endeavours for a thing, which he at the ſame time knows, moſt perfectly, will not come to paſs; and that it is abſurd to ſuppoſe, he makes the obtaining of a thing his end, in his calls and counſels, which he, at the ſame time, infallibly knows will not be obtained by theſe means.

Now, if God knows this, in the utmost certainty and perfection, the way by which he comes by this knowledge makes no difference. If he knows it is by the necessity which he sees in things, or by some other means; it alters not the case. But it is in effect allowed by *Arminians* themselves, that God's inviting and persuading men to do things, which he, at the same time, certainly knows will not be done, is no evidence of insincerity; because they allow, that God has a certain foreknowledge of all men's sinful actions and omissions. And as this is thus implicity allowed by most *Arminians*, so all that pretend to own the Scriptures to be the word of God, must be constrained to allow it.—God commanded and counselled Pharaoh to let his people go, and used arguments and persuasions to induce him to it; he laid before him arguments taken from his infinite Greatness and almighty Power, (Exod vii. 16.) and forewarned him of the fatal consequences of his refusal, from time to time; (chap. viii. 1, 2, 20, 21. chap. ix. 1,—5. 13,—17. and x. 3, 6,) He commanded Moses, and the elders of Israel, to go and beseech Pharaoh to let the people go; and at the same time told them, he knew surely that he would not comply to it. Exod. iii. 18, 19. *And thou shalt come, thou and the elders of Israel, unto the king of Egypt, and you shall say unto him; the Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us; and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice unto the Lord our God: and, I am sure, that the king of Egypt will not let you go.* So our Blessed Saviour, the evening wherein he was betrayed, knew that Peter would shamefully deny him, before the morning; for he declares it to him with asseverations, to shew the certainty of it; and tells the disciples, that all of them should be of-

fended becauſe of him that night; Matthew xxvi. 31,—35. John xiii. 38. Luke xxii. 31,—34. John xvi. 32. And yet it was their duty to avoid theſe things: they were very ſinful things, which God had forbidden, and which it was their duty to watch and pray againſt; and they were obliged to do ſo from the *counſels* and *perſuaſions* Chriſt uſed with them, at that very time, ſo to do; Matthew xxvi. 41. *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.* So that whatever difficulty there can be in this matter, it can be no objection againſt any principles which have been maintained in oppoſition to the principles of *Arminians;* nor does it any more concern me to remove the difficulty, than it does them, or indeed all, that call themſelves Chriſtians, and acknowledge the divine authority of the Scriptures.—Nevertheleſs, this matter may poſſibly (God allowing) be more particularly and largely conſidered, in ſome future diſcourſe, on the doctrine of *predeſtination.*

But I would here obſerve, that however the defenders of that notion of liberty of will, which I have oppoſed, exclaim againſt the doctrine of *Calviniſts*, as tending to bring men into doubts concerning the moral perfections of God; it is their ſcheme, and not the ſcheme of *Calviniſts*, that indeed is juſtly chargeable with this. For it is one of the moſt fundamental points of their ſcheme of things, that a freedom of will, conſiſting in ſelf-determination, without all neceſſity, is eſſential to *moral agency.* This is the ſame thing as to ſay, that ſuch a determination of the will, without all neceſſity, muſt be in all intelligent beings, in thoſe things, wherein they are *moral agents*, or in their *moral acts:* and from this it will follow, that God's will is not neceſ-

farily determined, in any thing he does, as a *moral agent*, or in any of his *acts* that are of a *moral nature*: So that in all things, wherein he acts *holily*, *justly*, and *truly*, he does not act necessarily; or his will is not necessarily determined, to act holily and justly; because, if it were necessarily determined, he would not be a *moral agent* in thus acting: his will would be attended with necessity; which, they say, is inconsistent with *moral agency*: "He can act no otherwise; He is at no liberty "in the affair; He is determined by unavoid-"able invincible necessity: therefore such agen-"cy is no moral agency; yea, no agency at "all, properly speaking: A necessary agent is "no agent: He being passive, and subject to "necessity, what he does is no act of his, but "an effect of a necessity prior to any act of "his." This is agreeable to their manner of arguing. Now then, what is become of all our proof of the moral perfections of God? How can we prove, that God certainly will, in any one instance, do that which is just and holy; seeing his will is determined in the matter by no necessity? We have no other way of proving that any thing *certainly* will be, but only by the necessity of the event. Where we can see no necessity but that the thing may be, or may not be, there we are unavoidably left at a loss. We have no other way properly and truly to demonstrate the moral perfections of God, but the way that Mr. Chubb proves them, in p. 252, 261, 262, 263. of his Tracts, *viz.* that God must necessarily perfectly know, what is most worthy and valuable in itself, which, in the nature of things, is best and fittest to be done. And, as this is most eligible in itself, He, being omniscient, must see it to be so; and being both omniscient and self-sufficient, cannot have any temptation to reject it; and so must

neceſſarily will that which is beſt. And thus, by this neceſſity of the determination of God's will to what is good and beſt, we demonſtrably eſtabliſh God's moral character.

*Corol.* From things which have been obſerved, it appears, that moſt of the arguments from Scripture, which *Arminians* make uſe of to ſupport their ſcheme, are no other than *begging the queſtion.* For in theſe their arguments, they determine in the firſt place, that without ſuch a freedom of will as they hold, men cannot be proper moral agents, nor the ſubjects of command, counſel, perſuaſion, invitation, promiſes, threatenings, expoſtulations, rewards and puniſhments; and that without ſuch freedom it is to no purpoſe for men to take any care, or uſe any diligence, endeavours or means, in order to their avoiding ſin, or becoming holy, eſcaping puniſhment or obtaining happineſs: and having ſuppoſed theſe things, which are grand things in queſtion in the debate, then they heap up Scriptures, containing commands, counſels, calls, warnings, perſuaſions, expoſtulations, promiſes, and threatenings; (as doubtleſs they may find enough ſuch; the Bible is confeſſedly full of them, from the beginning to the end) and then they glory, how full the Scripture is on their ſide, how many more texts there are that evidently favour their ſcheme, than ſuch as ſeem to favour the contrary. But let them firſt make manifeſt the things in queſtion, which they ſuppoſe and take for granted, and ſhew them to be conſiſtent with themſelves; and produce clear evidence of their truth; and they have gained their point, as all will confeſs, without bringing one Scripture. For none denies, that there are commands, counſels, promiſes, threatenings, *&c.* in the Bible. But unleſs they do theſe things,

their multiplying such texts of Scripture is insignificant and vain.

It may further be observed, that such Scriptures, as they bring, are really against them, and not for them. As it has been demonstrated, that it is their scheme, and not ours, that is inconsistent with the use of motives and persuasives, or any moral means whatsoever, to induce men to the practice of virtue, or abstaining from wickedness: their principles, and not ours, are repugnant to moral agency, and inconsistent with moral government, with law or precept, with the nature of virtue or vice, reward or punishment, and with every thing whatsoever of a moral nature, either on the part of the moral governor, or in the state, actions or conduct of the subject.

## SECTION XII.

### *Of a supposed Tendency of these Principles to* Atheism *and* Licentiousness.

IF any object against what has been maintained, that it tends to *Atheism;* I know not on what grounds such an objection can be raised, unless it be, that some Atheists have held a doctrine of necessity which they suppose to be like this. But if it be so, I am persuaded the *Arminians* would not look upon it just, that their notion of freedom and contingence should be charged with a tendency to all the errors that ever any embraced, who have held such opinions. The *Stoick* philosophers, whom the *Calvinists* are charged with agreeing with, were no Atheists, but the greatest Theists and nearest a-kin to Christians in their

opinions concerning the unity and the perfections of the Godhead, of all the heathen philosophers. And Epicurus, that chief father of Atheism, maintained no such doctrine of necessity, but was the greatest maintainer of contingence.

The doctrine of necessity, which supposes a necessary connection of all events, on some antecedent ground and reason of their existence, is the only medium we have to prove the being of God. And the contrary doctrine of contingence, even as maintained by *Arminians* (which certainly implies or infers, that events may come into existence, or begin to be, without dependence on any thing foregoing, as their cause, ground or reason) takes away all proof of the being of God; which proof is summarily expressed by the apostle, in Rom. i. 20. And this is a tendency to *Atheism* with a witness. So that, indeed, it is the doctrine of *Arminians*, and not of the *Calvinists*, that is justly charged with a tendency to *Atheism;* it being built on a foundation that is the utter subversion of every demonstrative argument for the proof of a Deity; as has been shown, Part II. Sect. III.

And whereas it has often been said, that the *Calvinistic* doctrine of necessity saps the foundations of all religion and virtue, and tends to the greatest Licentiousness of practice: this objection is built on the pretence, that our doctrine renders vain all means and endeavours, in order to be virtuous and religious. Which pretence has been already particularly considered in the 5th *Section* of this *Part;* where it has been demonstrated, that this doctrine has no such tendency; but that such a tendency is truly to be charged on the contrary doctrine: inasmuch as the no-

tion of contingence, which their doctrine implies, in its certain consequences, overthrows all connection in every degree, between endeavour and event, means and end.

And besides, if many other things, which have been observed to belong to the *Arminian* doctrine, or to be plain consequences of it, be considered, there will appear just reason to suppose that, it is *that* which must rather tend to Licentiousness. Their doctrine excuses all evil inclinations, which men find to be natural; because in such inclinations, they are not self-determined, as such inclinations are not owing to any choice or determination of their own wills. Which leads men wholly to justify themselves in all their wicked actions, so far as natural inclination has had a hand in determining their wills, to the commission of them. Yea, these notions, which suppose moral necessity and inability to be inconsistent with blame or moral obligation, will directly lead men to justify the vilest acts and practices, from the strength of their wicked inclinations of all sorts; strong inclinations inducing a moral necessity; yea, to excuse every degree of evil inclination, so far as this has evidently prevailed, and been the thing which has determined their wills: because, so far as antecedent inclination determined the will, so far the will was without liberty of indifference and self-determination. Which, at last, will come to this, that men will justify themselves in all the wickedness they commit. It has been observed already, that this scheme of things does exceedingly diminish the guilt of sin, and the difference between the greatest and smallest offences; * and if it be pursued in its real consequences, it leaves room

* Part III. Sect. VI.

for no such thing, as either virtue or vice, blame or praise in the world. † And then again, how naturally does this notion of the sovereign self-determining power of the will, in all things, virtuous or vicious, and whatsoever deserves, either reward or punishment, tend to encourage men to put off the work of religion and virtue, and turning from sin to God; it being that which they have a sovereign power to determine themselves to, just when they please; or if not, they are wholly excusable in going on in sin, because of their inability to do any other.

If it should be said, that the tendency of this doctrine of necessity, to Licentiousness, appears by the improvement many at this day actually make of it, to justify themselves in their dissolute courses; I will not deny that some men do unreasonably abuse this doctrine, as they do many other things, which are true and excellent in their own nature: but I deny that this proves, the doctrine itself has any tendency to Licentiousness. I think, the tendency of doctrines, by what now appears in the world, and in our nation in particular, may much more justly be argued, from the general effect which has been seen, to attend the prevailing of the principles of *Arminians*, and the contrary principles; as both have had their turn of general prevalence in our nation. If it be indeed, as is pretended, that *Calvinistic* doctrines undermine the very foundation of all religion and morality, and enervate and disannul all rational motives to holy and virtuous practice; and that the contrary doctrines give the inducements to virtue and goodness

† Part III. Sect. VI. Ibid. Sect. VII. Part IV. Sect. I. Part III. Sect. III. *Corol.* 1. after the first Head.

their proper force, and exhibit religion in a rational light, tending to recommend it to the reason of mankind, and enforce it in a manner that is agreeable to their natural notions of things: I say, if it be thus, it is remarkable, that virtue and religious practice should prevail most, when the former doctrines, so inconsistent with it, prevailed almost universally: and that ever since the latter doctrines, so happily agreeing with it, and of so proper and excellent a tendency to promote it, have been gradually prevailing, vice, profaneness, luxury and wickedness of all sorts. and contempt of all religion, and of every kind of seriousness and strictness of conversation, should proportionably prevail; and that these things should thus accompany one another, and rise and prevail one with another, now for a whole age together. It is remarkable, that this happy remedy (discovered by the free enquiries, and superior sense and wisdom of this age) against the pernicious effects of *Calvinism*, so inconsistent with religion, and tending so much to banish all virtue from the earth, should, on so long a trial, be attended with no good effect; but that the consequence should be the reverse of amendment; that in proportion as the remedy takes place, and is thoroughly applied, so the disease should prevail; and the very same dismal effect take place, to the highest degree, which *Calvinistic* doctrines are supposed to have so great a tendency to; even the banishing of religion and virtue, and the prevailing of unbounded Licentiousness of manners. If these things are truly so, they are very remarkable, and matter of very curious speculation.

## SECTION XIII.

*Concerning that Objection againſt the* reaſoning, *by which the* Calviniſtic *doctrine is ſupported, that it is* metaphyſical *and* abſtruſe.

IT has often been objected againſt the defenders of *Calviniſtic* principles, that in their reaſonings, they run into nice ſcholaſtic diſtinctions, and abſtruſe metaphyſical ſubtilties, and ſet theſe in oppoſition to common ſenſe. And it is poſſible, that, after the former manner, it may be alledged againſt the reaſoning by which I have endeavoured to confute the *Arminian* ſcheme of liberty and moral agency, that it is very abſtracted and metaphyſical.——Concerning this, I would obſerve the following things.

I. If that be made an objection againſt the foregoing Reaſoning, that it is *metaphyſical*, or may properly be reduced to the ſcience of *metaphyſicks*, it is a very impertinent objection; whether it be ſo or no, is not worthy of any diſpute or controverſy. If the Reaſoning be good, it is as frivolous to enquire what ſcience it is properly reduced to, as what language it is delivered in: and for a man to go about to confute the arguments of his opponent, by telling him, his arguments are *metaphyſical*, would be as weak as to tell him, his arguments could not be ſubſtantial, becauſe they were written in *French* or *Latin*. The queſtion is not, whether what is ſaid be metaphyſicks, phyſicks, logick, or mathematicks, *Latin*, *French*, *Engliſh*, or *Mohawk?* But whether the Reaſoning be good, and the arguments truly concluſive? The foregoing arguments are

no more metaphyſical, than thoſe which we uſe againſt the Papiſts, to diſprove their doctrine of tranſubſtantiation; alledging, it is inconſiſtent with the notion of corporeal identity, that it ſhould be in ten thouſand places at the ſame time. It is by metaphyſical arguments only we are able to prove, that the rational ſoul is not corporeal; that lead or ſand cannot think; that thoughts are not ſquare or round, or do not weigh a pound. The arguments by which we prove the being of God, if handled cloſely and diſtinctly, ſo as to ſhew their clear and demonſtrative evidence, muſt be metaphyſically treated. It is by metaphyſicks only, that we can demonſtrate, that God is not limited to a place, or is not mutable: that he is not ignorant, or forgetful; that it is impoſſible for him to lie, or be unjuſt; and that there is one God only, and not hundreds or thouſands. And, indeed, we have no ſtrict demonſtration of any thing, excepting mathematical truths, but by metaphyſicks. We can have no proof, that is properly demonſtrative, of any one propoſition, relating to the being and nature of God, his creation of the world, the dependence of all things on him, the nature of bodies or ſpirits, the nature of our own ſouls, or any of the great truths of morality and natural religion, but what is metaphyſical. I am willing, my arguments ſhould be brought to the teſt of the ſtricteſt and juſteſt Reaſon, and that a clear, diſtinct and determinate meaning of the terms I uſe, ſhould be inſiſted on; but let not the whole be rejected, as if all were confuted, by fixing on it the epithet, *metaphyſical.*

II. If the reaſoning, which has been made uſe of, be in ſome ſenſe metaphyſical, it will not fol-

low, that therefore it muſt needs be abſtruſe, unintelligible, and a-kin to the jargon of the ſchools. I humbly conceive, the foregoing reaſoning, at leaſt to thoſe things which are moſt material belonging to it, depends on no abſtruſe definitions or diſtinctions, or terms without a meaning, or of very ambiguous and undetermined ſignification, or any points of ſuch abſtraction and ſubtilty, as tends to involve the attentive underſtanding in clouds and darkneſs. There is no high degree of refinement and abſtruſe ſpeculation, in determining, that a thing is not before it is, and ſo cannot be the cauſe of itſelf; or that the firſt act of free choice, has not another act of free choice going before that, to excite or direct it; or in determining, that no choice is made, while the mind remains in a ſtate of abſolute indifference; that preference and equilibrium never co-exiſt; and that therefore no choice is made in a ſtate of liberty, conſiſting in indifference: and that ſo far as the will is determined by motives, exhibited and operating previous to the act of the will, ſo far it is not determined by the act of the will itſelf; that nothing can begin to be, which before was not, without a cauſe, or ſome antecedent ground or reaſon, why it then begins to be; that effects depend on their cauſes, and are connected with them; that virtue is not the worſe, nor ſin the better, for the ſtrength of inclination with which it is practiſed, and the difficulty which thence ariſes of doing otherwiſe; that when it is already infallibly known, that the thing will be, it is not a thing contingent whether it will ever be or no; or that it can be truly ſaid, notwithſtanding, that it is not neceſſary it ſhould be, but it either may be, or may not be. And the like might be obſerved of many other

things which belong to the foregoing Reasoning.

If any shall still stand to it, that the foregoing Reasoning is nothing but metaphysical sophistry; and that it must be so, that the seeming force of the arguments all depends on some fallacy and wile that is hid in the obscurity, which always attends a great degree of metaphysical abstraction and refinement; and shall be ready to say, "Here is indeed something that tends to confound the mind, but not to satisfy it: for who can ever be truly satisfied in it, that men are fitly blamed or commended, punished or rewarded for those volitions which are not from themselves, and of whose existence they are not the causes. Men may refine, as much as they please, and advance their abstract notions, and make out a thousand seeming contradictions, to puzzle our understandings; yet there can be no satisfaction in such doctrine as this: the natural sense of the mind of man will always resist it."* I humbly conceive, that such an objector, if he has capacity and hu-

* A certain noted Author of the present age says, the arguments for *necessity* are nothing but *quibbling, or logomachy, using words without a meaning, or begging the question.*—I do not know what kind of necessity any authors, he may have reference to, are advocates for; or whether they have managed their arguments well, or ill. As to the arguments I have made use of, if they are *quibbles* they may be shewn so: such knots are capable of being untied, and the trick and cheat may be detected and plainly laid open. If this be fairly done, with respect to the grounds and reasons I have relied upon, I shall have just occasion, for the future, to be silent, if not to be ashamed of my argumentations. I am willing my proofs should be thoroughly examined; and if there be nothing but *begging the question*, or mere *logomachy*, or dispute of words, let it be made manifest, and shewn how the seeming strength

mility and calmneſs of ſpirit, ſufficient impartially and thoroughly to examine himſelf, will find that he knows not really what he would be at; and indeed, his difficulty is nothing but a mere prejudice, from an inadvertent cuſtomary uſe of words, in a meaning that is not clearly underſtood, nor carefully reflected upon.——Let the

of the argument depends on my *uſing words without a meaning*, or ariſes from the ambiguity of terms, or my making uſe of words in an indeterminate and unſteady manner; and that the weight of my reaſons reſt mainly on ſuch a foundation: and then, I ſhall either be ready to retract what I have urged, and thank the man that has done the kind part, or ſhall be juſtly expoſed for my obſtinacy.

The ſame Author is abundant in appealing, in this affair, from what he calls *logomachy and ſophiſtry*, to *experience*.—— A perſon can experience only what paſſes in his own mind. But yet, as we may well ſuppoſe, that all men have the ſame human faculties; ſo a man may well argue from his own experience to that of others, in things that ſhew the nature of thoſe faculties, and the manner of their operation. But then one has as good right to alledge his experience, as another. As to my own experience, I find, that in innumerable things I can do as I will; that the motions of my body, in many reſpects, inſtantaneouſly follow the acts of my will concerning thoſe motions; and that my will has ſome command of my thoughts; and that the acts of my will are my own, *i. e.* that they are acts of my will, the volitions of my own mind; or, in other words, that what I will, I will. Which, I preſume, is the ſum of what others experience in this affair. But as to finding by experience, that my will is originally determined by itſelf; or that, my will firſt chuſing what volition there ſhall be, the choſen volition accordingly follows; and that this is the firſt riſe of the determination of my will in any affair; or that any volition riſes in my mind contingently; I declare, I know nothing in myſelf, by experience, of this nature; and nothing that ever I experienced, carries the leaſt appearance or ſhadow of any ſuch thing, or gives me any more reaſon to ſuppoſe or ſuſpect any ſuch thing, than to ſuppoſe that my volitions exiſted twenty years before they exiſted. It is true, I find myſelf poſſeſſed of my volitions, before I can ſee the effectual power of any cauſe to produce them (for the power and efficacy of the cauſe is not ſeen but

objector reflect again, if he has candor and patience enough, and does not ſcorn to be at the trouble of cloſe attention in the affair.—He would have a man's volition be *from himſelf*. Let it be *from himſelf*, moſt primarily and originally of any way conceivable; that is, from his own choice: how will that help the matter, as to his being juſtly blamed or praiſed, unleſs that choice itſelf be blame or praiſe-worthy? And how is the choice itſelf (an ill choice, for inſtance) blame-worthy, according to theſe principles, unleſs that be from himſelf too, in the ſame manner; that is, from his own choice? But the original and firſt-determining choice in the affair is not from his choice: his choice is not the cauſe of it.——And if it be from himſelf ſome other way, and not from his choice, ſurely that will not help the matter: If it be not from himſelf of choice, then it is not from himſelf voluntarily; and if ſo, he is ſurely no more to blame, than if it were not from himſelf at all. It is a vanity, to pretend it is a ſufficient anſwer to this, to ſay, that it is nothing but metaphyſical refinement and ſubtilty, and ſo attended with obſcurity and uncertainty.

If it be the natural ſenſe of our minds, that what is blame-worthy in a man muſt be from himſelf, then it doubtleſs is alſo, that it muſt be from ſomething *bad* in himſelf, a *bad choice*, or *bad diſpoſition*. But then our natural ſenſe is, that this bad choice or diſpoſition is evil *in itſelf*, and

but by the effect) and this, for ought I know, may make ſome imagine, that volition has no cauſe, or that it produces itſelf. But I have no more reaſon from hence to determine any ſuch thing, than I have to determine that I gave myſelf my own being, or that I came into being accidentally without a cauſe, becauſe I firſt found myſelf poſſeſſed of being, before I had knowledge of a cauſe of my being.

the man blame-worthy for it, *on its own account*, without taking into our notion of its blame-worthineſs, another bad choice, or diſpoſition going before this, from whence this ariſes: for that is a ridiculous abſurdity, running us into an immediate contradiction, which our natural ſenſe of blame-worthineſs has nothing to do with, and never comes into the mind, nor is ſuppoſed in the judgment we naturally make of the affair. As was demonſtrated before, natural ſenſe does not place the moral evil of volitions and diſpoſitions in the cauſe of them, but the nature of them. An evil thing's being FROM a man, or from ſomething antecedent in him, is not eſſential to the original notion we have of blame-worthineſs: but it is its being the choice of the heart; as appears by this, that if a thing be *from* us, and not from our choice, it has not the nature of blame-worthineſs or ill-deſert, according to our natural ſenſe. When a thing is *from* a man, in that ſenſe, that it is from his will or choice, he is to blame for it, becauſe his will is IN IT: ſo far as the will is *in it*, blame is *in it*, and no further. Neither do we go any further in our notion of blame, to enquire whether the bad will be FROM a bad will: there is no conſideration of the original of that bad will; becauſe, according to our natural apprehenſion, blame *originally conſiſts in it*. Therefore a thing's being *from* a man, is a ſecondary conſideration, in the notion of blame or ill-deſert. Becauſe thoſe things, in our *external* actions, are moſt properly ſaid to be *from* us, which are *from* our choice; and no other *external* actions, but thoſe that are from us in this ſenſe, have the nature of blame; and they indeed, not ſo properly becauſe they are *from us*, as becauſe we are *in them*, i. e. our wills are in them; not ſo much becauſe they are from

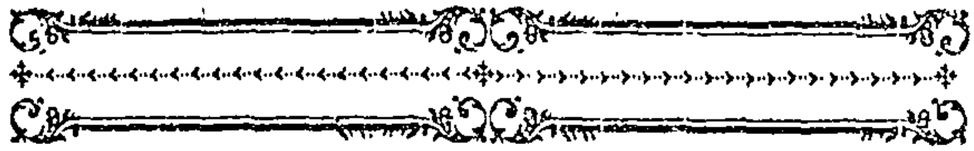
ſome *property* of ours, as becauſe they are our *properties.*

However, all theſe external actions being truly *from us*, as their cauſe; and we being ſo uſed, in ordinary ſpeech, and in the common affairs of life, to ſpeak of men's actions and conduct that we ſee, and that affect human ſociety, as deſerving ill or well, as worthy of blame or praiſe; hence it is come to paſs, that philoſophers have incautiouſly taken all their meaſures of good and evil, praiſe and blame, from the dictates of common ſenſe, about theſe *overt acts* of men; to the running of every thing into the moſt lamentable and dreadful confuſion. And, therefore, I obſerve,

III. It is ſo far from being true (whatever may be pretended) that the proof of the doctrine which has been maintained, depends on certain abſtruſe, unintelligible, metaphyſical terms and notions; and that the *Arminian* ſcheme, without needing ſuch clouds and darkneſs for its defence, is ſupported by the plain dictates of common ſenſe; that the very reverſe is moſt certainly true, and that to a great degree. It is fact, that they, and not we, have confounded things with metaphyſical, unintelligible notions and phraſes, and have drawn them from the light of plain truth, into the groſs darkneſs of abſtruſe metaphyſical propoſitions, and words without a meaning. Their pretended demonſtrations depend very much on ſuch unintelligible, metaphyſical phraſes, as *ſelf-determination*, and *ſovereignty of the will;* and the metaphyſical ſenſe they put on ſuch terms, as *neceſſity*, *contingency*, *action*, *agency*, &c. quite diverſe from their meaning as uſed in common ſpeech; and which, as

they uſe them, are without any conſiſtent meaning, or any manner of diſtinct conſiſtent ideas; as far from it as any of the abſtruſe terms and perplexed phraſes of the peripatetick philoſophers, or the moſt unintelligible jargon of the ſchools, or the cant of the wildeſt fanaticks. Yea, we may be bold to ſay, theſe metaphyſical terms, on which they build ſo much, are what they uſe without knowing what they mean themſelves; they are pure metaphyſical ſounds, without any ideas whatſoever in their minds to anſwer them; inaſmuch as it has been demonſtrated, that there cannot be any notion in the mind conſiſtent with theſe expreſſions, as they pretend to explain them; becauſe their explanations deſtroy themſelves. No ſuch notions as imply ſelf-contradiction, and ſelf-abolition, and this a great many ways, can ſubſiſt in the mind; as there can be no idea of a whole which is leſs than any of its parts, or of ſolid extenſion without dimenſions, or of an effect which is before its cauſe.———*Arminians* improve theſe terms, as terms of art, and in their metaphyſical meaning, to advance and eſtabliſh thoſe things which are contrary to common ſenſe, in a high degree. Thus, inſtead of the plain vulgar notion of liberty, which all mankind, in every part of the face of the earth, and in all ages, have; conſiſting in opportunity to do as one pleaſes; they have introduced a new ſtrange liberty, conſiſting in indifference. contingence, and ſelf-determination; by which they involve themſelves and others in great obſcurity, and manifold groſs inconſiſtence. So, inſtead of placing virtue and vice, as common ſenſe places them very much, in fixed bias and inclination, and greater virtue and vice in ſtronger and more eſtabliſhed inclination; theſe, through their refinings and abſtruſe

notions, ſuppoſe a liberty conſiſting in indifference, to be eſſential to all virtue and vice. So they have reaſoned themſelves, not by metaphyſical diſtinctions, but metaphyſical confuſion, into many principles about moral agency, blame, praiſe, reward and puniſhment, which are, as has been ſhewn, exceeding contrary to the common ſenſe of mankind; and perhaps to their own ſenſe, which governs them in common life.



THE

# CONCLUSION.

WHETHER the things which have been alledged, are liable to any tolerable anſwer in the ways of calm, intelligible and ſtrict reaſoning, I muſt leave others to judge: but I am ſenſible they are liable to one ſort of anſwer. It is not unlikely, that ſome, who value themſelves on the ſuppoſed rational and generous principles of the modern faſhionable divinity, will have their indignation and diſdain raiſed at the ſight of this diſcourſe, and on perceiving what things are pretended to be proved in it. And if they think it worthy of being read, or of ſo much notice as to ſay much about it, they may probably renew the uſual exclamations, with additional vehemence and contempt, about the *fate of the heathen*, Hobbes's *Neceſſity*, and *making men mere machines;* accumulating the terrible epithets of *fatal*, *unfruſtrable*, *inevitable*, *irreſiſtible*, &c. and it may be, with the addition of *horrid* and *blaſphemous;* and perhaps much ſkill may be uſed to ſet forth things, which have been ſaid, in colours which ſhall be ſhocking to the imaginations, and moving to the paſſions of thoſe, who have either too little capacity, or too much confidence of the

opinions they have imbibed, and contempt of the contrary, to try the matter by any serious and circumspect examination. * Or difficulties may be started and insisted on, which do not belong to the controversy; because, let them be more or less real, and hard to be resolved, they are not what are owing to any thing distinguishing of this scheme from that of the *Arminians*, and would not be removed nor diminished by renouncing the former, and adhering to the latter. Or some particular things may be picked out, which they may think will sound harshest in the ears of the generality; and these may be glossed and descanted on, with tart and contemptuous words; and from thence, the whole treated with triumph and insult.

It is easy to see, how the decision of most of the points in controversy, between *Calvinists* and *Arminians*, depends on the determination of this grand article concerning *the Freedom of the Will requisite to moral agency;* and that by clearing and esta-

* A writer, of the present age, whom I have several times had occasion to mention, speaks once and again of those who hold the doctrine of *Necessity*, as scarcely worthy of the name of *philosophers*.——I do not know, whether he has respect to any particular notion of necessity, that some may have maintained; and, if so, what doctrine of necessity it is that he means.——Whether I am worthy of the name of a philosopher, or not, would be a question little to the present purpose. If any, and ever so many, should deny it, I should not think it worth the while to enter into a dispute on that question: though at the same time I might expect, some better answer should be given to the arguments brought for the truth of the doctrine I maintain; and I might further reasonably desire, that it might be considered, whether it does not become those, who are *truly worthy* of the name of philosophers, to be sensible, that there is a difference between *argument* and *contempt;* yea, and a difference between the contemptibleness of the *person* that argues, and the inconclusiveness of the *arguments* he offers.

bliſhing the *Calviniſtic* doctrine in this point, the chief arguments are obviated, by which *Arminian* doctrines in general are ſupported, and the contrary doctrines demonſtratively confirmed. Hereby it becomes manifeſt, that God's moral government over mankind. his treating them as moral agents, making them the objects of his commands, counſels, calls, warnings, expoſtulations, promiſes, threatenings, rewards and puniſhments, is not inconſiſtent with a *determining diſpoſal* of all events, of every kind, throughout the univerſe, *in his Providence;* either by poſitive efficiency, or permiſſion. Indeed, ſuch an *univerſal determining Providence*, infers ſome kind of neceſſity of all events, ſuch a neceſſity as implies an infallible previous fixedneſs of the futurity of the event: but no other neceſſity of moral events, or volitions of intelligent agents, is needful in order to this, than *moral neceſſity;* which does as much aſcertain the futurity of the event, as any other neceſſity. But, as has been demonſtrated, ſuch a neceſſity is not at all repugnant to moral agency, and a reaſonable uſe of commands, calls, rewards, puniſhments, &c. Yea, not only are objections of this kind againſt the doctrine of an univerſal *determining Providence,* removed by what has been ſaid; but the truth of ſuch a doctrine is demonſtrated. As it has been demonſtrated, that the futurity of all future events is eſtabliſhed by previous neceſſity, either natural or moral; ſo it is manifeſt, that the ſovereign Creator and Diſpoſer of the world has ordered this neceſſity, by ordering his own conduct, either in deſignedly acting, or forbearing to act. For, as the being of the world is from God, ſo the circumſtances in which it had its being at firſt, both negative and poſitive, muſt be ordered by him, in one of theſe ways; and all the neceſ-

ſary conſequences of theſe circumſtances, muſt be ordered by him. And God's active and poſitive interpoſitions, after the world was created, and the conſequences of theſe interpoſitions; alſo every inſtance of his forbearing to interpoſe, and the ſure conſequences of this forbearance, muſt all be determined according to his pleaſure. And therefore every event, which is the conſequence of any thing whatſoever, or that is connected with any foregoing thing or circumſtance, either poſitive or negative, as the ground or reaſon of its exiſtence, muſt be ordered of God; either by a deſigning efficiency and interpoſition, or a deſigned forbearing to operate or interpoſe. But as has been proved, all events whatſoever are neceſſarily connected with ſomething foregoing, either poſitive or negative, which is the ground of its exiſtence. It follows, therefore, that the whole ſeries of events is thus connected with ſomething in the ſtate of things, either poſitive or negative, which is *original* in the ſeries; *i. e.* ſomething which is connected with nothing preceding that, but God's own immediate conduct, either his acting or forbearing to act. From whence it follows, that as God deſignedly orders his own conduct, and its connected conſequences, it muſt neceſſarily be, that he deſignedly orders all things.

The things, which have been ſaid, obviate ſome of the chief objections of *Arminians* againſt the *Calviniſtic* doctrine of the *total depravity and corruption of man's nature*, whereby his heart is wholly under the power of ſin, and he is utterly unable, without the interpoſition of ſovereign grace, ſavingly to love God, believe in Chriſt, or do any thing that is truly good and acceptable in God's ſight. For the main objection againſt this doctrine is, that it is inconſiſtent with the

freedom of man's will, consisting in indifference and self-determining power; because it supposes man to be under a necessity of sinning, and that God requires things of him, in order to his avoiding eternal damnation, which he is unable to do; and that this doctrine is wholly inconsistent with the sincerity of counsels, invitations, &c. Now, this doctrine supposes *no other necessity* of sinning, than a moral necessity; which, as has been shewn, does not at all excuse sin; and supposes *no other inability* to obey any command, or perform any duty, even the most spiritual and exalted, but a moral inability, which, as has been proved, does not excuse persons in the non-performance of any good thing, or make them not to be the proper objects of commands, counsels and invitations. And, moreover, it has been shewn, that there is not, and never can be, either in existence, or so much as in idea, any such freedom of will, consisting in indifference and self-determination, for the sake of which, this doctrine of original sin is cast out; and that no such freedom is necessary, in order to the nature of sin, and a just desert of punishment.

The things, which have been observed, do also take off the main objections of *Arminians* against the doctrine of *efficacious grace;* and, at the same time, prove the grace of God in a sinner's conversion (if there be any grace or divine influence in the affair) to be *efficacious*, yea, and *irresistible* too, if by irresistible is meant, that which is attended with a moral necessity, which it is impossible should ever be violated by any resistance. The main objection of *Arminians* against this doctrine is, that it is inconsistent with their self-determining freedom of will; and that it is repugnant to the nature of virtue, that it should be

wrought in the heart by the determining efficacy and power of another, instead of its being owing to a self-moving power; that, in that case, the good which is wrought, would not be *our* virtue, but rather God's virtue; because it is not the person in whom it is wrought, that is the determining author of it, but God that wrought it in him. But the things, which are the foundation of these objections, have been considered; and it has been demonstrated, that the liberty of moral agents does not consist in self-determining power; and that there is no need of any such liberty, in order to the nature of virtue; nor does it at all hinder, but that the state or act of the will may be the virtue of the subject, though it be not from self-determination, but the determination of an intrinsic cause; even so as to cause the event to be morally necessary to the subject of it. And as it has been proved, that nothing in the state or acts of the will of man is contingent; but that, on the contrary, every event of this kind is necessary, by a moral necessity; and has also been now demonstrated, that the doctrine of an universal determining Providence, follows from that doctrine of necessity, which was proved before: and so, that God does decisively, in his Providence, order all the volitions of moral agents, either by positive influence or permission: and it being allowed, on all hands, that what God does in the affair of man's virtuous volitions, whether it be more or less, is by some positive influence, and not by mere permission, as in the affair of a sinful volition; if we put these things together, it will follow, that God's assistance or influence, must be determining and decisive, or must be attended with a moral necessity of the event; and so, that God gives virtue, holiness and conversion to sinners, by an influence which

determines the effect, in such a manner, that the effect will infallibly follow by a moral necessity; which is what *Calvinists* mean by efficacious and irresistible grace.

The things, which have been said, do likewise answer the chief objections against the doctrine of God's *universal* and *absolute decree*, and afford infallible proof of this doctrine; and of the doctrine of *absolute, eternal, personal election* in particular. The main objections against these doctrines are, that they infer a necessity of the volitions of moral agents, and of the future moral state and acts of men; and so are not consistent with those eternal rewards and punishments, which are connected with conversion and impenitence; nor can be made to agree with the reasonableness and sincerity of the precepts, calls, counsels, warnings and expostulations of the Word of God; or with the various methods and means of grace, which God uses with sinners, to bring them to repentance; and the whole of that moral government, which God exercises towards mankind: and that they infer an inconsistence between the *secret* and *revealed Will of God;* and make God the author of sin. But all these things have been obviated in the preceding discourse. And the certain truth of these doctrines, concerning God's eternal purposes, will follow from what was just now observed concerning God's universal Providence; how it infallibly follows from what has been proved, that God orders all events; and the volitions of moral agents amongst others, by such a decisive disposal, that the events are infallibly connected with his disposal. For if God disposes all events, so that the infallible existence of the events is decided by his Providence, then he, doubtless, thus orders and decides things *know-*

*ingly*, and *on design*. God does not do what he does, nor order what he orders accidentally and unawares; either *without*, or *beside* his intention. And if there be a foregoing *design* of doing and ordering as he does, this is the same with a *purpose* or *decree*. And as it has been shewn, that nothing is new to God, in any respect, but all things are perfectly and equally in his view from eternity; hence it will follow, that his designs or purposes are not things formed anew, founded on any new views or appearances, but are all eternal purposes. And as it has been now shewn, how the doctrine of determining efficacious grace certainly follows from things proved in the foregoing discourse; hence will necessarily follow the doctrine of *particular*, *eternal*, *absolute election*, For if men are made true saints, no otherwise than as God makes them so, and distinguishes them from others, by an efficacious power and influence of his, that decides and fixes the event; and God thus makes some saints, and not others, on design or purpose, and (as has been now observed) no designs of God are new; it follows, that God thus distinguished from others, all that ever become true saints, by his eternal design or decree. I might also shew, how God's certain foreknowledge must suppose an absolute decree, and how such a decree can be proved to a demonstration from it: but that this discourse may not be lengthened out too much, that must be omitted for the present.

From these things it will inevitably follow, that however Christ in some sense may be said to *die for all*, and to redeem all visible Christians, yea, the whole world by his death; yet there must be something *particular* in the design of his death, with respect to such as he intended should actu-

ally be ſaved thereby. As appears by what has been now ſhewn, God has the actual ſalvation or redemption of a certain number in his proper abſolute deſign, and of a certain number only; and therefore ſuch a deſign only can be proſecuted in any thing God does, in order to the ſalvation of men. God purſues a proper deſign of the ſalvation of the elect in giving Chriſt to die, and proſecutes ſuch a deſign with reſpect to no other, moſt ſtrictly ſpeaking; for it is impoſſible, that God ſhould proſecute any other deſign than only ſuch as he has: he certainly does not, in the higheſt propriety and ſtrictneſs of ſpeech, purſue a deſign that he has not.—And, indeed, ſuch a particularity and limitation of redemption will as infallibly follow, from the doctrine of God's foreknowledge, as from that of the decree. For it is as impoſſible, in ſtrictneſs of ſpeech, that God ſhould proſecute a deſign, or aim at a thing, which He at the ſame time moſt perfectly knows will not be accompliſhed, as that he ſhould uſe endeavours for that which is beſide his decree.

By the things which have been proved, are obviated ſome of the main objections againſt the doctrine of the infallible and neceſſary *perſeverance* of ſaints, and ſome of the main foundations of this doctrine are eſtabliſhed. The main prejudices of *Arminians* againſt this doctrine ſeem to be theſe; they ſuppoſe ſuch a neceſſary, infallible perſeverance to be repugnant to the freedom of the will; that it muſt be owing to man's own ſelf-determining power, that he *firſt becomes* virtuous and holy; and ſo, in like manner, it muſt be left a thing contingent, to be determined by the ſame freedom of will, whether he will *perſevere* in virtue and holineſs; and that otherwiſe his continuing ſtedfaſt in faith and obedience would

not be his virtue, or at all praiſe-worthy and rewardable; nor could his perſeverance be properly the matter of divine commands, counſels and promiſes, nor his apoſtacy be properly threatened, and men warned againſt it. Whereas, we find all theſe things in Scripture: there we find ſtedfaſtneſs and perſeverance in true Chriſtianity, repreſented as the virtue of the ſaints, ſpoken of as praiſe-worthy in them, and glorious rewards promiſed to it; and alſo find, that God makes it the ſubject of his commands, counſels and promiſes; and the contrary, of threatenings and warnings. But the foundation of theſe objections has been removed, in its being ſhewn that moral neceſſity and infallible certainty of events is not inconſiſtent with theſe things; and that, as to freedom of will lying in the power of the will to determine itſelf, there neither is any ſuch thing, nor need of any of it, in order to virtue, reward, commands, counſels, &c.

And as the doctrines of efficacious grace and abſolute election do certainly follow from things, which have been proved in the preceding diſcourſe; ſo ſome of the main foundations of the doctrine of perſeverance, are thereby eſtabliſhed. If the beginning of true faith and holineſs, and a man's becoming a true ſaint at firſt, does not depend on the ſelf-determining power of the will, but on the determining efficacious grace of God; it may well be argued, that it is alſo with reſpect to men's being continued ſaints, or perſevering in faith and holineſs. The converſion of a ſinner being not owing to a man's ſelf-determination, but to God's determination, and eternal election, which is abſolute, and depending on the ſovereign will of God; and not on the free will of man; as is evident from what has been ſaid: and it being very evident from the Scrip-

tures, that the eternal election which there is of ſaints to faith and holineſs, is alſo an election of them to eternal ſalvation: hence their appointment to ſalvation muſt alſo be abſolute, and not depending on their contingent, ſelf-determining will. From all which it follows, that it is abſolutely fixed in God's decree, that all true ſaints ſhall perſevere to actual eternal ſalvation.

But I muſt leave all theſe things to the conſideration of the fair and impartial reader; and when he has maturely weighed them, I would propoſe it to his conſideration, whether many of the firſt reformers, and others that ſucceeded them, whom God in their day made the chief pillars of his church, and greateſt inſtruments of their deliverance from error and darkneſs, and of the ſupport of the cauſe of piety among them, have not been injured, in the contempt with which they have been treated by many late writers, for their teaching and maintaining ſuch doctrines as are commonly called *Calviniſtic*. Indeed, ſome of theſe new writers, at the ſame time that they have repreſented the doctrines of theſe antient and eminent divines, as in the higheſt degree ridiculous, and contrary to common ſenſe, in an oſtentation of a very generous charity, have allowed that they were honeſt well-meaning men: yea, it may be ſome of them, as though it were in great condeſcenſion and compaſſion to them, have allowed, that they did pretty well for the day which they lived in, and conſidering the great diſadvantages they laboured under: when, at the ſame time, their manner of ſpeaking has naturally and plainly ſuggeſted to the minds of their readers, that they were perſons, who through the lowneſs of their genius, and greatneſs of the bigotry, with which their minds were ſhackled,

and thoughts confined, living in the gloomy caves of ſuperſtition, fondly embraced, and demurely and zealouſly taught the moſt abſurd, ſilly and monſtrous opinions, worthy of the greateſt contempt of gentlemen poſſeſſed of that noble and generous freedom of thought, which happily prevails in this age of light and enquiry. When, indeed, ſuch is the caſe, that we might. if ſo diſpoſed, ſpeak as big words as they, and on far better grounds. And really all the *Arminians* on earth might be challenged without arrogance or vanity, to make theſe principles of theirs, wherein they mainly differ from their fathers, whom they ſo much deſpiſe, conſiſtent with common ſenſe; yea, and perhaps to produce any doctrine ever embraced by the blindeſt bigot of the Church of Rome, or the moſt ignorant Muſſulman, or extravagant enthuſiaſt, that might be reduced to more demonſtrable inconſiſtencies, and repugnancies to common ſenſe, and to themſelves; though their inconſiſtencies indeed may not lie ſo deep, or be ſo artfully vailed by a deceitful ambiguity of words, and an indeterminate ſignification of phraſes.—I will not deny, that theſe gentlemen, many of them, are men of great abilities, and have been helped to higher attainments in philoſophy, than thoſe antient divines, and have done great ſervice to the Church of God in ſome reſpects: but I humbly conceive, that their differing from their fathers, with ſuch magiſterial aſſurance, in theſe points in divinity, muſt be owing to ſome other cauſe than ſuperior wiſdom.

It may alſo be worthy of conſideration, whether the great alteration, which has been made in the ſtate of things in our nation, and ſome other parts of the Proteſtant world, in this and the paſt age, by the exploding ſo generally *Cal-*

*viniſtic* doctrines, that is ſo often ſpoken of as worthy to be greatly rejoiced in by the friends of truth, learning and virtue, as an inſtance of the great increaſe of light in the Chriſtian Church; I ſay, it may be worthy to be conſidered, whether this be indeed a happy change, owing to any ſuch cauſe as an increaſe of true knowledge and underſtanding in things of religion; or whether there is not reaſon to fear, that it may be owing to ſome worſe cauſe.

And I deſire it may be conſidered, whether the boldneſs of ſome writers may not be worthy to be reflected on, who have not ſcrupled to ſay, that if theſe and thoſe things are true (which yet appear to be the demonſtrable dictates of reaſon, as well as the certain dictates of the mouth of the Moſt High) then God is unjuſt and cruel, and guilty of manifeſt deceit and double dealing, and the like. Yea, ſome have gone ſo far, as confidently to aſſert, that if any book which pretends to be Scripture, teaches ſuch doctrines, that alone is ſufficient warrant for mankind to reject it, as what cannot be the Word of God. Some, who have not gone ſo far, have ſaid, that if the Scripture ſeems to teach any ſuch doctrines, ſo contrary to reaſon, we are obliged to find out ſome other interpretation of thoſe texts, where ſuch doctrines ſeem to be exhibited. Others expreſs themſelves yet more modeſtly: they expreſs a tenderneſs and religious fear, leſt they ſhould receive and teach any thing that ſhould ſeem to reflect on God's moral character, or be a diſparagement to his methods of adminiſtration, in his moral government; and therefore expreſs themſelves as not daring to embrace ſome doctrines, though they ſeem to be delivered in Scripture, according to the more obvious and natural

conſtruction of the words. But indeed it would ſhew a truer modeſty and humility, if they would more entirely rely on God's wiſdom and diſcerning, who knows infinitely better than we, what is agreeable to his own perfections, and never intended to leave theſe matters to the deciſion of the wiſdom and decerning of men; but by his own unerring inſtruction, to determine for us what the truth is; knowing how little our judgment is to be depended on, and how extremely prone, vain and blind men are, to err in ſuch matters.

The truth of the caſe is, that if the Scripture plainly taught the oppoſite doctrines, to thoſe that are ſo much ſtumbled at, *viz.* the *Arminian* doctrine of free-will, and others depending thereon, it would be the greateſt of all difficulties that attend the Scriptures, incomparably greater than its containing any, even the moſt myſterious of thoſe doctrines of the firſt reformers, which our late free-thinkers have ſo ſuperciliouſly exploded.—Indeed, it is a glorious argument of the divinity of the holy Scriptures, that they teach ſuch doctrines, which in one age and another, through the blindneſs of men's minds, and ſtrong prejudices of their hearts, are rejected, as moſt abſurd and unreaſonable, by the wiſe and great men of the world; which yet, when they are moſt carefully and ſtrictly examined, appear to be exactly agreeable to the moſt demonſtrable, certain, and natural dictates of reaſon. By ſuch things it appears, that the *fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than men*, and God does as is ſaid in 1 Cor. i. 19, 20. *For it is written, I will deſtroy the wiſdom of the wiſe; I will bring to nothing the underſtanding of the prudent. Where is the wiſe! Where is the ſcribe! Where is the diſputer of this world! Hath not God made fooliſh the wiſdom of this world?* And as it

uſed to be in time paſt, ſo it is probable it will be in time to come, as it is there written, in ver. 27, 28, 29. *But God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world, to confound the wiſe: and God hath choſen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty: and baſe things of the world, and things which are deſpiſed, hath God choſen: yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no fleſh ſhould glory in his preſence.* Amen.

THE

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# REMARKS

ON THE

ESSAYS on the PRINCIPLES of MORALITY and NATURAL RELIGION,

In a LETTER to a Minister of the CHURCH of SCOTLAND:

By the Rev. Mr. JONATHAN EDWARDS, President of the College of NEW JERSEY, and Author of the late ENQUIRY into the MODERN NOTIONS of the FREEDOM of WILL.

*Rev. SIR,*

THE intimations you have given me of the use which has, by some, been made of what I have written on the *Freedom of the Will*, &c. to vindicate what is said on the subject of liberty and necessity, by the Author of the *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*, has occasioned my reading this Author's Essay on that subject, with particular care and attention. And I think it must be evident to every one, that has read both his *Essay* and my *Inquiry*, that our schemes are exceeding reverse from each other. The wide difference appears particularly in the following things.

This author supposes, that such a necessity takes place with respect to all men's actions, as is inconsistent with liberty*, and plainly denies that men have any liberty in acting. Thus in p. 168. after he had been speaking of the necessity of our deter-

* P. 160, 161, 164, 165, and many other places.

minations, as connected with motives, he concludes with saying, " In short, if motives are not under our power or direction, which is confessedly the fact, we can at bottom have——NO LIBERTY." Whereas, I have abundantly expressed it as my mind, that man, in his moral actions, has true liberty; and that the moral necessity, which universally takes place, is not in the least inconsistent with any thing that is properly called liberty, and with the utmost liberty that can be desired, or that can possibly exist or be conceived of ‡.

I find that some are apt to think, that in that kind of moral necessity of men's volitions, which I suppose to be universal, at least some degree of liberty is denied; that though it be true I allow a sort of liberty, yet those who maintain a self-determining power in the will, and a liberty of contingence and indifference, hold an higher sort of freedom than I do: but I think this is certainly a great mistake.

Liberty, as I have explained it, in p. 38. and other places, is *the power, opportunity, or advantage that any one has to do as he pleases, or conducting*, IN ANY RESPECT, *according to his pleasure;* without considering how his pleasure comes to be as it is. It is demonstrable, and, I think, has been demonstrated, that no necessity of men's volitions that I maintain, is inconsistent with this liberty: and I think it is impossible for any one to rise higher in his conceptions of liberty than this: If any imagine they desire higher, and that they conceive of a higher and greater liberty than this, they are deceived, and delude themselves with confused ambiguous words, instead of ideas. If any one should here say, " Yes, I conceive of a freedom above and beyond the liberty a man has of conducting in

‡ *Inquiry*, P. 38—43, 186, 187, 278—288, 300, 307, 326—335.

any respect as he pleases, *viz.* a liberty of *chusing* as he pleases." Such an one, if he reflected, would either blush or laugh at his own instance. For, is not chusing as he pleases, conducting, IN SOME RESPECT, according to his pleasure, and still without determining how he came by that pleasure? If he says, "Yes, I came by that pleasure by my own choice." If he be a man of common sense, by this time he will see his own absurdity: for he must needs see that his notion or conception, even of this liberty, does not contain any judgment or conception how he comes by that choice, which first determines his pleasure, or which originally fixed his own will respecting the affair. Or if any shall say, "That a man exercises liberty in this, even in determining his own choice, but not as he pleases, or not in consequence of any choice, preference, or inclination of his own, but by a determination arising contingently out of a state of absolute indifference;" this is not rising higher in his conception of liberty: as such a determination of the will would not be a voluntary determination of it. Surely he that places liberty in a power of doing something not according to his own choice, or from his choice, has not a higher notion of it, than he that places it in doing as he pleases, or acting from his own election. If there were a power in the mind to determine itself, but not by its choice or according to its pleasure, what advantage would it give? and what liberty, worth contending for, would be exercised in it? Therefore no *Arminian*, *Pelagian*, or *Epicurean*, can rise higher in his conceptions of liberty, than the notion of it which I have explained: which notion is apparently, perfectly consistent with the whole of that necessity of men's actions, which I suppose takes place. And I scruple not to say, it is beyond all their wits to invent a higher notion, or

form a higher imagination of liberty; let them talk of *ſovereignty of the will*, *ſelf-determining power*, *ſelf-motion*, *ſelf-direction*, *arbitrary deciſion*, *liberty* ad utrumvis, *power of chuſing differently in given caſes*, &c. &c. as long as they will. It is apparent that theſe men, in their ſtrenuous affirmation, and diſpute about theſe things, aim at they know not what, fighting for ſomething they have no conception of, ſubſtituting a number of confuſed unmeaning words, inſtead of things, and inſtead of thoughts. They may be challenged clearly to explain what they would have: they never can anſwer the challenge.

The Author of the *Eſſays*, through his whole Eſſay on Liberty and Neceſſity, goes on that ſuppoſition, that, in order to the being of real liberty, a man muſt have a freedom that is oppoſed to moral neceſſity: and yet he ſuppoſes, p. 175, that *ſuch a liberty muſt ſignify a power in the mind of acting without and againſt motives, a power of acting without any view, purpoſe, or deſign, and even of acting in contradiction to our own deſires and averſions, and to all our principles of action; and is an abſurdity altogether inconſiſtent with a rational nature.* Now, who ever imagined ſuch a liberty as this, a higher ſort or degree of freedom, than a liberty of following one's own views and purpoſes, and acting agreeable to his own inclinations and paſſions? Who will ever reaſonably ſuppoſe that liberty, which is an abſurdity altogether inconſiſtent with a rational nature, to be a kind of liberty above that which is conſiſtent with the nature of a rational, intelligent, deſigning agent.

The Author of the *Eſſays* ſeems to ſuppoſe ſuch a neceſſity to take place, as is inconſiſtent with ſome ſuppoſable POWER OF ARBITRARY CHOICE*; or that there is ſome liberty conceivable, whereby

* P. 169.

men's own actions might be more PROPERLY IN THEIR POWER †, and by which events might be more DEPENDENT ON OURSELVES ‡; contrary to what I suppose to be evident in my *Inquiry* ||. What way can be imagined, of our actions being more *in our power*, *from ourselves*, or *dependent on ourselves*, than their being from our power to fulfil our own choice, to act from our own inclination, pursue our own views, and execute our own designs? Certainly, to be able to act thus, is as properly having our actions in our power, and dependent on ourselves, as a being liable to be the subjects of acts and events, contingently and fortuitously, *without desire, view, purpose or design, or any principle of action* within ourselves; as we must be, according to this Author's own declared sense, if our actions are performed with that liberty that is opposed to moral necessity.

This Author seems every where to suppose, that necessity, most properly so called, attends all men's actions; and that the terms *necessary*, *unavoidable*, *impossible*, &c. are equally applicable to the case of moral and natural necessity. In p. 173, he says, *The idea* of necessary *and* unavoidable *equally agrees, both to moral and physical necessity.* And in p. 184, *All things that fall out in the natural and moral world are alike necessary.* P. 174, *This inclination and choice is* unavoidably *caused or occasioned by the prevailing motive. In this lies the necessity of our actions, that, in such circumstances, it was* impossible *we* could *act otherwise.* He often expresses himself in like manner elsewhere, speaking in strong terms of men's actions as *unavoidable*, what they *cannot* forbear, having *no power* over their own actions, the order of them being *unalterably* fixed, and *inseparably* linked together, *&c.* §

† P. 191, 195, 197, 206. ‡ P. 183. || P. 395, 396.
§ P. 180, 188, 193, 194, 195, 197, 198, 199, 205, 206.

On the contrary, I have largely declared, that the connection between antecedent things and consequent ones, which takes place with regard to the acts of men's wills, which is called moral necessity, is called by the name of *necessity* improperly; and that all such terms as *must*, *cannot*, *impossible*, *unable*, *irresistible*, *unavoidable*, *invincible*, *&c.* when applied here, are not applied in their proper signification, and are either used nonsensically, and with perfect insignificance, or in a sense quite diverse from their original and proper meaning, and their use in common speech †: and, that such a necessity as attends the acts of men's wills, is more properly called *certainty*, than *necessity;* it being no other than the certain connection between the subject and predicate of the proposition which affirms their existence ‡.

Agreeable to what is observed in my *Inquiry* ¶, I think it is evidently owing to a strong prejudice in persons minds, arising from an insensible habitual perversion and misapplication of such-like terms, as *necessary*, *impossible*, *unable*, *unavoidable*, *invincible*, &c. that they are ready to think, that to suppose a certain connection of men's volitions, without any foregoing motives or inclinations, or any preceding moral influence whatsoever, is truly and properly to suppose such a strong irrefragable chain of causes and effects, as stands in the way of, and makes utterly vain, opposite desires and endeavours, like immovable and impenetrable mountains of brass; and impedes our liberty like walls of adamant, gates of brass, and bars of iron: whereas, all such representations suggest ideas as far from the truth, as the East is from the West.

† *Inquiry*, P. 18—28, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 232, 289—293, 296, 304——308, 397, 398. ‡ *Inquiry*, P. 22—24.
¶ P. 289,——293.

Nothing that I maintain, ſuppoſes that men are at all hindered by any fatal neceſſity, from doing, and even willing and chuſing as they pleaſe, with full freedom; yea with the higheſt degree of liberty that ever was thought of, or that ever could poſſibly enter into the heart of any man to conceive. I know it is in vain to endeavour to make ſome perſons believe this, or at leaſt fully and ſteadily to believe it: for if it be demonſtrated to them, ſtill the old prejudice remains, which has been long fixed by the uſe of the terms *neceſſary*, *muſt*, *cannot*, *impoſſible*, &c. the aſſociation with theſe terms of certain ideas, inconſiſtent with liberty, is not broken; and the judgment is powerfully warped by it; as a thing that has been long bent and grown ſtiff, if it be ſtraitened, will return to its former curvity again and again.

The Author of the *Eſſays* moſt manifeſtly ſuppoſes that if men had the truth concerning the real neceſſity of all their actions clearly in view, they would not appear to themſelves, or one another, as at all praiſe-worthy or culpable, or under any moral obligation, or accountable for their actions†: which ſuppoſes, that men are not to be blamed or praiſed for any of their actions, and are not under any obligations, nor are truly accountable for any thing they do, by reaſon of this neceſſity; which is very contrary to what I have endeavoured to prove, throughout the *third part* of my *Inquiry*. I humbly conceive it is there ſhewn, that this is ſo far from the truth, that the moral neceſſity of men's actions, which truly take place, is requiſite to the being of virtue and vice, or any thing praiſe-worthy or culpable: that the liberty of indifference and contingence, which is advanced in oppoſition to that neceſſity, is inconſiſtent with the being of

† P. 207, 209, and other places

thefe; as it would fuppofe that men are not determined in what they do, by any virtuous or vicious principles, nor act from any motives, intentions or aims whatfoever; or have any end, either good or bad, in acting. And is it not remarkable, that this Author fhould fuppofe, that, in order to men's actions truly having any defert, they muft be performed *without any view, purpofe, defign, or defire*, or *any principle of action*, or any thing *agreeable to a rational nature?* As it will appear that he does, if we compare, p. 206, 207, with p. 175.

The Author of the *Effays* fuppofes, that God has deeply implanted in man's nature, a ftrong and invincible apprehenfion, or feeling, as he calls it, of a liberty, and contingence, of his own actions, oppofite to that neceffity which truly attends them; and which in truth does not agree with real fact *a*, is not agreeable to ftrict philofophic truth *b*, is contradictory to the truth of things *c*, and which truth contradicts *d*, not tallying with the real plan *e*: and that therefore fuch feelings are deceitful *f*, are in reality of the declufive kind *g*. He fpeaks of them as a wife delufion *h*, as nice artificial feelings, merely that confcience may have a commanding power *i*: meaning plainly, that thefe feelings are a cunning artifice of the Author of Nature, to make men believe they are free, when they are not *k*. He fuppofes that, by thefe feelings, the moral world has a difguifed appearance *l*. And other things of this kind he fays. He fuppofes that all felf-approbation, and all remorfe of confcience, all commendation or condemnation of ourfelves or others, all fenfe of defert, and all that is connected with this way of thinking, all the ideas, which at prefent are fuggefted by the words

*a* P. 200, *b* P. 152. *c* P. 183. *d* P. 186. *e* P. 205. *f* P. 203, 204, 211. *g* P. 183. *h* P. 209. *i* P. 211. *k* P. 153. *l* P. 214.

*ought, ſhould*, ariſe from this deluſion and would entirely vaniſh without it *a*.

All which is very contrary to what I have abundantly inſiſted on and endeavoured to demonſtrate in my *Inquiry;* where I have largely ſhewn, that it is agreeable to the natural ſenſe of mankind, that the moral neceſſity or certainty that attends men's actions, is conſiſtent with praiſe and blame, reward and puniſhment *b;* and that it is agreeable to our natural notions, that moral evil, with its deſert of diſlike and abhorrence, and all its other ill-deſervings, conſiſts in a certain deformity in the nature of the diſpoſitions and acts of the heart, and not in the evil of ſomething elſe, diverſe from theſe, ſuppoſed to be their cauſe or occaſion *c*.

I might well aſk here, whether any one is to be found in the world of mankind, who is conſcious to a ſenſe or feeling, naturally and deeply rooted in his mind, that, in order to a man's performing any action that is praiſe or blame-worthy, he muſt exerciſe a liberty that implies and ſignifies a power of acting without any motive, view, deſign, deſire, or principle of action? For ſuch a liberty, this Author ſuppoſes, that muſt be which is oppoſed to moral neceſſity, as I have already obſerved once and again. Suppoſing a man ſhould actually do good, independent of deſire, aim, inducement, principle or end, is it a dictate of invincible natural ſenſe, that his act is more meritorious or praiſe-worthy, than if he had performed it for ſome *good end*, and had been governed in it by *good principles* and *motives?* and ſo I might aſk, on the contrary, with reſpect to evil actions *d*.

*a* P 160, 194, 199, 205, 206 207, 209. *b Inquiry* Part IV. Sect. 4. throughout. *c Idem*, Part IV. Sect. 1. throughout, and P. 395—397. *d* See this Matter illuſtrated in my *Inquiry*, Part IV. Sect. 4. eſpecially, P. 302—304.

The Author of the *Essays* supposes that the liberty without necessity, which we have a natural feeling of, implies *contingence:* and, speaking of this contingence, he sometimes calls it by the name of *chance.* And it is evident, that his notion of it, or rather what he says about it, implies things happening *loosely*, *fortuitously*, by *accident*, and *without a cause* ‡. Now I conceive the slightest reflection may be sufficient to satisfy any one, that such a contingence of men's actions, according to our natural sense, is so far from being essential to the morality or merit of those actions, that it would destroy it; and that, on the contrary, the dependence of our actions on such causes, as inward inclinations, incitements and ends, is essential to the being of it. Natural sense teaches men, when they see any thing done by others of a good or evil tendency, to inquire what their intention was; what principles and views they were moved by, in order to judge how far they are to be justified or condemned; and not to determine, that, in order to their being approved or blamed at all, the action must be performed altogether fortuitously, preceding from nothing, arising from no cause. Concerning this matter, I have fully expressed my mind in the *Inquiry* †.

If the liberty, which we have a natural sense of as necessary to desert, consists in the mind's self-determination, without being determined by previous inclination or motive, then indifference is essential to it, yea absolute indifference; as is observed in my *Inquiry* §. But men naturally have no notion of any such liberty as this, as essential to the morality or demerit of their actions; but, on the contrary, such a liberty, if it were possible, would be

‡ P. 156, 157, 158, 159, 177, 178, 181, 183, 184, 185.
† P. 258—261, 267, 302, 303, and other places.
§ P. 89—91.

inconſiſtent with our natural notions of deſert, as is largely ſhown in the *Inquiry*. * If it be agreeable to natural ſenſe, that men muſt be indifferent in determining their own actions; then, according to the ſame, the more they are determined by inclination, either good or bad, the leſs they have of deſert: the more good actions are performed from good diſpoſition, the leſs praiſe-worthy; and the more evil deeds are from evil diſpoſitions, the leſs culpable; and, in general, the more men's actions are from their hearts, the leſs they are to be commended or condemned: which all muſt know is very contrary to natural ſenſe.

Moral neceſſity is owing to the power and government of the inclination of the heart, either habitual or occaſional, excited by motive: but, according to natural and common ſenſe, the more a man does any thing with full inclination of heart, the more is it to be charged to his account for his condemnation, if it be an ill action, and the more to be aſcribed to him for his praiſe, if it be good.

If the mind were determined to evil actions by contingence, from a ſtate of indifference, then either there would be no fault in them, or elſe the fault would be in being ſo perfectly indifferent, that the mind was equally liable to a bad or good determination. And, if this indifference be liberty, then the very eſſence of the blame or fault would lie in the liberty itſelf, or the wickedneſs would, primarily and ſummarily, lie in being a free agent. If there were no fault in being indifferent, then there would be no fault in the determination's being agreeable to ſuch a ſtate of indifference: that is, there could no

* Eſpecially in Part III. Sect. 6, and 7.

fault be reaſonably found with this, *viz.* that oppoſite determinations actually happen to take place *indifferently*, ſometimes good and ſometimes bad, as contingence governs and decides. And if it be a fault to be indifferent to good and evil, then ſuch indifference is no indifference to good and evil, but is a determination to evil, or to a fault; and ſuch an indifferent diſpoſition would be an evil, faulty diſpoſition, tendency or determination of mind. So inconſiſtent are theſe notions of liberty, as eſſential to praiſe or blame.

The Author of the *Eſſays* ſuppoſes men's natural deluſive ſenſe of a liberty of contingence, to be, in truth, the foundation of all the labour, care and induſtry of mankind; † and that if men's *practical ideas had been formed on the plan of univerſal neceſſity, the* ignava ratio, *the inactive doctrine of the Stoicks, would have followed; and that there would have been no* ROOM *for forethought about futurity, or any ſort of induſtry and care:* ‡ plainly implying, that, in this caſe, men would ſee and know that all their induſtry and care ſignified nothing, was in vain, and to no purpoſe, or of no benefit; events being fixed in an irrefragable chain, and not at all DEPENDING on their care and endeavour; as he explains himſelf, particularly, in the inſtance of men's uſe of means to prolong life: § not only very contrary to what I largely maintain in my *Inquiry*, ‖ but alſo very inconſiſtently with his own ſcheme, in what he ſuppoſes of the ends for which God has ſo deeply implanted this deceitful feeling in man's nature; in which he manifeſtly ſuppoſes men's,

† P. 184. ‡ P. 189. § P. 184, 185. ‖ Eſpecially Part IV. Sect. 5.

care and induſtry not to be in vain and of no benefit, but of great uſe, yea of abſolute neceſſity, in order to the obtaining the moſt important ends and neceſſary purpoſes of human life, and to fulfil the ends of action to the BEST ADVANTAGE; as he largely declares.† Now, how ſhall theſe things be reconciled? That, if men had *a clear view of real truth*, they would ſee that there was *no* ROOM for their care and induſtry, becauſe they would ſee it to be in vain, and of no benefit; and yet that God, by having a clear view of real truth, ſees that their being excited to care and induſtry, will be of excellent uſe to mankind, and greatly for the benefit of the world, yea abſolutely neceſſary in order to it: and that therefore the great wiſdom and goodneſs of God to men appears, in artfully contriving to put them on care and induſtry for their good, which good could not be obtained without them; and yet both theſe things are maintained at once, and in the ſame ſentences and words by this Author. The very reaſon he gives, why God has put this deceitful feeling into men, contradicts and deſtroys itſelf; that God in his great goodneſs to men gave them ſuch a deceitful feeling, becauſe it was very uſeful and neceſſary for them, and greatly for their benefit, or excites them to care and induſtry for their own good, which care and induſtry is uſeful and neceſſary to that end: and yet the very thing that this great benefit of care and induſtry is given as a reaſon for, is God's deceiving men in this very point, in making them think their care and induſtry to be of great benefit to them, when indeed it is of none at all; and if they ſaw the real truth, they would ſee all their

† P. 188—192. and in many other places.

endeavours to be wholly uſeleſs, that there was NO ROOM for them, and that the event does not at all DEPEND upon them *a*.

And beſides, what this Author ſays, plainly implies (as appears by what has been already obſerved), that it is neceſſary men ſhould be deceived, by being made to believe that future events are contingent, and their own future actions free, with ſuch a freedom, as ſignifies that their actions are not the fruit of their own deſires, or deſigns, but altogether contingent, fortuitous and without a cauſe. But how ſhould a notion of liberty, conſiſting in accident or looſe chance, encourage care and induſtry? I ſhould think it would rather entirely diſcourage every thing of this nature. For ſurely, if our actions do not depend on our deſires and deſigns, then they do not depend on our endeavours, flowing from our deſires and deſigns. This Author himſelf ſeems to ſuppoſe, that if men had, indeed, ſuch a liberty of contingence, it would render all endeavours to determine or move men's future volitions, in vain: he ſays, that, in this caſe, *to exhort, to inſtruct, to promiſe, or to threaten*, would be to no purpoſe *b*. Why? Becauſe (as he himſelf gives the reaſon), *then our will would be capricious and arbitrary, and we ſhould be thrown looſe altogether, and our arbitrary power could do us good or ill only by accident*. But if ſuch a looſe fortuitous ſtate would render vain others endeavours upon us, for the ſame reaſon would it make uſeleſs our endeavours on ourſelves: for events that are truly contingent and accidental, and altogether looſe from, and independent of, all foregoing cauſes, are

*a* P. 188, 189, &c. *b* P. 178, 213, 214.

independent on every foregoing cauſe within ourſelves, as well as in others.

I ſuppoſe that it is ſo far from being true, that our minds are naturally poſſeſſed with a notion of ſuch liberty as this, ſo ſtrongly, that it is impoſſible to root it out, that indeed men have no ſuch notion of liberty at all, and that it is utterly impoſſible, by any means whatſoever to implant or introduce ſuch a notion into the mind. As no ſuch notions as imply ſelf-contradiction and ſelf-abolition can ſubſiſt in the mind, as I have ſhewn in my *Inquiry* †; I think a mature ſenſible conſideration of the matter, ſufficient to ſatisfy any one, that even the greateſt and moſt learned advocates themſelves for liberty of indifference and ſelf-determination, have no ſuch notion; and that indeed they mean ſomething wholly inconſiſtent with, and directly ſubverſive of, what they ſtrenuouſly affirm, and earneſtly contend for. By a man's having a power of determining his own will, they plainly mean a power of determining his will, as he pleaſes, or as he chuſes: which ſuppoſes that the mind has a choice, prior to its going about to confirm any action or determination to it. And if they mean that they determine even the original or prime choice, by their own pleaſure or choice, as the thing that cauſes and directs it; I ſcruple not moſt boldly to affirm, that they ſpeak they know not what, and that of which they have no manner of idea; becauſe no ſuch contradictory notion can come into, or have a moment's ſubſiſtence in, the mind of any man living, as an original or firſt choice being cauſed, or brought into being, by choice. After all, they ſay,

† P. 257, 258. See alſo P. 49, 56, 57, 73, 74, 79, 183—187, 281, 282, 298—301.

they have no higher or other conception of liberty, than that vulgar notion of it, which I contend for, *viz.* a man's having power or opportunity to do as he chuſes: or if they had a notion that every act of choice was determined by choice, yet it would deſtroy their notion of the contingence of choice; for then no one act of choice would ariſe contingently, or from a ſtate of indifference, but every individual act, in all the ſeries, would ariſe from foregoing bias or preference, and from a cauſe predetermining and fixing its exiſtence, which introduces at once ſuch a chain of cauſes and effects, each preceding link deciſively fixing the following, as they would by all means avoid.

And ſuch kind of deluſion and ſelf-contradiction as this, does not ariſe in men's minds by nature: it is not owing to any natural feeling which God has ſtrongly fixed in the mind and nature of man; but to falſe philoſophy, and ſtrong prejudice, from a deceitful abuſe of words. It is *artificial;* not in the ſenſe of the Author of the *Eſſays*, ſuppoſing it to be a deceitful artifice of God; but artificial as oppoſed to natural, and as owing to an artificial deceitful management of terms, to darken and confound the mind. Men have no ſuch thing when they firſt begin to exerciſe reaſon; but muſt have a great deal of time to blind themſelves, with metaphyſical confuſion, before they can embrace, and reſt in ſuch definitions of liberty as are given, and imagine they underſtand them.

On the whole, I humbly conceive, that whoſoever will give himſelf the trouble of weighing, what I have offered to conſideration in my *Inquiry*, muſt be ſenſible, that ſuch a moral neceſſity of men's actions as I maintain, is not at all inconſiſtent with any liberty that any creature has, or can have, as

a free, accountable, moral agent, and ſubject of moral government; and that this moral neceſſity is ſo far from being inconſiſtent with praiſe and blame, and the benefit and uſe of men's own care and labour, that, on the contrary, it implies the very ground and reaſon, why men's actions are to be aſcribed to them as their own, in that manner as to infer deſert, praiſe and blame, approbation and remorſe of conſcience, reward and puniſhment; and that it eſtabliſhes the moral ſyſtem of the univerſe, and God's moral government, in every reſpect, with the proper uſe of motives, exhortations, commands, counſels, promiſes, and threatenings; and the uſe and benefit of endeavours, care and induſtry: and that therefore there is no need that the ſtrict philoſophic truth ſhould be at all concealed from men; no danger in *contemplation* and *profound diſcovery* in theſe things. So far from this, that the truth in this matter is of vaſt importance, and extremely needful to be known; and that the more clearly and perfectly the real fact is known, and the more conſtantly it is in view, the better; and particularly, that the clear and full knowledge of that, which is the true ſyſtem of the univerſe, in theſe reſpects, would greatly eſtabliſh the doctrines which teach the true Chriſtian ſcheme of Divine Adminiſtration in the city of God, and the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, in its moſt important articles; and that theſe things never can be well eſtabliſhed, and the oppoſite errors, ſo ſubverſive of the whole Goſpel, which at this day ſo greatly and generally prevail, be well confuted, or the arguments by which they are maintained, anſwered, till theſe points are ſettled: while this is not done, it is, to me, beyond doubt, that the friends of thoſe great Goſpel Truths, will but poorly maintain their controverſy with the

adverſaries of thoſe truths: they will be obliged often to dodge, ſhuffle, hide, and turn their backs; and the latter will have a ſtrong fort, from whence they never can be driven, and weapons to uſe, which thoſe whom they oppoſe will find no ſhield to ſcreen themſelves from; and they will always puzzle, confound, and keep under the friends of ſound doctrine; and glory, and vaunt themſelves in their advantage over them; and carry their affairs with an high hand, as they have done already for a long time paſt.

I conclude, Sir, with aſking your pardon for troubling you with ſo much ſaid in vindication of myſelf from the imputation of advancing a ſcheme of neceſſity, of a like nature with that of the Author of the *Eſſays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion.* Conſidering that what I have ſaid is not only in vindication of myſelf, but, as I think, of the moſt important articles of moral philoſophy and religion; I truſt in what I know of your candour, that you will excuſe,

*Your obliged friend and brother,*

STOCKBRIDGE,
July 25, 1757.

J. EDWARDS.

*F I N I S.*